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Rethinking “Peace” of Hiroshima: Restoring the Subject, and the Logic of “the Only A-bombed Nation”

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Abstract: *This article provides a critical analysis of the representations of collective memory of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki at the end of the Asia-Pacific theatre of World War II. The discussion of the "subject debate" over the inscription of the Cenotaph for the A-bomb Victims, politics over the construction of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park and the preservation of the A-bomb Dome transpired the memory mechanisms at work with regard to the US responsibility for the A-bomb, the Japanese aggressive war leading up to the A-bomb, Japan's colonial rule of Korea, and denationalization and universalization of the A-bomb experience in Japan as a result. The article analyzes the chronology of the "only A-bombed nation" notion in the post-WWII Japanese "peace" discourses and concludes that it was a process to reconstruct Japanese national victimhood as a reaction to the "discovery" of the Korean A-bomb victims and the DPRK nuclear program. The article overall challenges the notion of "peace" and "pacifism" in post-WWII Japan that revolve around the experience of the atomic bombing.*

Keywords: *memory, collective memory, war memory, war responsibility, representation, Japanese colonization of Korea, World War II, the U.S. atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, A-bomb survivors, hibakusha, Korean hibakusha, A-bomb Dome, Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park, reconstruction of Hiroshima, “the only A-bombed nation,” victimhood, A-bomb nationalism, dehistoricization, decontextualization, universalization, peace, pacifism*

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History is the reproduction of memory. Various mechanisms sometimes enable things that happen in specific times and spaces to transcend individual experiences and are shared and reproduced as collective memories. Subjects of such mechanisms are often nation states, ethnic groups, and classes. These

subjects attempt the collective sharing of memory through textbooks, museums, and media. Through such processes, the accumulation of individual memories of one event converge to form collective memory. Differences of memory among groups over the same historical fact come from how the memory mechanism of one group differs from that of another.

This kind of memory mechanism functions in the atomic bomb experience of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The moment that the atomic bombs exploded, the only fact that existed was that individual lives were victimized by the "new weapon." As Nagai Takashi narrated in *The Rosary Chain* (1948), "One of the differences of the aftermaths of atomic-bombing and other bombings is that everywhere there are evenly accumulated ashes, roof tiles and burned items,"[1] people only exist as absolutely isolated, "even" beings in front of the atomic bomb; there is no class, ethnicity, or state. Ironically, the explosion of nuclear weapons paradoxically proved the tragic human equality and isolation. These human beings, completely detached from the social relations surrounding them, were just terrified by the unidentified new weapons. Once the moment of the explosion passed, however, these isolated individuals instantly recovered their ethnicity and class. This was evident in how so many people witnessed ethnic discrimination in the course of relief work, medical aid for the A-bomb victims, and the "reconstruction" process. National and ethnic discrimination was then formally carried out in the policymaking and commemorative projects for the A-bomb-affected. In other words, death treats individuals equally, but mechanisms to remember death discriminate by nationality, ethnicity, and class.

The differences between the Japanese and Korean perspectives on Hiroshima and Nagasaki reflect their relative positions as colonizer and colonized at the time of the bombing of course, but they are also a manifestation of the asymmetric paths that Japanese society and the Korean Peninsula followed after the end of World War II (hereafter WWII). How then are the tragedies of Hiroshima and Nagasaki remembered and reproduced in the Republic of Korea (ROK)?

There has been little systematic research on how ROK society has dealt with the tragedies of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. This may surprise some, considering the fact that so many Koreans were victimized by the bombing and there remain a few survivors in contemporary Korea suffering from the aftereffects of the bombing. The history of the atomic bombing, at best, is described simply as a factor in the Japanese surrender and Korean liberation in museums, memorial halls, literature, school textbooks, and newspapers.

For example, in August 1959, on the fifteenth anniversary of the "August 15 Liberation," the *Chosun Ilbo,* a conservative newspaper in the ROK ran a special article called "From Obsolete Films." It had a photo of a devastated Hiroshima, with quite a provocative caption that said, "One atomic bomb exterminated militarism from the face of the earth. August 6, 1945, in 'Hiroshima,' is the day when a monster called militarism took its last breath. This is their torn corpse."[2] The article refers to the atomic bombing as a "just and necessary punishment of Japan for the wrongs it committed,"[3] which brought "direct consequences of Japan's unconditional surrender—the end of WWII—the liberation of Korea," and therefore, an event in which "one should not be carried away" by the Japanese "sentiment for peace."[4]

As this example shows, it is a widely accepted view in the ROK that the atomic bombing of Japan was the biggest factor that brought the liberation of Korea from its enslaved status under Japanese imperial rule. It is a view that recognizes a causal relationship between the atomic bombing by the United States (US) and

the liberation of Korea, and understands that many peoples of Asia, including Korean people, were emancipated from the tyranny of Japanese imperialism. This is how the "theory of the atomic-bombing ending the war early" in the U.S. transforms into the "theory of an early emancipation from colonial rule" in the ROK. In 1995, marking the 50th anniversary of liberation, Korean journalist Choi Jung-ho raised the question of "why Germany stays silent on the tragedy of Dresden while Japan talks so much about Hiroshima," and criticized the Japanese perspective as follows:

> The difference stems from the presence or absence of historical conscience… Germans are silent on the tragedy of Dresden, as they regard it as one of the results of Nazism and the war. On the contrary, Japanese have forgotten 1931 and 1941, and only remember 1945. They have made Japan's war and history abstract by forgetting about the invasion of China and the attack on Pearl Harbor. By such "decontextualizing" of Hiroshima, they have focussed on the atomic bombing of the city as if it were something that the United States did with no reason while Japan was innocent.[5]

The causal theory that Japan's aggressive war invited the United States' atomic bombing, added to the "theory of the atomic-bombing ending the war early," render the official US story. Such perspective is not at all rare. Rhee Yeung-hee, a prominent ROK intellectual, writes in "Eternal Debate on Hiroshima, 1945," his essay endorsing the Korean version of *Shadows of Hiroshima* by Wilfred Burchett,

> For Korean people who were liberated thanks to the atomic-bombing, the only right answer was the logic of the United States, which brought the war to an end in victory by the atomic bombing. Other third-party perspectives, claims, particularly sentiments and logic that spoke for some Japanese people, did not merit any consideration and were totally ignored.[6]

As Rhee Yeung-hee pointed out, the perspective on Hiroshima in ROK society did not move one inch from the "American" causal theory. This is why any acceptance of the anti-nuclear peace ideal as a universal value in the ROK meets a challenge from historical consistency with Hiroshima. In other words, if one is asked to judge the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki on the basis of the normative value that "opposes all nuclear weapons," one must inevitably object to the causal theory tying the atomic bombing to the liberation of Korea. As long as we do not modify the widely held theory that Korean liberation resulted from the atomic bombing, any interpretation of 1945 on the basis of the absolute anti-nuclear value as we have it would dangerously lead toward an embrace of the "extension of colonial rule theory."

