BODIES OF MEMORY

NARRATIVES OF WAR IN POSTWAR JAPANESE CULTURE, 1945–1970

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The Bomb, Hirohito, and History: The Foundational Narrative of Postwar Relations between Japan and the United States

> Japan is like a woman that he can't live with, and can't live without, you know.
>
> *Michael Crichton,* Rising Sun

> WAR IS PEACE.
>
> *George Orwell,* 1984

THE EMOTIONALLY charged discussions on both sides of the Pacific over the Smithsonian Institution's attempt to represent the atomic bomb in a larger historical context demonstrate how deeply American and Japanese societies are still invested in memories of World War II.[1] Each country's "orthodox" history surrounding the use of the bomb presents a diametrically opposing view: as the Smithsonian Institution's drastic scaling down of its exhibit suggests, the prevalent view among Americans is that the use of the bomb was justified and that the bomb brought peace. Many Japanese, on the other hand, argue that the bomb was a cruel weapon that should never have been used: peace could have been attained without it. Each side's characterization of the bomb, however, is ultimately vested in a moral judgment that condemns the two countries to conflicting relations.

Memories of World War II may still linger in the two countries' perceptions of each other; however, their actual postwar relations have easily overcome the mutual animosity fostered throughout the war years.[2] Immediately after the war, Japan and the United States, the two most adversarial enemies in the Pacific, became the two closest allies. In the Cold War world order, the United States–Japan alliance provided the basis for U.S. policies against Communist regimes in Asia. Moreover, material assistance from the United States and access to the American market enabled Japan to make a remarkable economic recovery during the postwar years. This chimerical change in the international alliance between Japan and the United States in the immediate postwar years created a difficult situation for Japanese national identity because the survival of Japan de-

pended upon the hegemony of its former enemy. I argue in this chapter that the sequence of events leading to the conclusion of the two countries' conflict—the attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the emperor's so-called divine decision to terminate the war—provided the grounds upon which the Japanese wartime leadership would found a narrative that could explain away the tension created by its acceptance of defeat. This narrative managed to cloak Japan's defeat in the guise of strategic necessity and concern for humanity at large; moreover, in the immediate postwar years, U.S. leadership participated in the reinforcement of this narrative through its support of the emperor.

In the ideological remapping of the immediate postwar period, any history between the United States and Japan that was incongruous with the political necessity of the Cold War was soon repressed in the United States as well as in Japan. For both countries, yesterday's foe became today's friend. The demonstration of the unprecedented power of the nuclear weapons detonated in Hiroshima and Nagasaki provided the impetus for the United States and Japan to reconfigure their collective memories. At the end of the war, the United States and Japan cast themselves in a melodrama, so to speak, that culminated in the demonstration of the atomic bomb's unprecedented power.[3] Through the bomb, the United States, gendered as male, rescued and converted Japan, figured as a desperate woman. Hirohito's so-called divine decision to end the war participated in this drama by accepting the superior power of the United States. Despite its hyperbole, this popular narrative was effective in defining the two countries' perception of the war and how it ended.

I call this narrative the "foundational narrative" of U.S.-Japanese postwar relations. I will trace the creation of the foundational narrative and examine what this narrative managed to mask in the two countries' postwar relations. The foundational narrative was generated by the two countries' efforts to render understandable the experiences of the atomic bomb and the ensuing transformation of their relationship. The United States unilaterally used the atomic bomb against Japan; yet both the United States and Japan were complicit in the maintenance of the narrative that subsequently encoded the bomb and the conclusion of the conflict through the figure of the emperor. The two countries' contradictory orientations in encoding the war's conclusion notwithstanding, many people in both countries found popular representations of the historical events convincing. Popular narratives in both countries offered various narrative devices—the great man theory, the melodrama of conversion and rescue, the contradictory image of a good enemy—as a means to comprehend the series of events that took place in August 1945 and the following few months; all of these devices coalesced into the foundational narrative.

The foundational narrative powerfully captured the popular imagination of the two countries and defined the discussions of their mutual relations until the 1980s, when the Cold War political paradigm began to dissolve. With less emphasis on the importance of nuclear capability in the strategic planning of the post–Cold War period, Japan appears to be freeing itself from its prescribed role in the foundational narrative.[4] Yet, the strong opposition to attempts to rethink history in either country—the *Enola Gay* controversy and the Japanese controversy over the Diet resolution admitting Japan's war responsibility[5]—demonstrates the degree to which many Americans and Japanese are still invested in the foundational narrative of the postwar period even fifty years after the conclusion of the conflict.[6] The structure of the foundational narrative is not only intact but also regenerated each time the two countries attempt to face their war memories.

This chapter revisits the popular sites from which the foundational narrative was assembled. By tracing the genealogy of the foundational narrative and discussing its components, I will explore the possible means to untangle the complex web created between the bomb's explosion and Hirohito's so-called divine decision. The discursivity of these events—how history is constructed through narrative—is the primary focus of my discussion. While the narrative, which defined the tone of relations between the United States and Japan in the immediate postwar years, was no doubt more foundational to Japanese society because of the asymmetry in the two countries' power relations, it informed the ways in which each country defined the other's image in their postwar relations.

The Production of the Foundational Narrative

The United States and Japan stand miles apart from each other over the use of the atomic bomb at the end of World War II. The majority of U.S. citizens still feel that the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki was justifiable, while a large number of Japanese feel moral repugnance toward the use of the bombs.[7] However, despite their contrary responses to historical events, the narratives accepted in the two countries concerning how the war ended show a remarkable structural resemblance: in both versions, history is propelled by the decisions of great men and events.

The story widely accepted in both the United States and Japan concerning how the war ended is illuminated by a series of heroic decisions.[8] On July 26, 1945, the United States, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union demanded in the Potsdam Declaration "the unconditional surrender of all Japanese armed forces."[9] Although the inner circle of the Japanese government held a meeting concerning this declaration, it was rejected two

days later. Faced with this rejection, the American government had no recourse other than to drop atomic bombs on the selected cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki (the latter of which was substituted for the originally chosen city of Kokura because of weather conditions). Realizing the enormous power of the new weapon, the emperor expressed his desire to bring the conflict to a conclusion. The Supreme Council was convened in the emperor's presence, but their prolonged meeting reached a deadlock. Three members—Baron Hiranuma Ki'ichirō; Tōgō Shigenori, the minister of foreign affairs; and Admiral Yonai Mitsumasa—insisted on the immediate acceptance of the Potsdam Declaration, with the single condition that the imperial institution would be retained. The other three—the war minister, Anami Korechika, and the two chiefs of staff—insisted on three more conditions: "if Japan were to surrender, she must insist on acceptance of her four conditions guaranteeing not only the integrity of the Imperial structure but also Japan's right to disarm her own soldiers, conduct her own war trials, and limit the forces of occupation."[9] It is important to note that the members of the Supreme Council were not debating whether they should accept the unconditional surrender. They were debating what kind of conditions they should place on their acceptance of the Potsdam Declaration. The deadlock was ended by the emperor's "divine" intervention. Hirohito finally broke away from the apolitical, monarchical role he had established for himself when he acceded to the throne and decided how Japan would surrender. He made clear his preference for the immediate acceptance of the Potsdam Declaration with a single proviso: the retention of the imperial institution.

Despite the fact that Hirohito was more concerned with the fate of the imperial institution than with the devastation of the country, this narrative lauds him as an enlightened yet reticent sovereign who made a crucial decision to save Japan as well as all human beings. At this critical historical juncture, Hirohito for the first and last time managed to intervene in the historical process. The narrative's corollary is that much of Japan's prosperity today is the result of his "divine decision," which saved Japan from total destruction. Facing uncertainty as to his own fate, the emperor supposedly said, "I do not care about what may happen to me. I cannot continue the war any longer, for I cannot bear to see the suffering of the people."[10] However, this statement, often quoted to illustrate Hirohito's humanistic concerns at the end of the war, has to be placed in a political context: the future of the imperial institution was secured.

