

Yuki MIYAMOTO

## Rebirth in the Pure Land or God's Sacrificial Lambs? Religious Interpretations of the Atomic Bombings in Hiroshima and Nagasaki

This article explores the development of religious discourse surrounding the experiences of the atomic bombings of 1945. Although there have been attempts to discuss the ethics of the use of the bomb and nuclear weaponry from theological perspectives, little exists in the way of religious approaches to the experiences of those who suffered directly from the atomic bombings. I argue that religious understandings can and should contribute to the existing atomic bomb discourse, which is largely determined by a nation-state framework.

**KEYWORDS:** Atomic bomb – Pure Land Buddhism – Catholicism – nuclear arms issues – ethics

Yuki Miyamoto is a Visiting Assistant Professor, Department of Religious Studies, DePaul University.

THIS PAPER explores religious interpretations of the 1945 atomic bombings in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. My goal in this paper is to challenge the presently prevailing atomic bomb discourse, which is bound by a nation-state framework, and to propose religious interpretations as alternative readings to these events. In doing so, I argue that, despite certain limitations to these interpretations, they can contribute to a more inclusive understanding of the bombings—an understanding that the current discourse is unable to provide.

The bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki has often been discussed from within a discourse based upon nation-state boundaries. The Smithsonian debate of 1994–1995 exemplifies an interpretation of the atomic bombings that is bound by a nation-state framework. In 1994, Martin Harwit, then curator of the Smithsonian Institution's Air and Space Museum, planned a fiftieth anniversary exhibition to commemorate the end of World War II. A part of this plan included images of the atomic bombing taken from ground level, and for this purpose the Air and Space Museum made an arrangement for the loan of items from the Peace Museums in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. A number of World War II veterans in the United States, however, opposed Harwit's plan as "anti-patriotic," resulting in the cancellation of the original plan, as well as Harwit's resignation from the museum (HARWIT 1996, and LINENTHAL 1996, pp. 9–62).

In Japan, on the other hand, Hiroshima and Nagasaki, as memorial sites, became part of a "Japanese" collective past. That is to say, the bombings were presumed to have occurred to Japan as a nation state and to the Japanese people as a whole. This phenomenon culminated in the 1980s when prime ministers and major newspaper companies began to employ rhetoric implying that the experience of the atomic bombings was unique to Japan and the Japanese people.<sup>1</sup> The rhetoric suggested that Japan was the only country that truly knew the destruction of nuclear weapons, and that the Japanese were the only people who truly knew the horror of nuclear attacks. Such rhetoric was founded upon a myth that Japan was a homogeneous country, as expressed in the annual White Paper of Japan's Defense Agency of 1983, which referred to Japan as "one race, one state, and one language" (DOWER 1986, p. 315). Along with this rhetoric of privileges—the privilege of the Japanese as homogeneous people and the privilege of having a "unique" experience of atomic bombing—the two cities became prominent sightseeing spots and destinations for school excursions in the 1980s (YONEYAMA 1999, p. 100). This view of Hiroshima and Nagasaki as national

1. The rhetoric in which Japan is referred to as *yuiitsu no hibakukoku* 唯一の被爆国 ("the only country") itself existed in the 1950s; see ICHIBA 2001, pp. 89–91.

memorial sites of victimhood was challenged and radically altered in the 1990s. Coinciding with the death of the Shōwa Emperor in 1989, various *hibakusha* 被爆者 (atomic bomb victim) minorities emerged in public discourse. These included Korean, Okinawan, Japanese-American, American POW, and Dutch POW *hibakusha*, whose experiences had been expelled from the Japanese collective past.<sup>2</sup> The testimonies of the *hibakusha* minorities thus contested the dominant atomic bomb discourse in Japan, in which the experience of the atomic bombing was constitutive of Japanese uniqueness. In other words, while the atomic bombings influenced and impacted Japanese identity-formation, a number of *hibakusha* minorities, who experienced the atomic bombings and aftermath outside the nation-state framework, had been left out. This suggests that a nation-state framework that outlines the atomic bombings becomes inadequate to account for their experiences. In fact, it is extremely crucial to retrieve the experiences that have been often unrecognized in discussing the atomic bomb issue. This is precisely because such experiences enable us to realize the indiscriminate nature of this nuclear weaponry, which distinguishes it from other so-called “conventional” ones.<sup>3</sup>