There are only two ways to avoid such misunderstanding. The first is to divide "good nuclear and bad nuclear," which is to assess the nuclear weapons used in Hiroshima and Nagasaki as "good nuclear" that ended the war. This would mean acceptance of the theories such as "strategic peace" and "peace by armament." This kind of strategic peace theory is not rare in Japan. Recall the widely held view during the 1950s and 60s that the nuclear arming of socialist countries is justified because "socialist nuclear arms are defensive." In 1962, Ueda Koichiro (1927–2008), then Vice Chairman of Japan Communist Party, said that the "nuclear arms development by the Soviet Union was not just a 'countermeasure,'" but

was an "important 'protective wall for peace' for all peaceful forces that could prevent another world war by fighting against the United States' imperialist war policy, and at the same time a measure that provided feasibility for us to eventually secure an all-out nuclear weapons ban."[7] This is a typical argument based on strategic peace theory. Kyuma Fumio, who stepped down as a defense minister in 2007 for saying that the Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic bombings "could not have been helped," and Emperor Hirohito, who also said in 1975 that the "atomic bombing could not have been helped" both fall in this category by a broad definition.

The second is to deny the historical causal relationship between the atomic bombing and the liberation of Korea. In other words, it is to contend that the purpose of the atomic bombing was not to end the war early to save many US and Japanese lives, but to occupy a strategically advantageous position in the post-war world, for example, to better position itself for the Cold War. This perspective is not so common in the ROK.

The purpose of this chapter is to analyze the collective memory of the atomic bombing on Japan, with the case of the ROK in mind. How did individuals, who were isolated in wake of the atomic bomb, turn their bomb experiences in Hiroshima and Nagasaki into collective memory? Here, I will discuss issues surrounding the Cenotaph for the A-bomb Victims, Peace Memorial Park, and the notion of the "only A-bombed nation" as representative examples of collective memory.

Cenotaph for the A-bomb Victims and "Subject Debate"

Caption: Cenotaph for the A-bomb Victims. Photo by Satoko Oka Norimatsu.

The most representative memorial of Hiroshima's tragedy is the Cenotaph for the A-bomb Victims. The inscription on the memorial plaque that sits quietly under the arch-shaped monument says:

> Yasuraka ni nemutte kudasai (Please rest peacefully)
>
> Ayamachi wa kurikaeshimasenu kara (Will not repeat the wrong)
>
> [Translator's note: above is the translator's own literal translation. The official English translation of the inscription in English at the Cenotaph site is: "LET ALL SOULS HERE REST IN PEACE. FOR WE SHALL NOT REPEAT THE EVIL."]

When I look at this inscription, I feel strangely moved, but at the same time uncomfortable, as if that discomfort subdues the initial emotion. An impression of an object depends on the nature of the object, but is also influenced by

the perspective of the viewer. What feeling does this inscription invoke? Particularly, what is the "wrong"? Whose "wrong" is it? Is it the "wrong" of the United States that dropped the bomb, or the "wrong" of Japan that started the war? If the latter holds, does the "wrong" refer to the Pearl Harbor attack in 1941, or the invasion of "Manchuria" in 1930s? Or is it the colonization of Korea in 1910? The first Sino-Japanese War in 1894? How far does it go back? Even if it is the "wrong" of Japan, whose "wrong" is it? Is it the emperor who exercised unlimited power under the Constitution of the Empire of Japan? Or the Class-A war criminals who were executed? Or the approximately one thousand Class B and C war criminals who were given the death penalty for abuse of POWs and massacre of civilians across Southeast Asia? The latter include about twenty Koreans. If the atomic bombing is blamed on Japan's aggressive wars, do ordinary civilians of Hiroshima and Nagasaki have to pay the price? If so, is it because they supported the war on the home front instead of resisting the war of aggression? Questions over the subject of the "wrong" are endless.

We cannot attribute the ambiguity around the subject just to the grammatical structure of the Japanese language. The history of Hiroshima's post-war struggle with the atomic bomb tragedy has penetrated this subjectless inscription. It also has embraced both the emotion and the uncomfortable feeling that suppresses the emotion.

The first person who publicly problematized the inscription at the Cenotaph for the A-bomb Victims was Radha Binod Pal (1886–1967), a judge and legal scholar from India. He first got involved with the "subject debate" in 1946, when he was appointed as a judge representing India at the International Military Tribunal for the Far East (The Tokyo Trial). Pal insisted that the Japanese defendants were "not guilty," a position that won worship from the Japanese right-wing. They have paid special attention to Pal's words again in recent years, but let's make this a topic for another day. I will quote what Pal said about the Cenotaph. In November 1952, he is quoted as saying when visiting Hiroshima:

> Whose act does this "wrong" in "Will not repeat the wrong" refer to? Of course, it is the wrong by the Japanese. So, what kind of "wrong" is it? I have a doubt. It is the souls of the atomic bomb victims that we remember here and obviously it was not the Japanese that dropped the bomb. It would make sense to identify the party responsible for the bomb, then for that party to say "we will not repeat the wrong," If this "wrong" means the Pacific War, again it is not the responsibility of Japanese. Apparently, it was the Western countries that sowed the seeds of this war in order to conquer the East.[8]

Pal's argument is clear. Looking at the inscription of the Cenotaph that had left the subject of the "wrong" ambiguous, he thought the subject was obviously meant to be the Japanese. But it was the United States that dropped the bomb, so it is not right for Japan, which did not drop the bomb, to say that it won't repeat the "wrong." Even if the atomic bombing could be blamed on the war that Japan started, Pal reasoned that it was not an aggressive war, but rather one that attempted to protect the East from Western invasion. Some in Japan welcome this argument, and repeatedly quote Pal in explaining the history from the start of the war to the Tokyo Trial following Japan's defeat. Pal is well respected in Japanese society. The Pal-Shimonaka Memorial Hall in Hakone exhibits Pal's beloved chair, desk, and robe. There is a monument in honour of Pal at the Kyoto Ryozen Gokoku Shrine. Simply put, these monuments reflect Japanese society's wish to use external

authorities to cleanse the negative legacy of its aggressive war.

Hayashi Fusao (1903–1975), who is known for his 1963 book *Dai Toa Senso Kotei Ron* ("The Greater East Asia War was a Just War") that justifies Japan's aggressive wars, rekindled the debate over the Hiroshima Cenotaph inscription in August 1969. Hayashi said that the Atomic Bomb Dome and the Cenotaph "is a symbol of the beggar's spirit that takes advantage of an old wound to evoke pity and charity," and "for the Japanese spiritual rebirth, we must remove this monument of shame. Luckily Hiroshima has the ocean. There is no need for labour to carry it to the Pacific Ocean. Just dump the Atomic Bomb Dome and the Cenotaph into the depths of the Seto Inland Sea!"[9] Hayashi argued that these monuments must be removed as they represent the historical shame of Japanese defeat at the expense of many Japanese lives. "The Association for Correcting the Cenotaph for the Atomic-bomb Victims," launched in February 1970, wrote to the Hiroshima City Assembly:

> [The Cenotaph] attempts to erase the atrocious act that is unforgiveable by international law, with the inscription, "Please Rest Peacefully. Will Not Repeat the Wrong" … We should argue that this inscription is blasphemy against spirits of the over two hundred thousand people who were instantly killed by the atomic bomb… we must rebuild an elegant, immaculate, Japanese-style monument that does not tarnish our national pride and is appropriate for mourning the spirits of the martyrs of the nation who were victimized by the despicable atomic bomb. The existing inscription must be demolished accordingly.[10]

This kind of "criticism" by the political right is, in a way, geared towards a Japanese government and society that do not hold the United States accountable for using the atomic bombs.