In a similar manner, the American popular narrative characterizes President Harry S. Truman's decision to use the bomb as a sacred moment in American history—a moment that allows no challenges: the bomb was a benevolent weapon that ultimately saved millions of lives. The years

of developing the weapon and the process involved in deciding to use the bomb are reduced to Truman's decision; his is the single human agency that corresponds to the singular event of the bomb's explosion. In this equation of Truman and the bomb, the complex bureaucratic organization of the U.S. government is erased. History is simplified to a great man's deed.

The American and Japanese narratives seem to contradict each other with their seemingly separate emphases: Truman's decision and Hirohito's intervention. In fact, however, they nicely dovetail. Their differences function as the subplots of a larger narrative in which Truman and Hirohito mirror each other, and in which their decisions are construed as benevolent lifesaving acts. According to this narrative, Hirohito's intervention was just as crucial as Truman's decision in terminating the two countries' conflict; the blast of the atomic bomb is centrally located between these two men's acts. The unprecedented power of the bomb was encoded through the acts of human agents.

Both governments were complicit in giving signifying power to the explosion of the bomb: through the decision of the emperor, this unprecedented experience was rendered comprehensible as Japan's defeat. On August 10, the Allied governments were informed of the Japanese government's intention to surrender: "The Japanese Government are ready to accept the terms enumerated in the Joint Declaration which was issued at Potsdam on July 26, 1945, by the heads of the Governments of the United States, Great Britain, and China, and later subscribed to by the Soviet Government, with the understanding that the said Declaration does not comprise any demand which prejudices the prerogatives of His Majesty as a sovereign ruler."[11] This message implies that the Japanese government would have kept fighting if the Allies had rejected Japan's terms. The government was indeed ready to sacrifice the Japanese people for its last demand—the maintenance of the imperial institution. After the transmission of this message, the emperor made that commitment clear in the meeting held with other members of the imperial family on August 12. Hirohito answered "Of course" to the question asked by Prince Asaka as to whether he would continue the war if the national polity, namely the imperial institution, could not be maintained.[12]

Receiving this response from the Japanese government, Truman was totally baffled. He wondered whether it could really be called an unconditional surrender, given such a huge proviso. Truman's memoirs read:

> Were we to treat this message from Tokyo as an acceptance of the Potsdam Declaration? There had been many in this country who felt that the Emperor was an integral part of that Japanese system which we were pledged to destroy.

> Could we continue the Emperor and yet expect to eliminate the warlike spirit in Japan? Could we even consider a message with so large a "but" as the kind of unconditional surrender we had fought for?[13]

Despite Truman's claim of surprise, the members of the early Truman administration, including the president himself, had already been discussing a possible modification to the "unconditional surrender" demand—namely, an assurance that the imperial institution would remain—to make it more acceptable to the Japanese government.[14] The authority of the emperor had been recognized by U.S. officials as a useful tool to carry out the terms of the surrender, and the U.S. media had widely discussed the issue of possible conditions.[15] Although Tokyo's expedient response caught the U.S. government by surprise,[16] its contents were not unexpected; a compromise was quickly struck between the two countries when the U.S. government implicitly accepted the Japanese condition to the unconditional surrender. The response written by the secretary of state, James F. Byrnes, and jointly issued with Great Britain, China, and the Soviet Union on August 11 included a crucial clause that implicitly acquiesced to the Japanese terms: "From the moment of surrender the authority of the Emperor and the Japanese Government to rule the state shall be subject to the Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers who will take such steps as he deems proper to effectuate the surrender terms."[17]

It was no secret that the Allies struck a compromise with Japan at the conclusion of the conflict: the condition was again widely discussed in the American news media.[18] Yet, the drama of great men's decisions satisfied the American public; strong objections to the condition that the American government conceded to Tokyo were not loudly articulated in the American media. Ironically, as Michael Sherry claims, "the use of the bomb allowed the United States to offer surrender terms it previously withheld, giving the bomb as decisive an impact in Washington as in Tokyo."[19] In short, the abstract power of the bomb was made comprehensible to U.S. leaders through the emperor's initiative. Accepting the disciplinary power of the weapon, Japan surrendered. The emperor served as the prophet who deciphered the oracle of the atomic bomb. The total destruction of Japan and the imperial institution would have left no means to render the miraculous effects of the bomb comprehensible—the atomic bomb would have remained a huge explosive devise without a narrative. It was not the destructive power of the bomb per se but rather the narrative that "the bomb ended the war" that brought the war to its denouement; the emperor offered this narrative for the citizens of both the United States and Japan.

The narrative of how the war ended also established a circular referential relationship between the bomb and the emperor: the bomb was special

because it shocked the emperor into accepting the terms of surrender; the emperor accepted the peace because he realized the bomb was special. Within this circle, the bomb's detonation and the emperor's decision refer only to each other, and they are separated from any other factors that happened before or after. Hence, the hermeneutic nature of the explanation as to how the bomb (Truman's decision) and the emperor (Hirohito's intervention) ended the war makes it impossible to establish any dialogue between the supporters and opponents of the bomb's use. One either believes the explanation or not: there can be no middle ground as long as one assumes the mutual referentiality of the bomb and the emperor.

The final step in the peace process, the United States' acceptance of Japan's condition, confirmed the referential relationship between the atomic bomb and the emperor. In this referential relationship, the bomb and the emperor became the sole bases of mutual signification. The impressive power of the atomic bombs awoke the great liberal mind of Japan—Hirohito. Hirohito exploded like the bomb. Moreover, the bombs, like Hirohito, stayed apolitical up until 1945 because they were hidden from the public eye. However, they were brought to the public's attention at a crucial moment in order to intervene in the political process and to achieve peace in Japan. The bomb and Hirohito mirror each other's image in their singular political impact. This was the first and the last intervention they made. Since these "explosions," they have remained political symbols never to be used again. The bombs ushered the United States into the Cold War paradigm, and the emperor's decision transformed Japan into one of the United States' closest allies during the Cold War.[20]

Hirohito and the bomb also became paired through their paradoxical nature: the destructive power of the bomb brought peace to the Pacific, while the autocratic power of the emperor was the key to that peace. The narrative of great men's interventions and the circle of mutual reference trap the bomb and the emperor at the moment of a radical shift from a negative to a positive effect. August 1945 becomes the privileged moment of this transformation. Therefore, as long as this contradiction remains intact, revelations about the negative force of the bomb and the emperor cannot challenge their value as the ultimate peacemakers. Negative revelations only dramatize the positive outcome of the transformation—it was awful, but it was necessary. The images of charred bodies in Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the dictatorial figure of Hirohito become the necessary conditions for peace. The more destructive or autocratic these images, the more dramatic the moment of conversion becomes. The radical contradiction between the negative and positive qualities of the bomb and Hirohito becomes the prerequisite for the postwar drama between the United States and Japan.