In addressing this issue, I propose to examine religious, rather than strictly political, interpretations of the bombing. Unlike the existing discourse on the atomic bombings in the United States and Japan, religious interpretations are not necessarily grounded in national boundaries, but in theological understandings of history, anthropology, and soteriology. Through such differences, religious interpretations create different frameworks that can go beyond the nation-state framework, by which the victims of the atomic bombings, regardless of their national identities, take part in discourse, as well as non-victims. I argue, therefore, that religious interpretations provide us with a more inclusive perspective on this historical event, and thereby they can contribute to creating a discourse in which the marginalized *hibakusha* participate more fully, regardless of their connection, or lack thereof, to a particular nation-state. It is extremely important to stress my argument here that religious interpretations only supplement the existing atomic bomb discourse, but not replace it. They have their own frameworks and those who do not share the same faith will find themselves unheard when a particular religious interpretation becomes a dominant narrative.

In order to present my argument, I will focus primarily the work of two

2. Significantly, corresponding to the death of the Shōwa Emperor, a number of atrocities that the Japanese Imperial Army committed during the Pacific War (1931–1945)—such as the Nanjing massacre, the use of “comfort women” (systematic sex slavery by the Army), and the vivisection experiments of Unit 731—emerged in public discourse. It is important to note that employing a victim narrative based upon the atomic bomb experience promoted a selective amnesia among the Japanese about the past atrocities on a national level.

3. The prolonged life-threatening effect of radiation is another characteristic that distinguishes nuclear weapons from other bombs.

thinkers who attempt to come to terms with the atomic bomb incidents in a religious context: the first is the interpretation by Nagai Takashi, a Catholic convert in Nagasaki. The second is that of Kōji Shigenobu, a True Pure Land (Jōdo Shinshū) priest residing in Hiroshima. The selection of these two religious figures reflects the religious demography of Nagasaki and Hiroshima respectively. Over half of the residents of Nagasaki's Urakami area, over which the atomic bomb was detonated, profess the Catholic faith, while Hiroshima is characterized by its significant *Aki-monto* 安芸門徒 (True Pure Landers of Hiroshima) population.

In examining these different religious traditions on interpretations of the atomic bombing, I will test the possibilities, as well as limitations, of religious interpretations in coming to a greater understanding of human-made mass death such as that of the atomic bombing. To this end, I will address to the following questions: (1) a theological question—how can we understand the atomic bombing incident in relation to God or Amida (Amitābha) Buddha?; (2) a soteriological question—in a religious context, what does it mean to die from the atomic bomb?; and (3) an anthropological question—what does the atomic bombing tell us about human nature more generally?

I open this paper with a brief history of the Catholic community of Urakami in order to attain a better understanding of their eventual embracing of Nagai's idiosyncratic interpretation of the bombing. After examining Nagai Takashi's theological interpretation of the event, I will introduce Kōji's True Pure Land's interpretation, which stands in contrast to Nagai's. Through this comparative study of two religious understandings of the bombing, I hope to develop a perspective that is broader and more inclusive than that of the prevailing discourse, which is confined by a nation-state framework.

### *A Brief History of Urakami*

Christianity was introduced to Japan in 1549, when St. Francis Xavier, one of the six founders of the Society of Jesus (the Jesuits), landed with the ambition to proselytize the Japanese people. Having gained favor from several powerful feudal lords seeking for trading opportunities at the time, the missionaries succeeded in the promulgation of Christianity for the first thirty years. The number of converts exceeded thirty thousand within a decade. Although this number includes many cases of mass conversion, in which feudal lords imposed baptism on their retainers and subordinates, the figure comprised over one percent of the entire population (SPAER 1964, pp. 4–5, and BOXER 1951, p. 321).<sup>4</sup> This favorable relationship, which was based upon the feudal lords' interest in the firearms pro-

4. In a letter by Alessandro Valignano dated 16 October 1601, the number of Catholic converts was estimated to be 300,000 while the entire population was 20,000,000 in 1601. Alessandro Valignano (1539–1606), a native of present-day Italy, and a Visitor (Supervisor) of the Jesuit mission in Asia, arrived in Japan in 1579.