However, if one regards the atomic bombing by the United States as a deserved consequence for its attack on Pearl Harbor, the logic that the atomic bombs were used to end Japan's invasion of Asia would not stand anymore. This is why, unless Hiroshima and Nagasaki squarely face Japan's responsibility for its aggressive war first, they cannot condemn the US for its atomic bombing and current nuclear armament and still stand by absolute pacifism. Such inconsistency led Japan to look at the issue of atomic bombing from the universal perspective of "nuclear weapons vs. humanity," detached from the "US vs. Japan" and "Japan vs. Asia" perspectives.

Saika Tadayoshi (1894–1961), a professor at Hiroshima University who composed the inscription on the Cenotaph for the A-bomb Victims, criticized Judge Pal in a protest letter:

> We, citizens of Hiroshima, and at the same time citizens of the world, pledge to the souls of the dead that we will not repeat the wrong—this is Hiroshima citizens' sentiment and call of conscience that speaks to the past, present and future of all humanity. [Pal states,] "while it says Hiroshima citizens will not repeat the wrong, wasn't the bomb dropped by foreigners? They should say 'we will not allow the wrong to be repeated,' instead of 'we will not repeat the wrong,' because the wrong was not done by Hiroshima citizens." However, these words will not speak to the world citizens. When one stands on such a narrow-minded position, one can no longer live up to the message of "not repeating the wrong" and one has no right to speak in front of the souls of the dead. (November 10, 1952)[11]

In March 1970, then mayor of Hiroshima Yamada Setsuo (1898–1975) said, "we will not change the inscription. The subject of the inscription is world humanity, and it [the inscription] is a warning and alert for the whole of humanity." Then on November 3, 1983, Hiroshima City placed a sign beside the Cenotaph that explains both in English and Japanese:

> The inscription is a pledge for all people to mourn those who were killed by the atomic bomb and that the wrong called war will not be repeated. Inscribed on it is the "heart of Hiroshima," which endures the sorrow of the past, overcomes the anger, wishes for the cooperation and prosperity of all humanity, and prays for the realization of true world peace.[12]

Controversy over the Cenotaph in Hiroshima continued. In August 1996, Kamei Shizuka, then an LDP (Liberal Democratic Party) member of the Lower House, visited Hiroshima and said, "this is Peace (Memorial) Park, but there is one disturbing monument," referring to the Cenotaph. "It says 'We will not repeat the wrong,' but it doesn't make sense, as it was not Japan that dropped the atomic bomb."[13] An incident later occurred in May 2005, when a right-wing young man vandalized the "wrong" part of the inscription of the Cenotaph.[14] Controversy continues, but officially, the interpretation of the Cenotaph inscription seems to have settled on that of Mayor Yamada's. Although the inscription does not clarify it, its subject was implied to be dehistoricized "humanity of the world" and "all people." In this process, we can see Hiroshima's agony in trying to transform the A-bomb tragedy to universal peace ideals.[15] By now, I think it is clear why I felt "moved" when I saw the Cenotaph as I described before, but the source of my concurrent "discomfort," which controls the initial "moved" emotion, is still not clear.

Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park and the Atomic Bomb Dome

A-bomb Dome at the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park. Photo by Satoko Oka Norimatsu.

With a fifteen-minute trolley ride from JR Hiroshima Station, you will suddenly see a huge park in the city centre. It is not a dense forest like Central Park in New York. It is not a bleak bed of asphalt in the middle of an urban centre, like what used to be the Yeouido Park in Korea, Red Square in Moscow, or Tiananmen Square. Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park is an artificial park, sandwiched between rivers, and decorated with a certain amount of green and asphalt.

This park, spanning 122,100 square meters, attracts many school trips and other tourists. According to the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, the number of visitors to the museum

in 2014 was 1,310,000. The population of Hiroshima City is approximately one million, so this means that the number of people that the museum draws from inside and outside the country exceeds the city's entire population. Hiroshima also hosts numerous anti-nuclear assemblies and peace conferences in August every year. It is a major hub for anti-nuclear and peace movements and a place to learn about the horror of nuclear weapons.

The history of the biggest urban district of Hiroshima, where 2,600 people once lived in 700 buildings, being turned into a park after the atomic bombing represents how Hiroshima changed its doorplate from a "major military city" to a "peace city." The city has not been free from criticism of its commercialization of "peace," though. As the *Asahi Shimbun* on August 4, 1965 described in its special series "65 Years After Hiroshima,"

> Tourists in Hiroshima, who suddenly surge when summer arrives, first visit the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum. While they enjoy a brief relief from the heat, they cut their visit rather short. Then they walk through the modern-looking peace park, enjoying all those avant-garde monuments that symbolize peace and prayer. Then they visit the A-bomb Dome, the building that seems to be on the verge of collapsing. In front of the Dome, tourists hear a story of an extraordinary hibakusha who received money for showing the keloid scars on their back. Then people go back to the bustling downtown, and tourist buses disappear into Miyajima Island and Itsukushima Shrine. Three years ago, the US magazine *Time* sarcastically laughed at such a Hiroshima, for making money from its past misery![16]

Author Günther Anders (1902–1992), who visited Hiroshima around the same time, said, "Travellers, give up Miyajima, give up Itsukushima, and stay in Hiroshima! Stay in Hiroshima and wander aimlessly around, from neighbourhood to neighbourhood, and bridge to bridge. Where is it that you are wandering? Who, and what are you walking upon?"[17] Günther was criticizing the commercialized "peace" of Hiroshima.

However, not many tourists notice an installation that represents one aspect of Japan's post-war pacifism that is incongruous with "peace." It is the tall flagpole with the Rising Sun (Hinomaru) flag that stands right beside the Cenotaph for the A-bomb Victims. Kurihara Sadako, a poet known for her numerous A-bomb themed poems, expressed in her 1986 poem called "Soredemo Peace Hiroshima [Still 'Peace, Hiroshima']"

> Hiroshima is a cruel city
>
> A Hinomaru flag swirls in the sky over the A-bomb Cenotaph in the Peace Park
>
> "Why is the Japanese Hinomaru red? It is red with my son's blood"
>
> The flag is still for the country, for the Emperor
>
> It flies, saying "die, die"
>
> There is no "Rest in Peace" under the Hinomaru Flag. No RIP
>
> Still, "Peace, peace, peace Hiroshima."[18]

With this poem, Kurihara harshly criticizes the superficial "peace," arguing that there is no "Rest in Peace" as long as the peace ideals represented by Hiroshima and its Peace Memorial Park reside under the Hinomaru flag, which encouraged "death for the Emperor."

While Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park and Museum are symbolic places that represent Japan's and Hiroshima's firm commitment to peace, Kure City, less than an hour's drive from Hiroshima hosts a Self Defense Forces base, and the Yamato Museum (Kure Maritime Museum) attracts even more visitors than the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum.[19] Within the same prefecture of Hiroshima, one exhibit represents regret over the war and anti-nuclear ideals, and the other displays a warship that played a central role in the aggressive war. This is proof that the idea of peace, drawn from the experience of being attacked by the atomic bomb, is contained in a specific time and period within Hiroshima.

The notion of "peace" that fills Hiroshima, the A-bombed city, has become a keyword that signifies the "war, the atomic bomb, and reconstruction" in one bundle, but it is necessary to be aware that the other side of this word carries the contradiction and agony that the post-war society of Hiroshima and Japan as a whole have embraced. Therefore, we need to carefully trace how Hiroshima has used the A-bomb experience to journey towards "peace" in its rebirth process, which revolved around the initial reconstruction plans, Peace Memorial Park, the A-bomb Dome, and the Cenotaph.

Redevelop, or remain as ruins? Debate over the "reconstruction" of Hiroshima

On August 6, 1945, a single atomic bomb instantly turned one of the then seven major cities of Japan into ashes. Approximately seventy percent of the buildings were destroyed, and about 140,000 people were killed by the end of 1945. Japan surrendered less than ten days after that, and Hiroshima faced the challenge of reconstruction under a new order. "Reconstruction" and "peace" were the words that symbolized the post-war Hiroshima. But these two words were not naturally connected and accepted by the citizens of Hiroshima.

Caption: Illustration based on Toge Sankichi's 1946 essay "Hiroshima 1965."

Source: https://www.city.hiroshima.lg.jp/www/contents/1391050531094/html/common/5d775774009.htm.

In 1946, *Chugoku Shimbun*, a newspaper that mostly circulated in Hiroshima and its vicinity, held an essay contest with the theme of "Construction of Utopia Hiroshima." There were one hundred and seventy entries, and the first prize went to "Hiroshima in 1965" by Toge Sankichi (1917–1953), an atomic-bomb survivor and poet. His work represented a then-Hiroshima citizen's thoughts on the city's reconstruction. The illustration[20] based on Toge's essay reveals that the Hiroshima twenty years after the bombing that he envisaged was very different from what Hiroshima became. The city would expand radially, centred on a tower, mostly with green space. With the

assumption of a population of three hundred thousand, it envisions wider streets with 40% of the land as parks and green areas. It was a plan for virtually a whole new city, rather than a "reconstruction." Nowhere in the plan was there any idea to build a facility to mourn the A-bomb victims.

Chugoku Shimbun ran a series "Daydream Peace City Hiroshima" in 1949. This illustrated a Manhattan-like near-future city filled with skyscrapers centred in the area which is now the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park. It proposed connecting Hiroshima City and Kure City on the port side with buses with cafeterias in them, and 400-ton sightseeing ships cruising on the seven canals that go through Hiroshima.[21] Such "Hiroshima development theories" that *Chugoku Shimbun* repeated were a sharp criticism of the "ruins preservation theories" to be discussed later in this chapter. There is no way to know now to what extent such visions reflected the sentiment of Hiroshima citizens then, but it is clear that the "development theories" by *Chugoku Shimbun* were very different from the "anti-development theories," such as the "ruins preservation theories" and current Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park. The "development theories" were better described as "urban creation theories," detached from Hiroshima's history and living space.

Differing from such "urban creation theories," evening newspaper *Yukan Hiroshima*'s 6-part article "Hiroshima, To Be Completed 25 Years Later" that ran starting July 29, 1948, offered concepts that could have inspired the current Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park. The proposed design in the article envisioned a huge "peace fountain" that resembled a Greek-style amphitheatre in the area that is the Peace Park now, and a "peace spire" on the north side of the city for which marble pillars would be procured from around the world.[22] But this proposal does not reference anything related to remembering and mourning of the victims, and does not reference the A-bomb Dome, which is now symbolic of Hiroshima's tragedy. Nor does it suggest restoring the area that is the Peace Park now, the bustling city centre that was turned into ashes by the bombing, to a "space of livelihood" either. This proposal did contain the concept of "peace," but no ideas for remembering and mourning the victims. Its idea of re-developing the devastated area around the A-bomb hypocentre into a city centre with rows of skyscrapers had commonality with the "urban creation theories."

It was not the case that no one called for the preservation of the Hiroshima ruins as evidence of history. For example, Takara Tomiko, Deputy Mayor of Kure City, spoke at the "Hiroshima City Reconstruction Roundtable" held on February 22, 1946. She made clear her opposition to the redevelopment of the hypocentre by saying, "I want miles and miles of ruins to remain as they are, as a memorial cemetery that symbolizes eternal world peace. Is it a good idea to build a city on the land where so many people died? A new Hiroshima does not have to go back to the same place. We can find a new area near the city and re-build Hiroshima there."[23] Takara believed that the ruins themselves were the best symbol for peace, and re-developing the land with so many souls of the victims would be disgrace to the dead. Considering that there could have been still remains of victims left all over the area at the beginning of 1946, such "ruins preservation theory" probably represented the sentiment of the victims and their families.

There were more concrete "ruins preservation theories" too. Kuwahara Ichio, the president of Asahi Co., Ltd., published "A New Hiroshima Construction Outline" in the November 20, 1945 edition of the *Chugoku Shimbun*, three months before Takara's statement. To summarize, first, a new Hiroshima should not be a reproduction of the old Hiroshima;

instead, it should be "based on the new concept of expressing a new ideal of the people of defeated Japan." Second, the Outline called for a new Hiroshima as a "birthplace of world peace," by creating a cemetery in the one square kilometre area surrounding the hypocentre, preserving the next square kilometre as ruins, and building social facilities in the next square kilometre area. A memorial tower for the two hundred thousand victims and an "end of the war memorial hall" would be built within the cemetery area. Religious and social facilities would be built in the "social facilities" area, and would be called "religious/peace zones."[24] Kuwahara's concept was ground-breaking. His proposal, based on the ideal of a "birthplace of world peace," declared a complete departure from the war-time system. It was refreshing. It also clearly opposed the redevelopment of the area surrounding the hypocentre. The significance of the A-bomb experience was preserving the ruins, but still building necessary social facilities. The proposal reflected such significance in the urban planning.

The pro-development *Chugoku Shimbun* opposed these "ruins preservation theories" from early on. For example, on September 5, 1945, barely a month after the atomic bombing, its editorial denounced such calls for preservation by saying, "we, who love our native land, cannot but express our outrage at those who irresponsibly and shamelessly call the ruined Hiroshima a 'war memorial' and even demand permanent preservation of this boundless burnt land." It went on to say, with heroic determination, "our white blood cell count may be dropping. At worst, we might fall dead during the reconstruction. But those should not get in the way of our do-or-die resolve, to protect the delta land that we inherited from our ancestors."[25]

Such fierce argument carried on the wartime Japanese mentality that remained strong in Hiroshima before the US military arrived, at a time when occupation policy wasn't known yet. During the war, the word "reconstruction" was used as a spiritual morale booster that stressed patriotism, love of native land, and love of family, as people had to rebuild after the air raids and other wartime destruction.[26] *Chugoku Shimbun*'s argument against the preservation of ruins was not free from such war-time mentality. But from this editorial, we can indirectly infer another reason for their opposition to "ruins preservation theories," particularly in these words: "our white blood cell count may be dropping. At worst, we might fall dead during the reconstruction." At that time, there were more and more indirect A-bomb victims from the massive residual radioactivity and the "black rain," an aftereffect of the nuclear fallout. It is possible that behind those calls for preservation of ruins was fear of residual radioactivity. In fact, the *Asahi Shimbun* reported a theory that there "would be no life in Hiroshima and Nagasaki for the next seventy years," citing a US source, on September 22, 1945.