This narrative of conversion has been used by conservative voices in Japan to deny the emperor's responsibility in the Asia Pacific War. As the Japanese wartime government leaders prepared the drama of Hirohito's intervention, they added a subplot to the narrative: the autocratic power of the emperor was attributed to the Japanese militarists.[21] The government issued an imperial rescript on August 15, 1945, declaring the end of the war in Hirohito's name. After the American acceptance of the Japanese condition, the Japanese cabinet became confident that they could maintain the national polity. On August 14, the emperor resorted to his second "divine decision" by accepting the Allied response in an imperial meeting. The only thing left for the cabinet was to separate itself from the military by blaming everything on the militarists and to convince the Japanese people that it was necessary to terminate the conflict. For this purpose, the government fully utilized the authority of the emperor. First, the government leaders created and circulated a myth that the decision to end the war was due solely to Hirohito's divine decision.[22] Second, the emperor read the rescript announcing the conclusion of the conflict on radio. This was the first time in history his voice was heard on the radio, and this unprecedented announcement highlighted Hirohito's active involvement in the final decision making.[23]

The philosopher Washida Koyata makes the following four points about the rescript: First, it presented the emperor as the agency that ended the war; according to the rescript, this was not a defeat because it was the emperor's conscious act. A corollary was that nobody was responsible for the defeat, let alone for the war itself. Second, the rescript declared that the government would accept the Potsdam Declaration, but nowhere did it mention the content of this declaration.[24] Furthermore, it defined the war only in relation to the European powers and the United States and neglected Japanese aggression against other Asian countries. Thus, according to the rescript, the war began after Pearl Harbor. The attitude of those who wrote the rescript was that the war in Asia was necessary to bring peace and stability to Asia and was not an act of colonization, and that even if there had been aggression and colonization, they were carried out against Hirohito's will. It was the military that was responsible. Third, the rescript noted that innocent civilians had been killed by brutal weapons (atomic bombs). If the government did not stop the war, the Japanese people and human civilization would be made extinct, it said. The logic was that the Japanese people were the victims of the war and the emperor risked his life to protect them. Fourth, the rescript insisted that it was the emperor who would lead the Japanese people into the future.[25]

The operative logic of the rescript was rather simple: by defining Hirohito as apolitical and ahistorical, the government managed to absolve

him from his actual political actions, and by extension, the leaders of the government who were faithfully following Hirohito could be similarly exonerated from their political responsibility. This logic also applies to the general populace, since their will was just an extension of the emperor's will. If the emperor was not responsible, then they were not responsible either. According to this reasoning, the militarists were the ones who should be blamed; the emperor was kept captive in the hands of the military leaders against his desire to keep the peace. In this way, the emperor separated himself from the political conditions of the 1930s and the first half of the 1940s and exonerated himself from the implication that he was responsible for the act of war. If he was not responsible, nobody in Japan could be responsible because the war had been fought in his name.[26] The emperor was responsible only for his attempt to bring peace to Japan. Similarly, for many ordinary Japanese, the emperor was a useful instrument through whom they could suppress the history of the war and slide into the postwar period absolved of responsibility.

The postwar Japanese political system was only too eager to reconfirm the fiction that the rescript offered. The Shidehara administration passed a resolution on November 5, 1945, that included the following characterizations of the war and the emperor's role in it:

1. The Japanese Empire could not help but start the Great East Asian War, given the surrounding circumstances;
2. The emperor wished to see the American negotiations reach a peaceful compromise;
3. In accordance with the established precedents in observing the Constitution, the emperor never rejected the decision of the imperial government and the Imperial General Headquarters to start the conflict and to execute plans.[27]

With the help of postwar administrations, the image of the peace-loving sovereign portrayed in the imperial rescript steadily seeped into the Japanese popular imagination.[28]

The accounts of the period recorded by the very people who suffered from the atomic bomb attest to the persuasive power of the narrative of Hirohito's "divine intervention." The blast of the bomb managed to instill a sense of fear and dismay among the residents of Hiroshima and Nagasaki; yet, these instinctive responses did not necessarily translate into a desire to terminate the conflict.[29] Hachiya Michihiko, a doctor who experienced the Hiroshima atomic bomb, recorded in his diary's August 15 entry: "Many who had been strong advocates of peace and others who had lost their taste for war following the pika [the blast of the atomic bomb] were now shouting for the war to continue."[30] To many who resolved to keep fighting even after the blast, the emperor's announcement

to accept the surrender terms was more shocking. Hachiya continues: "The one word—surrender—had produced a greater shock than the bombing of our city."[31]

Tanimoto Kiyoshi, who also lived through the bomb in Hiroshima and whom John Hersey interviewed for his journalistic piece *Hiroshima*, experienced a similar shock after learning of Japan's surrender. However, his sense of devastation was healed as he learned how the emperor made his decision. He recalls:

> Afterward, as the process through which and the reason for which the emperor decreed the imperial rescript accepting the end of the war was published in the newspapers, we found hope to live. The emperor could not endure to witness his subjects suffer in the war any longer and accepted the terms the four nations presented "by enduring the unendurable and suffering what is insufferable" in order to save his subjects and the human beings of the world from the destruction of war. The sacrifice in Hiroshima became the basis "to pave the way for a grand peace for all the generations to come."[32]

Tanimoto's account, with quotations from the imperial rescript, demonstrates how the experiences of Hiroshima became an integral part of the foundational narrative of postwar Japan. In his recollection, the cruelty of the war and the atomic bomb only served to enhance the benevolence of the emperor's "sacrifice."

The narrative devices of Hirohito's "divine decision" and "sacrifice" supported the myth that the unprecedented power of the atomic bomb ended the war. The governmental decision expressed in the rescript rendered the power of the bomb comprehensible to those both inside and outside of Hiroshima. Through reading the implicit message in the U.S. government's response correctly and actively producing the narrative of conversion—that is, the conversion of Japan from a militarist state to a peaceful one—the Japanese government prepared the stage for the drama that would solidify Japan's relations with the United States in the postwar world.

MacArthur and Hirohito—the Rendezvous

With the implicit assurance that the imperial institution would remain, the American government also participated in the production of this foundational narrative based in part on the deeds of great men. However, since the relationship between the two countries was far from stable, there was a need for other explanatory devices to stabilize the foundational narrative. Immediately after the defeat of Japan, the United States and Japan recast their relationship in terms of a melodrama of rescue and conver-

sion. According to this melodrama, the United States rescues a good enemy, Hirohito, from the deleterious elements in the enemy country, and the good enemy becomes converted into a representative of U.S. values. Hirohito emerges as a desirable object in the drama to explain why he deserves to be rescued; both countries' relations are expressed through a drama that features an entanglement of desires for the other.

The relationship between the United States and Japan in the postwar melodrama is highly sexualized. The drama casts the United States as a male and Hirohito and Japan as a docile female, who unconditionally accepts the United States' desire for self-assurance. As a good enemy that is also constructed as a docile woman, Japan provides the United States with a reflection of its own power. However, Japan's female character also encompasses the obverse image of the enemy: the dangerous woman. Thus, Japan's role as the good enemy both enacts and threatens to transgress its prescribed role in the melodrama. The narrative of great men unfolds in the postwar period as a melodrama between Hirohito, a feminized Japan, and the new male protagonist, Douglas MacArthur.

On September 27, 1945, Emperor Hirohito visited General Douglas MacArthur, the supreme commander for the Allied powers, for the first time at the American Embassy. This meeting was carefully prepared by Japanese officials.[33] MacArthur describes the scene of his meeting with Hirohito in an overly theatrical fashion:

> He was nervous and the stress of the past months showed plainly. I dismissed everyone but his own interpreter, and we sat down before an open fire at one end of the long reception hall. I offered him an American cigarette, which he took with thanks. I noticed how his hands shook as I lighted it for him. I tried to make it as easy for him as I could, but I knew how deep and dreadful must be his agony of humiliation.

Hirohito is transformed into a feminine character in MacArthur's description. In the domestic atmosphere in front of a hearth, MacArthur offers Hirohito an American cigarette. Accepting this American object par excellence, Hirohito communicates his nervousness through his shaking hands. His "agony of humiliation" renders him a helpless and emasculated figure, worthy of MacArthur's pity and aid. MacArthur continues:

> I had an uneasy feeling he might plead his own cause against indictment as a war criminal. There had been considerable outcry from some of the Allies, notably the Russians and the British, to include him in this category. Indeed, the initial list of those proposed by them was headed by the Emperor's name. Realizing the tragic consequences that would follow such an unjust action, I had stoutly resisted such efforts. When Washington seemed to be veering toward the British point of view, I had advised that I would need at least one million reinforcements should such action be taken.[34]

Appearing docile, Hirohito still represents a potential danger to the American commander. Indeed, in MacArthur's mind, one million soldiers will be necessary to contain Hirohito's danger. Moreover, once again Hirohito and the bomb are equated, this time through the magic number one million. MacArthur claims that the emperor equals at least one million American reinforcements, while Henry Stimson maintained in 1947 that the atomic bomb saved over one million American lives;[35] the emperor and the bomb are represented as prerequisites for peace through the same number of soldiers they can replace. MacArthur's equation insists on the contradictory value of the emperor: he is dangerous yet necessary.