vided by the missionaries' home countries, underwent a change when two of the prominent lords attempted to unify Japan. The missionaries' close connection to their homelands—primarily Spain, Portugal, and Italy—became a threat to the lords, who now viewed these countries as a danger to the unified Japan. Unlike the previous “Warring states” period (*sengoku jidai* 戦国時代) when many feudal lords sought to fortify their power by importing firearms from Western countries, once unification was achieved to some extent, the unifiers' concern shifted to protecting themselves from those countries that were capable of providing such powerful weapons. Finally, in 1614, threatened by the influences of these countries, the Tokugawa shogunate proscribed Christian practice, and persecuted the Christian populace.

Because of this persecution, the Japanese Catholics had no other choice but to either proselytize or practice their faith in secret. However, several Catholic communities survived this persecution that ended up lasting over two hundred and fifty years. Among them were the Urakami Catholics. To this day, they maintain the belief that their religious lineage has passed unbroken from their ancestors, who were initiated into Christianity by the Western missionaries in the sixteenth century. It is true, however, that the Catholic faith was transformed during the time when Christianity was officially forbidden from 1614 to 1873. As adherents to Catholicism were forced to practice underground, disguising their faith in the outward accoutrements of Buddhism, their religious exercises thus merged with certain practices of indigenous folk religion and Buddhism. Finally in 1867, the Urakami Catholics were reconnected to the Church when the Tokugawa shogunate, at the mercy of treaties with the United States and several other countries, made a decision to permit foreigners to reside in Japan and practice Christianity. However, the edict addressed to these newcomer foreigners from America and European countries alone and the shogunate still disallowed the Japanese to practice this proscribed religion (see TOBY 1984).<sup>5</sup>

When the Paris Foreign Missioners<sup>6</sup> built a church in Yokohama in 1862, and another in Ōura, Nagasaki in 1865, a group of Catholics from the Urakami area visited this Ōura church, and thereby confirmed that the religious practice from their ancestors was that of Roman Catholicism (SPAE 1964, p. 13). Encouraged by the reconnection to the Church, the Urakami Catholics became less afraid of pronouncing their faith, despite the ongoing official proscription of Christianity. Eventually they conducted a funeral without a Buddhist priest, in opposition to the Tokugawa shogunate's mandate. In 1867, the shogunate imprisoned sixty-eight prominently active Urakami Catholics, and in 1868 exiled one

5. The shogunate permitted Chinese, Koreans, and Dutch people to live in Dejima, Nagasaki, before the treaty.

6. The Vatican purposely dispatched the Paris Foreign Missioners, instead of the Jesuits, since among all the orders the Jesuits had suffered the most from the Tokugawa persecution because of their enthusiasm for missionary work.

hundred and fourteen villagers into different domains in Japan for their practice of a proscribed religion. In the same year, the Meiji government overthrew the Tokugawa shogunate and established itself as a nation state, modeled after Great Britain, France, Germany, and the United States. Yet, its religious policy remained unchanged. It was not until 1873 that this newly established Meiji government allowed all the villagers in exile to return home, largely because of pressure from those countries the government was emulating. Thus, the Urakami Catholics returned home after a five-year absence, only to find their village in ruins. Despite their hardships, in 1914, just forty-one years after their return, they completed a cathedral that became the largest one in East Asia at the time. Unfortunately, on 9 August 1945, the atomic bomb was detonated over the cathedral, destroying the church and the entire vicinity.

After Japan's surrender to the Allied Powers in 1945, Westernization, or more precisely Americanization, made Christianity more familiar to the Japanese. Nonetheless, the number of Christian converts remained less than one percent of the entire Japanese population. Considering this figure, the high population of Catholics in the Urakami area is particularly remarkable. In fact, only a year after the bombing, the Urakami Catholics rebuilt their church temporarily as a place to worship, while postponing the construction of their own houses. After creating this temporary place of worship, they completed a new cathedral with twin spires, which became again "the largest of the Far East" until 1962 (VAN HECKEN 1963, p. 210). With this history and concentration of Catholics in Urakami in mind, I will now turn to Nagai Takashi's interpretation of the atomic bombing.