What position did the city of Hiroshima take in response to such debates in the private sector? Some of the reconstruction plans that were considered by the city right after the atomic bombing mostly discussed concrete aspects like the appropriate population size, transportation infrastructure, and the revamping of the Ota River, and did not yet go as far as considering abstract aspects such as "peace" and "remembering and mourning the victims." The policy speech that the then Mayor of Hiroshima gave to the city assembly on December 6, 1945 only refers to reconstructing Hiroshima as a "city for production and trade." In fact, other than the private proposals that I have introduced so far, there was hardly any official proposal by the city to place "peace" as a central idea for its concrete reconstruction planning. The Hiroshima city assembly's resolution of November 1945 has a sentence that says, "As a city destroyed by war damage unprecedented in world history, Hiroshima

must be reborn as an ideal cultural city, one that lives up to the name of a world peace memorial city,"[27] but the city appears to have merely inserted "peace," a buzzword that was popular immediately after Japan's defeat in the war. It was not presented as a core value for reconstruction planning. As the Higashikuni Naruhiko Cabinet, formed August 17, 1945 declared, "Japan must be reborn as a peace nation, in line with the Potsdam Declaration that aimed to turn our nation into a 'peace loving people,'" immediately after the defeat, words like "peace" and "cultural nation" were being used like magic words.[28] Hiroshima City's use of the word "peace" can be regarded in that light.

Paradoxically, it was the reconstruction expense that eventually led Hiroshima City to place "peace" as a pillar of its reconstruction planning. The biggest obstacle to the reconstruction of Hiroshima was money. According to the "Public Opinion Poll for the Hiroshima City Reconstruction" conducted in September 1946 by the Hiroshima Chamber of Commerce, 50% of respondents answered the "expense issue" when asked what they thought was the biggest obstacle reconstruction.[29] The fact that the Hiroshima Chamber of Commerce, the core of the business community and the leader of the pro-development school, initiated such a poll shows how enthusiastic the business community was for reconstructing Hiroshima as soon as possible.

The goals of the Japanese government in the reconstruction of Hiroshima were relatively clear. Right after the war, the number of war-damaged (e.g., by air raids) cities in Japan was 215, of which the total damaged area reached 64,500 hectares. The Japanese government established a centrally-controlled city reconstruction system by creating the War Damage Reconstruction Board in November 1945, and issued the "Basic Policy for Reconstruction of War Damaged Areas" the following month. Since this Policy required that each municipality raise its own funds for reconstruction, Hiroshima could not expect special financial assistance from the central government. At this point, the Japanese government was treating the atomic bomb damage no differently than the damage by air raids in other cities. To secure government funds, Hiroshima City had to claim the atomic bomb damage as unique. On July 10, 1947, then Mayor Hamai Shinzo emphasized in his essay "My Thoughts on the Hiroshima Reconstruction,"

> The war damage in Hiroshima has special uniqueness since it was inflicted by the atomic bomb, a new weapon with the most formidable power in human history. As we all know, the world is paying attention to the situation surrounding Hiroshima's war damage and how the city recovers from it. Obviously, the damage to Hiroshima was one of the factors ending World War II, and one might say that Hiroshima City became a monumental city for the restoration of peace. This is why we want to set the creation of a peaceful and beautiful international city here as our goal for reconstructing Hiroshima, to give true meaning to those who sacrificed their lives to be pillars of peace, and to commemorate eternal peace. This is not just about wishing for peace, but I do believe this is the wish of all peace-loving people of the world.[30]

Here, Hamai claims differences between Hiroshima and other war-damaged cities: it is not just the scale of the damage, but Hiroshima is gaining international attention because its "damage" was one of the "factors for ending the WWII," and Hiroshima became a "monumental city for peace restoration." The perspective seeing damage to Hiroshima as different from other war-related damage is

similar to the perspective of differentiating "Hibaku dead" (deaths caused by the atomic bombing) from other war dead. It might have also contributed to the formation of a culture that discriminates between two kinds of deaths—a dichotomy that regards those who die from the A-bomb as victims versus soldiers who die in battlefields as victimizers.

Hiroshima's claim to uniqueness brought about legislation called the "Hiroshima Peace Memorial City Construction Act" (August 6, 1949, hereafter "Peace Construction Act"). As the first article of this law stipulates, it "has an aim of constructing Hiroshima City as a Peace Memorial City, to symbolize the ideal of sincere efforts for realizing eternal peace." Hiroshima, with this legislation, started to push forward its "peace city" plan with government assistance.

After all, it was the idea of peace that connected "ruins" and "reconstruction." The notion of peace exerted the magic-like power mentioned earlier, and became a driving force for gaining governmental support. Support for "ruins preservation theories" that called for preservation of the hypocentre as a symbol of peace quickly lost support with the emergence of the call for city development in the name of peace. Here, "peace" and "development" merged without contradiction.

A view of the A-bomb Dome in the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park from the Hiroshima Orizuru Tower. Photo by Satoko Oka Norimatsu.

Isolating A-bomb Memory from the Dome

How was the decision made to preserve the A-bomb Dome, now the most prominent symbol in Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park? As discussed above, the "ruin preservation theories" disappeared as "peace development theories" emerged. The A-bombed structure, which stood out in a flattened Hiroshima, could have been the first target of demolition.

The A-bomb Dome, which symbolizes the tragedy of Hiroshima, was originally the Hiroshima Prefectural Industrial Promotion Hall, designed by Czechoslovakian architect Jan Letzel (1880–1926) in 1915. During the first Sino-Japanese War, the Imperial Headquarters was established in Hiroshima as a base for attacking Korea and continental China, giving the city a momentum for its modern expansion and development. The Hiroshima Prefectural Industrial Promotion Hall was a showcase of the Japanese Empire and its colonialism throughout the Asia-Pacific. The Dome, with only part of the skeletal framework left after the A-bomb destroyed the arch-shaped roof, appeared like a representation of the demise of the Empire of Japan.

Chugoku Shimbun ran a roundtable with the Mayor of Hiroshima City and Governor of Hiroshima Prefecture on August 6, 1951. Mayor Hamai Shinzo said, "there is no way to preserve [the A-bomb Dome]. It is not worth spending money to keep it," and Governor Ohara Hiroo said, "if it's for inducing hostility, it is another matter, but if it's a peace memorial, there is no need to preserve it."[31] Those two individuals who had the biggest influence on the park plan both held negative views about preservation of the A-bomb Dome. In fact, the Dome was not regarded as an important structure in the discussion of "peace

development theories."