The emperor's announcement of his war responsibility and his self-sacrifice, however, helped to reinforce his docile image. MacArthur describes his surprise at the emperor's acceptance of his defeat as follows:

> But my fears were groundless. What he said was this: "I come to you General MacArthur, to offer myself to the judgment of the powers you represent as the one to bear sole responsibility for every political and military decision made and action taken by people in the conduct of war." A tremendous impression swept me. This courageous assumption of a responsibility implicit with death, a responsibility clearly belied by facts of which I was fully aware, moved me to the very marrow of my bones.[36]

The meeting was a drama staged for MacArthur's personal consumption; it contained the necessary ingredients for a melodrama—humiliation and the heroic acceptance of humiliation. MacArthur emphasizes the sense of humiliation born by the emperor, which only enhances the heroic quality of Hirohito's total conversion. Although the emperor was probably less articulate and heroic in the actual scene, his speech fulfilled the drama of conversion enough to move MacArthur to "the very marrow of my bones."[37] According to an account of Shigemitsu Mamoru, who met MacArthur ten years later in Washington, D.C., MacArthur was then so moved that he wanted to kiss Hirohito on the cheek.[38] MacArthur found Hirohito's act worthy of American rescue; hence, the emperor's affinity with American values had to be highlighted. MacArthur claimed in *Reminiscences* that, through their subsequent meetings, he "found he [the emperor] had a more thorough grasp of the democratic concept than almost any Japanese with whom I talked."[39] The union of Japan and the United States was not strange since Hirohito demonstrated a natural affinity for American principles.

Written eighteen years after their actual meetings, MacArthur's descriptions contain a series of errors. For example, no list of war criminals "headed by the Emperor's name" was ever presented by other allied nations; MacArthur's famous warning of the potential need for one million reinforcements was not telegraphed to Washington until January 1946;

and Hirohito was also well known for his dislike of smoking.[40] MacArthur's misremembering notwithstanding, his dramatized account is valuable for showing how easily the leader of the American occupation forces accepted the narrative of rescue and conversion.

This narrative was useful to both MacArthur and Hirohito. The historian Toyoshita Narahiko argues that, although MacArthur was later perceived by many Japanese to be a powerful autocratic leader of the occupation forces, his authority as supreme commander for the Allied powers was precarious at the beginning of the American occupation.[41] MacArthur found himself in the midst of a power struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union over Japan. The U.S. government did not desire to grant undefined autonomous power to MacArthur because it did not want to address directly the Soviet challenge to American control over Japan. Under these circumstances, the emperor's complete cooperation with the occupation policy was a fortuitous gift for MacArthur, who was seeking to fortify his position as supreme commander. On the other hand, the emperor was in desperate need of support from the occupation leadership: his personal fate was not assured in the absence of a clear occupation policy toward the throne. Hence, MacArthur and Hirohito entered into a covenant that fulfilled each other's needs.

MacArthur and Hirohito were destined to find each other, as is often the case in a melodrama. Together, they were able to stave off the other Allied nations' attempts to interfere with the American occupation policy and to indict the emperor for war crimes; together, they embodied the melodrama of rescue and conversion to a liberal American creed: the emperor was rescued by the Americans from the evil hands of the Japanese militarists. A picture taken by an American photographer prior to MacArthur and Hirohito's meeting represents the happy union of the two countries (fig. 2). Newspaper articles on the emperor's visit with MacArthur first appeared the next day, and the photo appeared on the front pages on September 29. MacArthur towers over the emperor in a relaxed posture with his hand on his own buttocks. Meanwhile, the stiff figure of the emperor, dressed in formal wear, stands gazing straight into the camera. In the sexualized power relations of the two countries, it is only appropriate for Douglas Lummis to call this picture their "wedding photo."[42]

To many Japanese, this photograph was material evidence that the authority of the U.S. occupation forces had displaced that of imperial Japan. The minister of the interior banned the circulation of newspapers carrying the photo, finding the contrast between the two figures demeaning to the emperor. Yet, MacArthur's General Headquarters (GHQ) immediately intervened to enforce the freedom of the press and had the Japanese government lift its ban the very same day.[43] The stark contrast of the two figures in the photo reminds the viewer of the kind of power relation

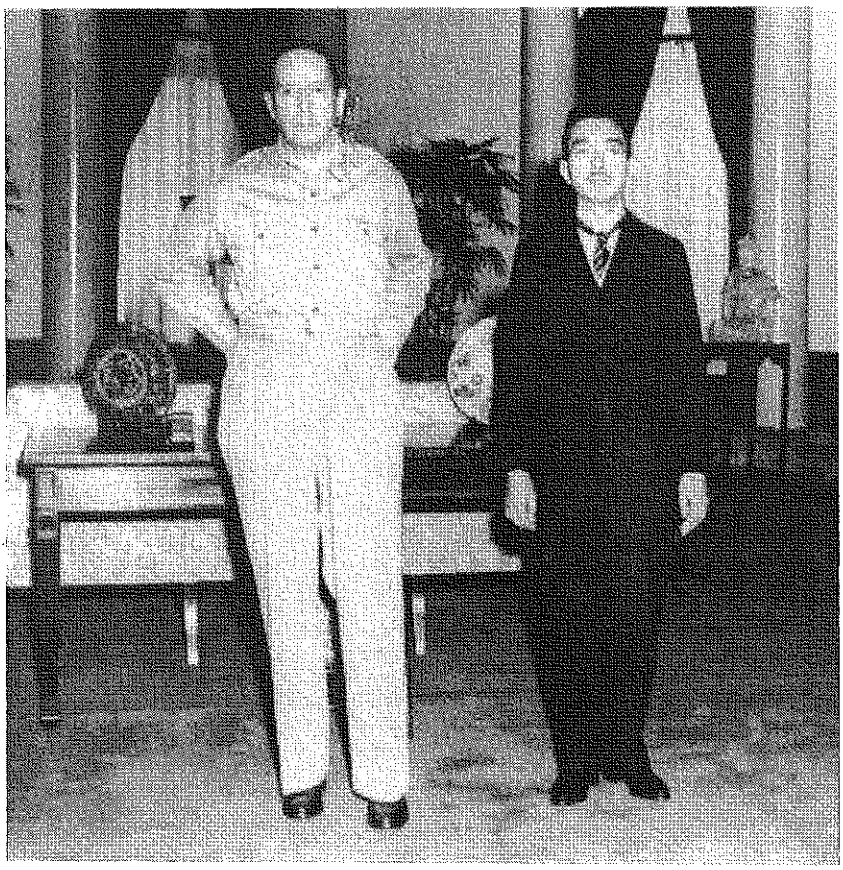

Figure 2. General Douglas MacArthur and Emperor Hirohito, September 27, 1945. Courtesy of the MacArthur Memorial.

that existed between the United States and Japan at the beginning of the postwar period. The meaning of the loss of the war was negatively embodied by the emperor, while the power and the material wealth that defeated Japan was represented by the towering figure of Douglas MacArthur.