#### *Nagai Takashi's Interpretation: God's Sacrificial Lambs*

Nagai Takashi was a well-respected medical doctor and Catholic convert in the Urakami community. He was born into a family whose father and grandfather were also doctors in Shimane prefecture, and the family practiced Shinto, more specifically, Izumo Shinto of which the main shrine is located close to his hometown. His mother was from a samurai (warrior) class, and she disciplined her children with the Japanese Confucian ethics that was largely employed by this class. Nagai himself became attracted to materialism, as he developed his interests in science in his high school days. The turning point for him was when his mother died. He hurried home from Nagasaki, where he studied medicine, to be at his mother's deathbed. His mother's last gaze at Nagai made him believe in the existence of human spirit beyond the decay of the physical body. Nagai's biographers have speculated on several reasons for his conversion to Catholicism,<sup>7</sup> among which is this experience of being present at his mother's death.

7. William Johnston, who translated Nagai's *Nagasaki no kane*, speculates that Pascal's *Pan-sée*, the Angelus at the Urakami Cathedral, and Nagai's wife Moriyama Midori, were the primary factors that influenced Nagai to convert. See William Johnston's "Introduction" in NAGAI 1984, p. viii.

Others are his encounter with the work of Pascal, who mitigated his rational life as a scientist and his spiritual life as a believer, with the Angelus from the Cathedral that created ethereal atmosphere, and with the Moriyama family, whose only daughter became his wife.<sup>8</sup>

I will enlarge the list of possible reasons by adding his encounter with the living faith of the Urakami villagers. After the loss of his mother, Nagai needed a quiet environment to calm his upset mind. Having lived in the downtown area of Nagasaki for two years, he had already noticed the two different faces of the city. One face displays a town of commerce where the foreign ships and traders filled the downtown area with exotic goods; it is a town of excitement, amusement, and passion. Another face shows a town of prayer, where one encounters Catholic priests, monks, and nuns on the streets, as well as cathedrals, churches, and other Catholic institutions such as hospitals, nurseries, and orphanages. What attracted Nagai to this religious face of Nagasaki at that time must have been his aspiration for spirituality, for something beyond materialism.

Thus, he moved to the Urakami area and convinced the Moriyama family to provide a room for him. His future wife, Midori, was the only daughter of this family, which was known as the Office of the Calendar (*chōkata* 帳方) throughout the persecution period (1614–1873)—the position in charge of announcing holidays and celebrations according to the Church calendar. After their marriage, Nagai was diagnosed with leukemia while he was working as a radiologist at Nagasaki Medical School. Acknowledging that he would have only three to four years to live, Nagai was hoping that his wife would raise their children after his death. Ironically, it was not Nagai but Midori who left their children behind. She died an almost instant death due to the bomb, while Nagai managed to reunite with his children after the bombing despite his injuries. Nagai's two children and Midori's mother suffered no direct damage from the bomb, as they had evacuated from the Urakami area. They joined Nagai five days after the detonation of the bomb.

While Nagai and his bereaved family were restoring their lives in Urakami, Nagai's former students, who had been conscripted into the army, visited him upon their return. Frustrated with their loss, they told Nagai that non-Catholics and even Catholics perceived the atomic bombing on the Urakami area as a punishment from God or the gods (*kami*). Non-Catholics claimed that Urakami Catholics had been worshipping a "foreign" god, which led to the bombing of Urakami, while Catholics blamed themselves for being unfaithful and giving in to the militaristic regime, unlike their ancestors who had endured a long-lasting persecution. Upon hearing their lament, Nagai felt an urge to explain what the

---

Philosopher TAKAHASHI Shinji disagrees slightly with Johnston and adds Nagai's mother's death to the list of direct causes (1994, p. 195).

8. As for Nagai's conversion, see his semi-autobiographical *Horobinu mono o* (NAGAI 1996).

atomic bombing meant to the Urakami Catholics. In his mind, this incident was by no means a punishment from God.