Mayor Hamai, who was reluctant to preserve the A-bomb Dome, was forty years old at the time of the bombing and was Chief of the Ration Section and the Ration Team Leader at the Air Raid Defense Headquarters of Hiroshima City. He is a hibakusha, who suffered leg injuries and minor A-bomb symptoms. After serving as a deputy mayor, he served four consecutive terms as mayor, and people called him the "A-bomb Mayor." He was President of the Hiroshima City chapter of the Japan Council Against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs (Gensuikyo). He was politically progressive, but had no political party affiliation. Mayor Hamai said in 1965:

> "Some hibakusha do not want the A-bomb Dome because every time they see it, it brings up painful memories and hurts their feelings. My wife, who lost many family members, brings guests to the A-bomb Museum, but never enters it herself."
>
> "If the Dome were located on private property, it would have been long gone. That area has the highest real estate value. In rebuilding Hiroshima, we tried to eliminate the scars of the A-bomb, starting from where it was most visible. Then for future generations, we gathered all the terrible memories in one place, which was the museum. It would cost tens of millions of yen to demolish and rebuild the Dome, so honestly, I left the issue untouched, intending to let public opinion take the lead. Right now, we are investigating how much the reinforcement cost would be to preserve it. If we decide to do so, we will probably finance it with donations from the world. After all, it is a 'symbol of Hiroshima.'"[32]

As reasons to be reluctant about the preservation of the A-bomb Dome, Hamai cites both expenses and the possibility of inflicting pain on the hibakusha, because it could bring about painful memories. In Hirai's statements, there is no hint of consideration of the wartime role that the Dome building originally played as an Industrial Promotion Hall.

The society-wide debate over the preservation of the A-bomb Dome only started in the 1960s, when the dilapidation of the building was deemed serious. Those who favored preservation thought that the skeletal structure expressed the true horror of the A-bomb and would better serve as a peace symbol of Hiroshima than a brand new building. Those who supported demolition thought that it would not only invoke painful memory and trauma, but also ruin the surrounding scenery and get in the way of the city's redevelopment. The Hiroshima City assembly's resolution was as follows:

> Along with the prevention of nuclear war, and complete prohibition of atomic and hydrogen bombs, it is the yearning of hibakusha, all citizens of Hiroshima, and all peace-loving people of the country to preserve the A-bomb Dome. Preservation of the Dome for future generations is one of our obligations to the spirits of over 200,000 people who were killed by the atomic bombing and peace-wishing people in the world.[33]

Driven by this resolution, the A-bomb Dome was preserved with donations from across the country, and was designated as a national historic site in the 1990s. It was then designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1996. In the review committee for World Heritage designation, the United States opposed and China abstained. This is how the

Industrial Promotion Hall that symbolized the economic expansion of Japanese imperialism and the A-bomb Dome that symbolized "Peace City Hiroshima" were separated, once and for all. The history of the A-bomb Dome, as a peace symbol, started on August 6, 1945, not 1915. Also, as the A-bomb Dome was preserved and became the only symbol, other ruins disappeared. Among the A-bomb affected buildings within the 2-kilometre radius of the hypocentre, four buildings were dismantled between 1945 and 1955 (three private, one public); 17 between 1956 and 1975 (two of whose owners are unknown, thirteen private, two public); nine between 1976 and 1995 (six private, two public, one owner unknown); and two between 1996 and 2005. A total of thirty-two A-bomb affected buildings disappeared during these time periods. Now seventeen remain, including the A-bomb Dome, which is also the only one with a preservation plan.[34] "Preservation" of the A-bomb Dome resulted in concentration of the memory of A-bomb "ruins" in a single place. It fulfilled the function of separating the inside of the ruins from the outside.

Restoration of the Subject and the Idea of "The Only A-bombed Nation"

> Countless people in Nagasaki suffered terribly from the atomic bombing, but getting my head around it, it ended the war, and now I think it could not have been helped.

On June 30, 2007, Kyuma Fumio, a Member of Parliament elected from Nagasaki Prefecture and then Minister of Defense said the words above during his speech at a university. His statement became a big controversy. Newspapers made front-page headlines about his statement and their editorials criticized Kyuma, saying, for example, this statement "differs greatly from the national sentiment on the atomic bomb." Day after day, peace groups, including A-bomb survivors' groups, issued statements criticizing and protesting Kyuma's statement. However, one could say that it was a statement based on the fact that Japan achieved its economic development under the US nuclear umbrella and the Japan-US military alliance, while the country never once officially protested the atomic bombing. To put it simply, Kyuma believed that the atomic bombing eventually brought about Japan's prosperity, and that understanding led to his statement that the atomic bombing "could not have been helped." The question we must ask here is, when criticizing historical understanding like Kyuma's, who do we identify as its subject, and on what ground? Here arises the problem of so-called "Hibaku nationalism," which positions Japan as the "only A-bombed nation." It is an idea that subjectifies the Hiroshima experience as a national memory.

For example, Kamei Hisaoki of People's New Party said at a press conference that same day, "Japan should continue our call and our action for nuclear abolition as the only A-bombed nation."[35] The Japanese Medical and Dental Practitioners for the Improvement of Medical Care sent a protest letter to Prime Minister Abe, saying, "it was unacceptable that a cabinet member of the only A-bombed nation in the world made such a statement."[36] Media reacted similarly. On July 3, an editorial committee member of the *Mainichi Shimbun* wrote an article titled "Gap Between 'Abolition' and 'Umbrella,'" referring to the "history of Japan being 'the only A-bombed nation.'"[37] The Letters to the Editor section of *Asahi Shimbun* on July 4 and 5 ran letters concerning the Kyuma statement, among which expressions such as "How could the defense minister of the only A-bombed nation…?"[38] was used. *Akahata*, the Japan Communist Party's organ, in its July 3rd edition, demanded that the prime minister

remove Kyuma from the ministerial position, and argued it was "utterly irresponsible on the part of a minister who is directly responsible for the national security of 'the only A-bombed nation' which should lead the world in nuclear weapons abolition." The next day, *Akahata* again used the phrase "the only A-bombed nation" in two of its articles. Media, from left to right, condemned Kyuma's statement. In fact, Kyuma's words were nothing new. On October 31, 1975, Emperor Hirohito also said, upon returning from the United States, that the atomic bombing "could not have been helped" while expressing "a feeling of remorse" regarding the atomic bombing. Hibakusha organizations replied by sending letters of protest.