Many Japanese writers who lived through the immediate postwar period articulated their encounter with the United States in purely physical terms. For instance, Toshio the protagonist in Nosaka Akiyuki's semiautobiographical story "American *Hijiki*" ("Amerika hijiki") (1967), recollects his social studies teacher's theory of the correlation between physical strength and national power: "Look at the Americans. Their average height is five feet, ten inches. For us, it's only five three. This difference of seven inches figures in everything, and I believe that's why we lost the

War. A basic difference in physical strength is invariably manifested in national strength."[44] Toshio does not have to hear this theory from his teacher; he already knows it. In Toshio's memories, the image of "MacArthur with the Emperor just up to his shoulders"[45] is meshed with other fragmentary impressions of the United States' material wealth; moreover, the physical strength of American soldiers translates into sexual prowess in Toshio's memories of the immediate postwar period when GIs walked around with Japanese prostitutes clinging to their arms.[46]

To Ide Magoroku, who turned fourteen on September 29, 1945, the memories of his first encounter with GIs are wrapped in the homoerotic images evoked by the corporeality of the victors: "The GIs riding in a few jeeps were almost unarmed, except for a pistol each of them had, and they threw candies from the rear pockets of their pants to the emaciated snotty kids standing on the street. I even heard a mysterious humming. That was the first jazz I ever heard. The bursting buttocks that bounced [*burun burun to yureru*] to every rhythmic move—that was the body that displayed the victor."[47] In Ide's recollection of the immediate postwar period, the description of the GIs' buttocks leads to a paragraph in which he recalls the surprise of seeing the photograph of the emperor and MacArthur on his birthday: "Yet, the grave shock on that day [the day he saw the GIs for the first time] came when I glanced at a newspaper on the table after returning home from school. The huge photo showed 'The Emperor Visiting the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers.' In contrast to the tall general full of pride, the figure of the emperor's worn-out body wrapped in morning dress was nothing but the evidence of defeat to the patriotic boy in the second year of middle school."[48]

In spite of these negative readings of the picture, ultimately the visual image of the photograph insisted upon the emperor's sacrifice. The image of the emperor as an unimpressive figure in contrast to MacArthur's powerful physique embodied the meaning of the sacrifice that the emperor made for Japan. If people could identify with the emperor as a human being in the postwar period, as Ueno Kōshi claims, that identification was facilitated through the myth that the emperor sacrificed himself for the future of his country.[49] The photograph vividly demonstrates what happened to the emperor who supposedly insisted: "I do not care about what may happen to me." The shabbier the image of the emperor in the photo, the easier it was to perceive his sacrifice. Many Japanese transposed their own fate in Japan after the defeat onto this figure of Hirohito.

The photo was not only a reminder of the power imbalance between the United States and Japan but also a representation of how the two countries resolved their conflict. At the core of the foundational narrative lay the destructive force of nuclear weapons. The narrative suggested that the United States managed to rescue and convert Japan through a show

of power. As Douglas Lummis claims, peace and democracy materialized from the destruction wrought by the nuclear weapon.[50] The creation of the new Japanese constitution shows how the postwar peace was entangled with the destructive power of the bomb.

Realizing the Japanese government's unwillingness to depart from the conservative Meiji Constitution, on February 3, 1946, Douglas MacArthur directed Courtney Whitney, chief of the Government Section of GHQ, to prepare a draft of a new Japanese constitution. With the help of his staff of lawyers and members of the Government Section, Whitney managed to produce a draft in a week. On February 13, copies of the draft were handed over to Japanese officials, namely Matsumoto Jōji, the chairman of the Constitution Revision Committee of the cabinet; Yoshida Shigeru, the foreign minister; Shirasu Jirō, the assistant to the Foreign Minister; and Hasegawa Motoyoshi, who served as an interpreter.[51] The three GHQ staff members who accompanied Whitney to the meeting documented the scene:

> General Whitney sat with his back to the sun, affording [the] best light on the countenances of the Japanese present who sat opposite him. . . . General Whitney at once throttled any discussion of the Matsumoto draft by saying slowly, weighing every word: "The draft of constitution revision, which you submitted to us the other day, is wholly unacceptable to the Supreme Commander as a document of freedom and democracy. The Supreme Commander, however, being fully conscious of the desperate need of the people of Japan for a liberal and enlightened Constitution that will defend them from the injustices and the arbitrary controls of the past, has approved this document and directed that I present it to you as one embodying the principles which in his opinion the situation in Japan demands."[52]

Whitney intentionally sits "with his back to the sun" so that the Japanese delegates have the sun in their eyes. The sun's blinding effect symbolizes the United States' power to define the two countries' relations. Whitney acts out the narrative of rescue and conversion. He will save Japan by offering her a path to conversion—a liberal and enlightened constitution. Moreover, he goes on to remind the Japanese of the connection between their conversion and the United States' nuclear capability:

> At 10:10 o'clock General Whitney and the undersigned left the porch and went out into the sunshine of the garden as an American plane passed over the house. After about fifteen minutes Mr. Shirasu joined us, whereupon General Whitney quietly observed to him: "We are out here enjoying the warmth of atomic energy."[53]

According to Mark Gayn, a journalist who was stationed in Japan at the time, "Just about then, a U.S. bomber buzzed the house. It was a well-

timed incident, even if General Whitney insisted that it had been unscheduled."[54] The idyllic garden scene is interrupted by the sound of a U.S. bomber. If Mark Gayn is right, the plane was a B-29 bomber, the same type as those that released the atomic bombs. Because of these perfectly performed theatrics, Whitney needed few words to remind the Japanese officials of the way the two countries' conflict had been concluded. The metaphor of the sun projects the image of a benevolent American power that rescues Japan from the brink of its own self-destruction. The sun's power forces the Japanese leaders to accept a democratic constitution and hence become converted to the postwar paradigm. General Whitney's statement concerning the atomic sunshine reminds the Japanese delegates that Japan's future issues from the bomb's destructive power: the United States has the power both to foster the garden's growth and to destroy it.

Japan as the Colonial Other

So as not to privilege the moment of conversion in August 1945, it is necessary to show that the melodrama of the two countries was hackneyed even as it was being played out, having already been rehearsed in Japan's relations with other Asian countries. Then, however, Japan performed the male role, while Asia was often cast as the heroine. After its defeat, Japan's status as occupier was easily translated into that of the occupied through the familiar tropes of colonial power relations; once the United States displaced Japan and Japan took up the position of Asia in the drama, Asia was squeezed out. With its defeat in the war, Japan lost not only its former colonies but also the memories of its colonial enterprises. By displacing Japan's role as colonizer with that of the United States, the United States–Japan melodrama assisted in concealing Japan's historical connection with Asia in postwar Japanese social discourse.

Immediately after the defeat, many Japanese anticipated their encounter with the arriving Americans in sexual terms: Japanese womanhood was in peril of being violated by American troops. People hid valuables and young women, and some local governments encouraged women to leave city areas. The poet Kaneko Mitsuharu reports that in the village where he and his family took refuge during the war, even elderly women infested with lice fled to the mountains in fear of rape upon hearing the rumor that "the Americans are beasts."[55] On an official level, as early as August 18, 1945, the Japanese government began setting up "sexual comfort stations" to alleviate the American soldiers' libido and to reduce rape incidents.[56] When many Japanese gave up the idea of fighting with bamboo spears—and hence the masculine defense of their community—they were ready to accept the feminine role into which Japan was cast.[57]

A feminized Japan surreptitiously moved into the position of the occupied, a position that used to be held by other Asian countries in wartime Japanese propaganda films. Postwar relations between the United States and Japan replicated the earlier power relations between Japan and Asia. Hence, the narrative of rescue and conversion in the melodrama of August 1945 had its precursors in wartime Japanese propaganda films that were distributed throughout Asia. A desirable colonial relationship between Japan and its colonies was often portrayed through the figures of two lovers in these films. The narrative often followed a similar pattern: Japan's altruistic intention, initially misunderstood, prevails in the end. *Shina no yoru* (China night, 1940) provides an exemplary case of this melodramatic narrative. Its justification of violence against the Chinese heroine probably added to its popularity in Japan.[58] The drama in *Shina no yoru* is a precursor to the actual melodrama that later unfolded between the United States and Japan. However, the difference between the film's diagesis and the foundational narrative of the postwar period is the fact that it was China, not Japan, that was rescued by its enemy in the film.

The plot of the film is as follows: a young Chinese heroine who nurses an intense hatred of Japan because her family was destroyed in the war against Japan falls in love with a Japanese sailor—an idealist who embodies official Japanese ideology. She loses all of her anti-Japanese feelings once she realizes the earnestness of her lover as well as the sincerity of his Japanese friends. The heroine first appears on the screen with a dirty face and in a ragged dress; however, after she is rescued from destitution by the sailor and taken to his residential hotel, she emerges from the hotel's communal bathroom as a shining beauty. Despite the goodwill of the sailor and the Japanese who are staying at the hotel, the Chinese heroine remains resentful toward Japan and does not hesitate to show it. Finally, after enduring the unendurable, the sailor gives her a slap in the face. With this slap, the rebellious heroine turns into an obedient woman who fully understands the true intentions of the male protagonist.[59] The slap also consummates the romantic relationship between the sailor and the heroine. The story thus resolves the entanglement of sexual desire between the two protagonists through the conflict of love and hate. It is through violence that the heroine realizes her desire for the sailor; her hatred turns out to be a sign of her desire. Her vengeful gaze disappears and is replaced with an adoring look. The slap on the face awakens the female protagonist to the true intentions and sincerity of the sailor. The slap is not desirable, but it is administered to wake her to her own unreasonableness and to his sincerity: in other words, violence is necessitated by an act of goodwill. However, despite her conversion, the heroine con-

tinues to be in contact with a harmful element—a clandestine anti-Japanese group organized by her cousin. Her associates in the organization refuse to go away and use her as a decoy to trap the sailor, from whom they want an ammunition-shipping schedule. With her help, the sailor manages both to escape and to rescue her. Her innocence and conversion are proven after the rescue when she is found handcuffed.

The atomic attack on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945 was a slap in Japan's face; with this slap, Japan's vengeful gaze toward the United States was transformed into an adoring look. By moving into the feminine position that Asia had occupied, Japan easily assumed the role of victim. Hirohito played the role of the heroine who first recognizes the didactic values of the slap. According to the foundational narrative, the United States rescued a longing for liberalism in Japan: though (s)he initially resisted, (s)he eventually succumbed to America's allure. Facing inevitable defeat in World War II, the Japanese leadership produced a drama of rescue—the rescue of Hirohito from the corrupt militarists—in an attempt to rationalize the defeat. Just as the Japanese sailor saves the heroine from the underground anti-Japanese organization, the United States rescues Hirohito from coercion by the militarists. By retaining Hirohito on the throne, the American government not only accepted this narrative of a rescue, but it also used it to consolidate the bilateral relations (holy matrimony) of the two countries in the postwar period.

Perhaps it is no coincidence that the Chinese heroine in *Shina no yoru* (fig. 3) was actually played by Ri Kō-ran (pronounced "Li Xiang-lan" in Chinese), a Japanese actress who passed as Chinese because she grew up in Manchuria and spoke fluent Chinese.[60] Thus, the good enemy (a Chinese in this case) rescued by the Japanese sailor was an extension of Japan after all. After the war, Ri Kō-ran resumed her career as the Japanese actress Yamaguchi Yoshiko; yet, her life and her pursuit of a new identity were once again caught in the power relations of two countries—the United States and Japan this time. In the early 1950s, Yamaguchi studied acting in New York, where she met her first husband, the Japanese American artist Isamu Noguchi; she appeared as Shirley Yamaguchi in two Hollywood films, *Japanese War Bride* (1952) and *House of Bamboo* (1955).[61] In these postwar films, Yamaguchi fulfilled the American male fantasy of what Japanese women were—obedient and dedicated to their masters or to their American husbands.[62] The conjugal relations of the United States and Japan were figuratively told through her roles.

Ri Kō-ran's career reveals the adaptability of the narrative of rescue and conversion. Even before August 1945, Japan was playing out a drama of desire with Asia. Because Japan was already consuming this narrative, it was ready to see its relationship with the United States in similar terms.

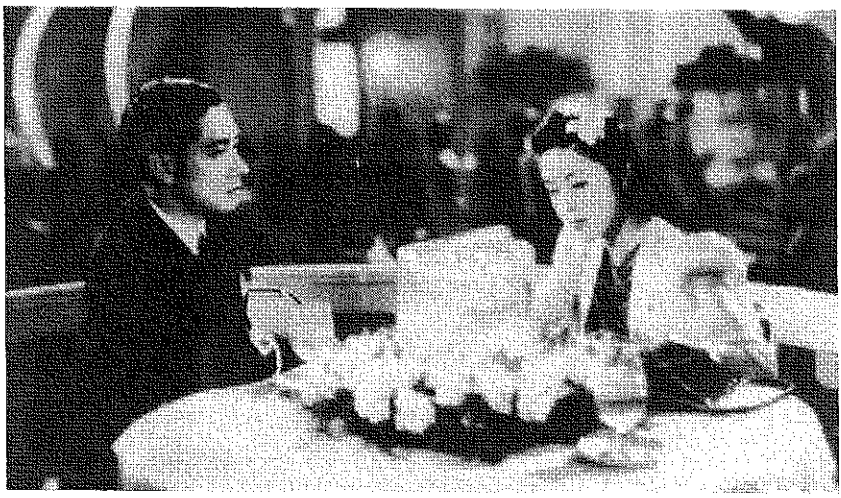

Figure 3. Ri Kō-ran and Hasegawa Kazuo in *Sina no Yoru.* Courtesy of the Kawakita Memorial Foundation.

The narrative of rescue and conversion that Japan propagated during the war with Asia returned to postwar Japan with its roles recast.

No longer the male aggressor, Japan assumed the identity of the woman in need of rescue. By switching roles, Japan managed to sustain the drama and conceal the rupture of defeat that initiated the postwar period.

American Hirohito

Hirohito ardently fulfilled the role of rescued and converted enemy in the melodrama by ventriloquizing the United States' desire as his own. He was well aware of the United States' role in shielding him from the Tokyo Trial (International Military Tribunal for the Far East). Thanks to the protection provided by MacArthur as well Japanese collaborators, Emperor Hirohito was neither indicted nor subpoenaed in the trial.[63] In the absence of material evidence—many key documents were destroyed prior to the arrival of the American occupation forces—it was not hard to corroborate the theory that the emperor had been a peace-loving constitutional monarch, a puppet figure for the Japanese military. The fact that the emperor was not subpoenaed by the court provided political legitimacy to the claim that he was innocent and that responsibility for the war rested elsewhere. The emperor metonymically proved the innocence of Japan; as many scholars have claimed, the exemption of the emperor from the

trial has effectively preempted discussions of Japan's involvement and responsibility in the Asia Pacific War.[64]

The emperor was appreciative of American assistance in shielding him from the trial and eager to perform his assigned role as the supporter of the United States' policy in Asia. In 1979, the international relations scholar Shindō Ei'ichi discovered two important U.S. documents, both authored by William J. Sebald, the diplomatic section chief of GHQ; dated September 1947, they were addressed to Douglas MacArthur and to Secretary of State George C. Marshall respectively.[65] According to the memoranda, the emperor had sent his interpreter, Terasaki Hidenari, to deliver a message to Sebald. In the message, the emperor expressed his wish to see the long-term U.S. occupation of the Ryukyu Islands as a defense against the Russian threat. The emperor's message directly challenges both the perception that he was a passive sovereign and the new definition of the monarch as "the symbol of the state" in the postwar constitution. The emperor felt compelled to rearticulate U.S. interests in East Asia as Japan's own security concern in order to accept his deference to U.S. political authority.