In October 2006, when the Democratic People's Republic of Korea announced that it had successfully conducted a nuclear test, "the only A-bombed nation" expression was used frequently in media. Both Lower and Upper Houses of Japan in their protest statement said, "in view of the fact that our country is the only A-bombed nation, which experienced the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, our Houses oppose nuclear tests by any nation. We lodge a serious protest against North Korea's nuclear test, and strongly demand that North Korea immediately abandon all of their nuclear weapons and nuclear plans." The Japan Communist Party also protested saying, "Japan is the only A-bombed nation and North Korea's neighbour. It is also the chairing country of the United Nations Security Council this month."[39] The Komeito Party also said, "As the only A-bombed nation, our country should make its position against all nuclear testing clear. Now is the time to exert our leadership towards nuclear abolition."[40] Then the leading opposition party acting leader Kan Naoto said, "For Japan, the only A-bombed nation that has maintained a restrained position regarding nuclear proliferation and criticized it, the issue of nuclear proliferation across Northeast Asia and North Korea's action have posed a serious security crisis."[41]

The expression "the only A-bombed nation" is a modifier that is most likely used when presenting post-war Japan as an agent of peace. There is no other expression that contributes more to the collective memory of Japan as a "peace nation" than this expression, ubiquitously used from the political left to right, which claims Japan is the only nation that has suffered from atomic bombing.

Actually, there seems to be little research done on how the notion of "the only A-bombed nation" was invented and how it became widespread. Of course, it was not that there was no counterargument. For example, Ishii Kazuhiko, referring to his finding that sixty-two percent of the local governments' non-nuclear declarations used the "only A-bombed nation" expression, points out that it goes against historical fact, given that hibakusha include many Koreans and US POWs, and that the Bikini Atoll hydrogen bomb experiment afflicted many indigenous people. Likewise, authors such as Ichiba Junko, Haruna Mikio, and Nakajima Tatsumi problematized the Japanese "Hibaku nationalism" contained in the modifier "the only A-bombed nation," based on the existence of many Korean and hibakusha of other nationalities.[42]

Their studies were inspired by the Korean hibakusha movements that erupted from around the mid-1960s in the ROK. By shedding light on the existence of Korean hibakusha who had been buried in historical darkness until the 1960s, and by extending governmental hibakusha support to non-Japanese survivors where it was previously only available to Japanese survivors, these studies transformed the A-bomb experience of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, which had been bound by Japanese nationalism, to an "open and universal experience," in both qualitative and quantitative terms. These studies identified the origin of "Hibaku nationalism" in the Japanese

post-war memory based on the "incorrect assertion" that only Japanese people experienced the horror of atomic bombs, and by delving into the "new understanding" that it was not just the Japanese who went through the terror of those bombs, attempted to dissect "hibaku nationalism." In a nutshell, these studies regarded the expression "the only A-bombed nation" as a result of neglecting the existence of non-Japanese hibakusha. But while these studies focused heavily on the inadequacy of the expression of "the only A-bombed nation," they paid very little attention to how it became established as such a commonly used expression. They overlooked the logic that dictated its use and transformed the A-bomb experience of Hiroshima and Nagasaki into a national memory. Korean hibakusha were certainly unrecognized until the 1960s, with no exceptions found even in the anti-nuclear movement. For example, a Zainichi Korean delegate representing Korea at the No. 3 sectional meeting of the Japan preparatory meeting of a world conference held in July 1955, said,

> Even when I submitted information about Korean hibakusha based on my research, it was turned down, for the reason that 'there were no family registration records.' I wonder if it was for fear of retaliation that may occur if the information became public. If they know the number of hibakusha was three hundred thousand, they should have known about Korean victims too, but they don't disclose it. For the sake of humanitarianism and love of humanity, the number of Korean hibakusha should be made available and be included in the research documentation. There should be relief measures for Hiroshima and Nagasaki A-bomb victims. There have been many calls for help coming from Korea, but there is not much we can do unless Japan helps.[43]

According to the record of the first Standing Committee of the Japan Council Against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs (October 22, 1955), a participant from the General Association of Korean Residents in Japan asked, "For the investigation of Korean hibakusha in Hiroshima that we are attempting, can I have some answers?"[44] In the victims' conference at the August 6, 1995 Hiroshima Conference, a Korean hibakusha said that there were at least four thousand Korean victims.[45] These are examples of the Korean hibakusha's call for attention seen in various records, but there is no trace of anti-nuclear movement organizations taking them seriously and acting on their concerns.

First, let us look at how the Parliament used "the only A-bombed nation."[46] It first appeared in Diet minutes on April 30, 1955. Takasaki Tatsunosuke, Chief of the Economic Council Agency who represented Japan at the "Asian-African Conference" held in Bandung, Indonesia at the end of 1954, reported at the Upper House plenary session upon return, "Our country, in a unique position as the only nation afflicted by atomic bombs, persistently made our case, in agreement with countries like Pakistan and Turkey that concurrently undertook the issues of disarmament and prohibition of weapons of mass destruction." There was a statement along the same line even before that. Oka Ryoichi of the Rightist Socialist Party of Japan said in the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Lower House, "We are not saying this from an anti-American view, but Japan is the only nation in the world that was victimized by atomic bombs. The release of atomic energy was the peak of the world scientists' wisdom, and the weaponized version of it instantly took the lives of 230,000 fellow Japanese, and it has been proved that modern medicine is totally useless in the event of such a disaster." After that, "the only A-bombed nation" became a phrase representing the

Japanese A-bomb experience and the subsequent determination for world peace. The frequency of its use jumped during the 1980s. At least during that decade, there was no significant difference between the conservative and progressive voices. The phrase was used seventy times in the Diet during 1981. The LDP used it most frequently, a total of twenty-four times. The Japan Socialist Party used it sixteen times, and the Japan Communist Party used it twenty-one times.

Looking at non-nuclear declarations of local governments, as of 2015, out of the three hundred and fourteen members of the National Council of Japan Nuclear Free Local Authorities, I was able to obtain 305 "non-nuclear declarations" (including partial duplications). Of those, 158 declarations (51.8%) used the phrase "the only A-bombed nation." There were no significant regional differences.[47] In Hiroshima Prefecture, among the total of 17 local governments that have issued a non-nuclear statement, only Hatsukaichi City used "the only A-bombed nation" in its 1985 declaration. Eight of them, including Hiroshima City, used "the first A-bombed prefecture in the world." In Nagasaki Prefecture, seven out of 16 local governments have used this expression. It is seen frequently in Nagasaki, which experienced the A-bomb like Hiroshima. If you analyze chronologically, three local governments that originally issued non-nuclear declarations at the end of 1950s, Kamakura City (Kanagawa), Handa City (Aichi), and Mishima City (Shizuoka) did not use "the only A-bombed nation." But in the 1980s, at the peak of the non-nuclear declaration movement, 91 (50.8%) out of the total 179 declarations used "the only A-bombed nation." 22 (50.0%) out of the total of 44 in 1990s. 45 (60.0%) out of the total of 79 used it in the 2000s. The frequency of the use of "the only A-bombed nation" increased from the 1980s to 2000s. Hirakata City of Osaka Prefecture announced that it would remove the expression "the only A-bombed people in the world" from its non-nuclear declaration in 1989. The reason was that "there were also Koreans and Chinese who were forcefully mobilized to Hiroshima and Nagasaki, so it is wrong to say Japanese were the only victims,"[48] but such a case was extremely rare.