The emperor was later rewarded for his efforts with a warm welcome by Americans when he visited the United States for the first time in October 1975. The American media greeted him with generous coverage, replicating all the official explanations for his noninvolvement in politics. One of the United States' most hated enemies during World War II was described thirty years later by a *New York Times* article as the person who "has a shy charm and conveys to those who meet him a sense of almost painful honesty, sincerity and kindness."[66] The figure of the frail old man appeared on television screens and newspapers in the United States as a symbol of reconciliation between the two countries. Two days after Hirohito's visit to the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, an editorial in the *Washington Post* stated: "The visit here by Emperor Hirohito is the kind of symbolic ceremony by which nations acknowledge the large silent changes in the world's affairs. It is not the recollection of World War II that is being marked here, but the long succession of other events that have pushed it back in memory."[67] The postwar political order surrounding the United States and Japan necessitated the repression of memories of World War II. As long as this political order remained as "silent changes," there was no way to articulate what it had repressed. Even when a political protest was made against Hirohito, the message—"Emperor Hirohito: Please Save Our Whales" on a streamer attached to a small aircraft—had less to do with his past political function than his new identity as a marine biologist, an identity that foregrounded his apolitical existence in the postwar period.

In Los Angeles, he was welcomed by conservative Hollywood figures such as John Wayne, Charlton Heston, Robert Goulet, and Carol Lawrence at a banquet at the Los Angeles Music Center. A UPI report in the *Atlanta Constitution* describes the meeting with John Wayne as reminiscent of Hirohito's meeting with Douglas MacArthur: "The lanky Wayne, star of many a picture showing him fighting the Japanese in World War II, towered over the tiny Emperor as they met at the reception."[68] One such movie was the 1958 financial flop *The Barbarian and a Geisha*, in which John Wayne played Townsend Harris: Harris successfully negotiates a treaty to open Japanese ports to the United States; during his mission, he finds the unconditional love of a "geisha" (played by Andō Eiko).[69] The towering figure of John Wayne and his popular association with U.S. masculinity once again evoked Japan's defeat through Hirohito's feminized form—his diminutive figure and his shy charm.

During this trip, the emperor also was portrayed as a representative of American values, appearing happily in the media alongside American popular icons. He visited Disneyland, where Mickey Mouse greeted him along with Snow White, the Seven Dwarves, Goofy, and other Disney characters; he also watched a New York Jets–New England Patriots game at Shea Stadium. Disneyland and American football—perhaps no two symbols could have demonstrated his affinity for American culture better.

Hirohito's sojourn in the United States was a success compared to his trip to Western Europe four years earlier. In that 1971 visit, protest signs underscored the fact that a brutal war had been fought in Hirohito's name, and his car was physically attacked in Holland. The *London Times* reported that "some householders flew Dutch flags at half-mast, Japanese flags were burned and the Emperor was booed in Amsterdam."[70] According to *Asahi shinbun*, someone cut down the trees in London that the emperor planted to commemorate his visit, and there were no Japanese flags flying in the Hague or Amsterdam to welcome the royal couple.[71] On the official level, to the extent that the leaders of the Western European countries embraced U.S. Cold War policy, they welcomed the Japanese monarchy. Yet these incidents demonstrate that memories of the war still affected popular perceptions of Japan and the Japanese monarchy in Europe. Largely excluded from the U.S. occupation policies of Japan, European countries remained outside of the foundational narrative that the United States and Japan coproduced and maintained.

War Is Peace

The foundational narrative that confines Japan to the ambivalent category of good enemy/loser masks the most fundamental element in post–

World War II international relations—that the two enemy countries became the two closest allies in the Pacific. Yet the narrative's readings diverge in the two countries. What has been repressed in the United States is not past memories of the conflict between the two counties but the present alliance between the two countries that the narrative of conversion and rescue carefully masks. The trope of the good enemy/loser freezes the relations of the United States and Japan at the contradictory moment of the conflict's resolution: August 1945. As shown in the controversy over the planning of the *Enola Gay* exhibit at the Smithsonian Institution, discussions of the atomic bomb in the postwar United States have often linked the destructive power of the bomb to the miraculous moment of conversion, the conversion of the entire Japanese nation led by Hirohito. For instance, after reiterating the foundational narrative—the bomb helped to convert the emperor and Japan—James R. Van de Velde, a dean of Yale University, declared with a tone of finality: "it is historically accurate to state that the two atomic bombs helped hasten this terrible war's end—period. And that was unambiguously good."[72] This emphatic insistence on conversion haunts and traps Japan in the duality of the good enemy/loser. Although the transformation of Japan into a good enemy/loser signals a détente between the two countries, a belligerency must remain to maintain the category of enemy: a model enemy is still an enemy, not to be fully trusted. The loser always conjures up memories of the original condition of a conflict; hence, discussions of the atomic bombing are often paired with memories of Pearl Harbor. As long as Japan is identified as a good enemy/loser, it is caught in the moment of the conversion from an enemy to an ally.

On the other hand, by repressing its memories of the conflict in the postwar period, Japan accentuated its alliance with the United States. By accepting the role of model loser, Japan managed to enter into intimate relations with the United States: a model loser deserves rescue and conversion by the United States. By privileging its close relations with the United States, Japanese postwar popular discourse managed to repress the memories of Japan's past conflict with the United States as well as with other countries; according to this logic, because Japan is presently a friend, it always was one.

It is the image of the good loser that has haunted postwar Japanese discussions of Japan's role in World War II. On the level of official discourse, Japan's representation of the bomb supplements the American government's stance toward its use by mimicking the U.S. government's justification for bombing Hiroshima and Nagasaki: the bomb was necessary to conclude the conflict between the two countries.[73] With the show of overwhelming American power, Japan transformed itself into a model, desirable loser for the United States. At the level of popular discourse, the

bomb's impressive power became a lightning rod that attracted much of the discussion of the war in Japan; the bomb has come to metonymically represent all memories of the war.[74] The story of the rescue and conversion of Japan privileges bilateral relations with the United States and represses the memories of Japan's conflicts with other countries. The war, fought over a period of fourteen years beginning in late 1931 and involving other Asian and European countries, is reduced to the United States' bombing of Japan (with incendiary bombs and particularly with the atomic bombs).

In *1984*, his caricature of the Cold War world, George Orwell deftly characterizes the logic of contradiction that defines international relations after 1945: the constant realignments of alliances between three states—Oceania, Eurasia, and Eastasia—necessitates a constant rewriting of history. The protagonist, Winston Smith, lives in London, a city in Oceania, and begins questioning the authority of Big Brother, the Ministry of Truth, and the Party—the authorities that repress and rewrite history. In the constant shift of alliances between Eurasia and Eastasia, memories of a past alliance with a present enemy and a past adversarial relationship with a present ally are obliterated through various ideological conditionings. One central method to overcome the contradictions in history is "doublethink," a practice all the members of Oceania have to adhere to. The contradiction between goodness and destruction is embodied by the Party's ubiquitous slogan: "WAR IS PEACE / FREEDOM IS SLAVERY / IGNORANCE IS STRENGTH." One of the characteristics of doublethink is "to hold simultaneously two opinions . . . , knowing them to be contradictory and believing in both of them."[75]

It is easy to detect the process of doublethink in the American popular discourse of the bombs. In the midst of the recent *Enola Gay* controversy, the Senate passed Resolution 257, which reads: "the role of the *Enola Gay* during World War II was momentous in helping to bring World War II to *a merciful end*, which resulted in saving lives of Americans and Japanese" (emphasis added).[76] It is precisely the destructiveness of the weapon that brings good: the slap had to be serious enough to wake the heroine. In *1984*, the use of doublethink constitutes the means to suspend people's critical thinking and to repress memories; in the postwar foundational narrative, doublethink, which posits that the atomic bomb (and the emperor) brought peace, naturalizes the destructive nature of the nuclear weapons.

One is also required to doublethink the existence of Japan in the postwar U.S. hegemony: Japan is an ally and an enemy simultaneously. It is precisely this ambivalence that both enables and ironically destabilizes the narrative that smoothes over the drastic and arbitrary historical transformation in U.S.-Japanese relations in the postwar period. The chasm in

the historical narrative has been sutured through the construction of Japan as a good enemy/loser; yet the suture functions as a constant reminder of the chasm itself—the sudden realignment of alliances. As long as Japan stays in this category of a good enemy—an enemy that submits to U.S. might—the semblance of peace can be maintained. However, once Japan steps outside, or is perceived to step outside, of its prescribed role in the drama, the good enemy simply slides back into the category of enemy. It is no surprise that Japan once again emerged as a threat to U.S. national security in the fervor of "Japan bashing" in the late 1980s by the U.S. media, a response to numerous trade conflicts between the two countries in the postwar period. The postwar foundational narrative's power has been constantly challenged by the ever changing power dynamics of the two countries, and to each challenge, the narrative responds with its basic theme of the popular representations of the two countries' relations— rescue and conversion.

In recent criticisms of Japan and its economic practices, Japan emerged once again as a contradictory entity; moreover, the popular discourse that emphasized Japan's economic threat to U.S. interests was expressed in the form of sexual anxiety. In a May 1989 article, the Washington-based journalist James Fallows advocated the necessity of dealing with the Japanese economic threat. Although Fallows's article did not offer new insights into the state of Japan's economy, his rhetoric, along with the article's accompanying illustrations, revealed not only the deep-seated narrative structure of the good enemy in recent attempts to explain Japan but also the ease with which tropes of nuclear containment inform the discussion of U.S.-Japanese relations. Fallows argued that "there is a basic conflict between Japanese and American interests—notwithstanding that the two countries need each other as friends."[77] If Japan's "adversarial trade" practices were not contained, they would harm the United States and the rest of the world. This containment was symbolically depicted in one of the article's illustrations: a smiling globe—its face on the Atlantic and North America—offers a corset to an oversized sumo wrestler (fig. 4). The smooth and hairless body of the sumo wrestler announces its gender trouble: Japan, pictured as an aggressive male figure because of its economic power, must be forced back inside a corset and into the image of a good, effeminate, and docile enemy.

One finds a similar sentiment expressed in Michael Crichton's 1992 novel *Rising Sun* (Crichton actually includes Fallows's article in his bibliography). Crichton's novel opens with the discovery of the murder of a young Caucasian female at the Nakamoto Building, the U.S. headquarters of a Japanese corporation. Detective Smith, the novel's protagonist, learns that the Japanese economy is taking over the United States. The United States and Japan are in an economic war that most Americans are un-

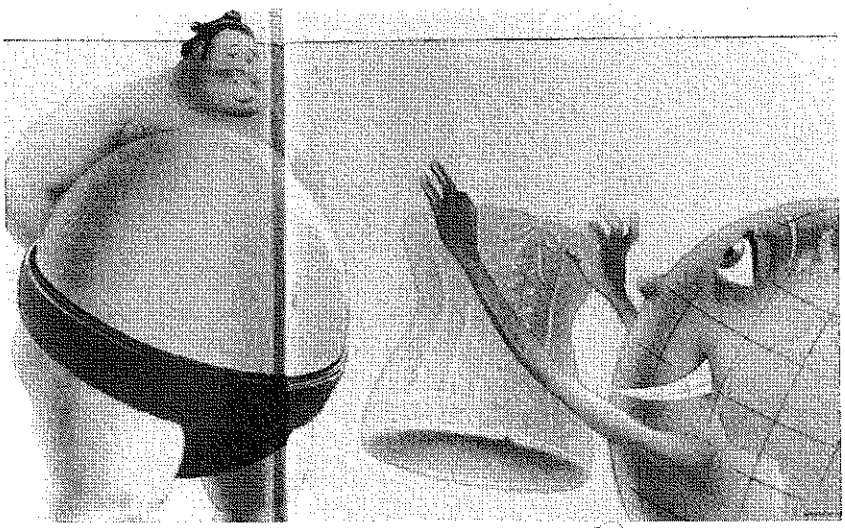

Figure 4. Art by Robert Grossman. *The Atlantic*, May 1989, 46–47.

aware of, and Japan is winning. Japan emerges in the story as an aggressive male, as the mystery unfolds around two main themes: the deviant sexual behavior of the Japanese male and Japan's aggressive trading practices. The chastity of white womanhood is juxtaposed to American security, both of which have to be protected from aggressive Japanese (male) behavior. Crichton's writing appears to be a simple extension of American wartime propaganda, which often invoked white womanhood in need of defense (fig. 5). Yet there are curious parallels in the story between postwar U.S.-Japanese relations and the domestic conflicts that Detective Smith experiences in *Rising Sun*. It is his wife's ambition to be a successful lawyer that destroys their family life: the couple was divorced because she was not satisfied with her domestic role as a mother. Her career success is a threat to Smith much in the same way as Japan's economic might is a danger to American security. Japan and Smith's wife become threats once they overstep their assigned roles in Crichton's misogynist world.

Detective Smith indulges in a sense of anxiety after the case comes to its conclusion, a conclusion that is far from the usual denouement of a mystery novel. A dark chasm of anxiety begins to erode the foundation of his daily life, which has hitherto appeared solid. He ruminates over the uneasy feeling in his heart as he watches his daughter sleep in her crib:

> I thought of the way she slept, so trustingly, lying on her back, her arms thrown over her head. I thought of the way she trusted me to make her world for her now. And I thought of the world that she would grow into. And as I started to make her bed, I felt uneasy in my heart.[78]

Figure 5. One of two hundred war posters displayed at the Museum of Modern Art in 1942. *Life*, December 21, 1942, p.53.

Smith sees the future of American womanhood in his daughter, and he is not sure whether he will be able to protect it. It used to be that the destructive power of nuclear weapons was the main threat to U.S. security and an anxious obsession of the American people. Here, Smith's fear is less clearly definable and more insidious. Ironically, he fears that the very principle the United States fought the Cold War for—the principle of a free economy—may now allow American women and Japan to transgress their docile feminine roles.

Crichton and Fallows are fearful that the two nations may be breaking out of the roles prescribed by the foundational narrative of the postwar period. Japan should simply adhere to the role of good enemy. At one point in Crichton's novel, a character states, "You know I have colleagues who say sooner or later we're going to have to drop another bomb. They think it'll come to that."[79] Ultimately, the atomic bomb recalls the memories of the two countries' conflict and the narrative of rescue and conversion. For Crichton, the boundaries need to be re-marked: the United States should reassert its male role, and Japan should be reminded of its role as a good, feminized enemy.

Crichton's character imagines the bomb as an option in dealing with the shifting historical conditions between the United States and Japan, at the risk of annihilating the entire human population. However, I would like to suggest a more modest measure. We should return to the postwar history of the two countries, where the foundational narrative has been produced, repeated, negotiated, distorted, exaggerated, denied, and accepted. The narrative may have confined the historical imagination; yet the process through which the narrative has exerted itself has not been uniform. The power of the foundational narrative derives from its contradictory claims; hence, it requires constant maintenance. We must attend to these processes in our search for alternative paths in history. By excavating the historical processes that produced and sustained the foundational narrative in both countries and by realizing the United States' and Japan's shared space in history we can start to imagine new narratives for U.S.-Japanese relations. The following chapters focus on the processes through which postwar Japanese society recuperated war-scarred Japan's nationhood within this shared space. In chapter 2, I return to the immediate postwar period to examine strategies for restoring the health of the national body.