Let us next look at the peace declarations of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and the notion of "the only A-bombed nation." Of the 68 "Peace Declarations" by Hiroshima City from 1947 to 2015, "the only A-bombed nation" appears ten times (14.7%), beginning in 1978, then from 1983 to 1987, 2003, 2004, 2007, and 2014. If we count from 1978 when it was first used, it is ten out of 38 (26.3%). In Nagasaki, "the only A-bombed nation" appeared for the first time in 1987, then 2002, and 2004.[49]

Let us look at the media. Scanning *Asahi Shimbun* from the 1940s to the 1970s, there were only three mentions in 1967, and six in 1975. But then the number suddenly jumped to 19 in 1985, then kept rising until the 1995 peak. It decreased after that but maintained double-digit numbers.[50]

How about peace movements? Among the activist organizations' statements and meeting minutes, the first use of "the only" expression that I identified was "The Impacts of the Hydrogen Bomb Experiment at the Bikini Atoll and Movements for Banning A- and H-Bombs (A Report to the World)," published by the National Council for the Signature Campaign for Banning A- and H-Bombs in January 1955. This literature cites "the fact that Japanese people are the first and only people who underwent the atomic bombing" as a reason for why the movements for banning A- and H-bombs were growing in Japan.[51] The use of such expressions continued after that. At the 3rd World Conference Against A- and H-Bombs International Preparatory Meeting held before the World Conference of 1957, Yasui Kaoru, Chair of the National Council and also Chair of the International Preparatory Centre made a

presentation called "Confrontation with the Atomic War System." There, Yasui positioned Japan, the host country for the world conference, as "the only country that suffered from A- or H-bombs in the world."[52] The "Yaizu Declaration," which was issued in 1959 to mark the fifth anniversary of the Bikini Atoll nuclear damage, also defines Japanese people as "the only A-bombed people in the world, to prevent the reoccurrence of the tragedy."[53] In 1959, Kanagawa Prefecture sent a message to the Japan Council against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs describing Japanese people and Japanese movements as "the only A-bombed people in the world who initiated the movements to ban A- and H-bombs ahead of other nations and made great contributions for projects to maintain world peace."[54] The Japan Council against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs, in their April 5, 1960 protest letter against the Soviet Union that declared a restart of their nuclear testing, also defined themselves as "an organization in the only A-bombed nation of the world."[55] Subsequent use of the phrase was difficult to trace, due to the scarcity of materials, but from these statements by political parties and statements by social organizations, it is unlikely that the frequency of the use of the phrase decreased after the 1950s.

Considering the fact that there are some variations depending on who uses the phrase, I believe the following conclusion can be drawn from the above analysis. The use of "the only A-bombed nation" started around the time of the "Lucky Dragon No. 5 Incident" (translator's note: the 1954 U.S. hydrogen bomb experiment in the Bikini Atoll that irradiated many fishing boats including Lucky Dragon No. 5). It was originally used by anti-nuclear peace organizations and some members of the Diet. Its frequency increased from around the 1980s, in newspapers, non-nuclear declarations of local governments, "Peace Declaration" speeches of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and in the Diet. It then spiked after the end of the Cold War in 1990, particularly after suspicions arose of the DPRK developing nuclear weapons. Ichiba Junko claims that the expression "the only A-bombed nation" was widely used from the 1950s, assuming that it was because people didn't know about Korean hibakusha then. However, that cannot explain the sudden increase in the use of the phrase since the 1990s, at which point the existence of Korean hibakusha was already known to society. "The only A-bombed nation" notion was not the result of ignorance about non-Japanese hibakusha; along with that ignorance, or independent of it, it became widespread in Japanese society from the 1980s, then suddenly increased from the 1990s in wake of the end of the Cold War, particularly since the "threat" of the DPRK started to be emphasized.

Of course, the phrase "the only A-bombed nation" is a representation that became popular and was established in the process of drawing from and evoking Japan's past war and its history of being the target of the atomic bombings. If the inscription at the Cenotaph for the A-bomb Victims in Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park, "Please rest peacefully. Will not repeat the wrong" attempted to denationalize and universalize the A-bomb experience by establishing the structure of nuclear weapons versus humanity, dissecting the structure of the victimizer and victims, and by making the subject of the statement vague, then the representation "the only A-bombed nation" are nothing but the process of reconstructing Japanese people as victims in a nationally-framed time and space. In other words, "the only A-bombed nation" is a present problem that has its origin in the 1950s. On one hand, this phrase became widely used as a response to the process in which the framework of "Japan and Japanese as leaders of peace" was about to "rupture" through the "discovery" of Korean hibakusha. On the other hand, it was a phrase that became popular in order to reinforce the structure of benefits brought on during the Cold War, which were bound to

change in the wake of the Cold War's dissolution.

Conclusion

From the above arguments, the following is clear.

First, as it transpired in the controversy over the inscription at the Cenotaph for the A-bomb Victims, questions of the responsibility for the bombing were left out of the discourse from an early stage. As in the cases that I introduced and individual hibakusha's journals illustrate, anger towards the United States was confined within the private realm and quickly disappeared from public discourse. This is likely related to the ironic fact that Japan enjoyed economic prosperity and peace under the US nuclear umbrella. Pursuing US responsibility for the atomic bombing would entail recognition of the origin of the war, which might invite greater attention to Japanese war responsibilities. If one holds the United States, which claims that the atomic bombing was done to end the war early, accountable, one inevitably will be asked about Japan's responsibility for its colonial rule. Hence, until Korean hibakusha appeared as witnesses of colonial rule in the 1980s, the "whose wrong?" discussion was kept ambiguous and the line between victimizers and victims remained blurred.

Second, the expression "the only A-bombed nation" was seen here and there from the 1950s, then more frequently since the 1980s, in newspapers and in statements of local and national governments. It was established as a "representative phrase" for remembering the atomic bomb experiences of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Then the Cold War ended, and from around the 2000s, when the DPRK's nuclear issue emerged in conversation, the trend accelerated. As the Cold War ended and the security system surrounding Japan became more uncertain, the use of "the only A-bombed nation" sharply increased, in order to both reaffirm the A-bomb experience as a national experience and to establish Japan's national identity.

If the debate over the subject of the Cenotaph inscription brought about denationalization and universalization of the A-bomb experience, the proliferation of the phrase "the only A-bombed nation" was a process to reconstruct Japanese people into a national framework as victims. Then, if the all-out national concentration of memory through "exclusion" and "integration" of the A-bomb experience appeared as anti-nuclear public sentiment and a "nuclear allergy," we must ask why this is expressed in the phrase "the only A-bombed nation."

The "integration" here means the proliferation and national sharing of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki A-bomb experiences, which constituted one axis of Japanese post-war pacifism. "Exclusion" here refers to a function that removes and marginalizes, from the memory space, the experiences that are expelled from memory made by "integration" by means of equalization, standardization and nationalization of memory. It is an inevitable result that stems purposefully and consciously from the process of "individual memory" changing into "collective memory." Non-Japanese hibakusha are excluded from the collective memory of the atomic bomb experience, and anger towards the United States, a natural sentiment of hibakusha, gets absorbed into the monster called "pacifism" or "universalization" of the A-bomb cause. The corollary of this process is the expression "the only A-bombed nation."

Translator's note: *In the endnotes, references are listed under their original Japanese titles, without translation, for the convenience of readers who may wish to locate the sources in the Japanese or Korean language. URLs are*

updated.

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Notes

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