One of Nagai's friends, Yamada Ichitarō, who lost all of his family to the atomic bomb, visited Nagai at about the same time. Like other Urakami Catholics, Yamada was eager to know why this atrocity befell them. Yamada pressed Nagai to provide an answer for the meaning of the bomb, especially when some non-Catholics understood that the gods had separated good from evil through using the bomb. Yamada explained that non-Catholics, primarily Shintoists, believed that the bomb was a punishment from Heaven. Those who died were evil people who failed to worship Shinto gods, while those who survived had received special grace. Yamada asked Nagai whether or not the people who were killed by the bomb, including his wife and children, were evil, deserving God's punishment (NAGAI 1984, p. 106). Responding to Yamada, Nagai introduced his own understanding of the bombing: "I have a completely different view. In fact, I have the opposite view. The atomic bomb falling on Nagasaki was a great act of Divine Providence. It was an act of grace from God. Nagasaki must give thanks to God" (NAGAI 1984, p. 106). Nagai comforted Yamada by assuring him that his family members were not evil but were, on the contrary, holy enough to be chosen as a sacrifice, while those who survived the bomb, like Nagai and Yamada, had to face the loss, that is, the loss of their families, belongings, and the war.

In addition to conversations with his former students and friends, two episodes contributed to the development of Nagai's interpretation of the bombing as Divine Providence. First, several nurses from the radiology department where Nagai was working testified that they had heard Latin hymns around midnight of the ninth, but were too exhausted to find out who was singing. The next morning, the nurses passed by the place where they had heard the hymns, and discovered twenty-seven nuns from the Josei convent burned to death. The second episode concerned Catholic schoolgirls at Junshin high school, where Nagai's wife Midori had once taught. During the war, the school principal, Sr. Ezumi Sue, had the students sing a hymn every day to ask for God's protection. The hymn begins with the words, "Mother Mary, I offer myself to you, my body, my soul, and my spirit." Most of the Junshin girls died singing this very hymn on the day of the bombing. These two stories, in which nuns and schoolgirls died singing hymns, deeply moved Nagai, and in fact implanted in him the image that he would go on to use in his explanation of the bombing: sacrificial lambs burnt at the altar, praising God.

Three months after the atomic bombing, on 23 November 1945, Nagai was asked to deliver a speech at a Requiem Mass. At this Mass, he addressed the Urakami Catholics openly, saying they should thank God for the atomic bombing. Those who were killed by the bomb, he claimed, were God's "sacrificial lambs." They were, in fact, unblemished lambs chosen by God to atone for the human sins of war. His conclusive remarks announced more explicitly the link



between the victims of the bomb and God's grace acting through them. "Let us be thankful that Nagasaki was chosen for the whole-burnt sacrifice! Let us be thankful that through this sacrifice, the world saw peace, which brought religious freedom to Japan" (GLYNN 1990, p. 190). Despite the apparent idiosyncrasy of Nagai's understanding, the Urakami Catholics embraced his interpretation, relieved to know that their loved ones were chosen, not punished.

In order to understand the acceptance of Nagai's interpretation of the atomic bombing, we must take into account the pride of the Urakami Catholics in their unbroken lineage of the Catholic faith that endured persecution. For example, Bishop Urakawa Wasaburō (SHIRABE 1972, p. 158) once stated that "[w]hen the Urakami Catholics returned from their 'journey' (the exile from 1868 to 1873), Urakami was a wasteland with no soul. However, we rose up from the devastation. We were even able to build a marvelous church right here in Urakami. Unfortunately, the atomic bomb smashed our seventy-year-old accomplishment into pieces once again. Those victims were all righteously devoted believers."<sup>9</sup> By overlapping the wreckage after the "journey" and the destruction after the bomb, Urakawa reminded the atomic bomb survivors of their ancestors' hardships. In other words, the 1945 tragedy is associated with their community's hardships of not long ago, or the event cannot be understood without their faith of survival. Although there were only some twenty Urakami Catholics who experienced the "journey" seventy-five years prior, most of the survivors knew this story as that of the experience of their parents or grandparents. The narrative of the "journey" provided Urakami Catholics with an identity as enduring Catholics, which came to be inseparable from their experience of the atomic bombing. Bishop Urakawa's conclusion reinforces Nagai's understanding of the atomic bomb: "All are in Heaven. We survivors should take the atomic bomb as God's providence, and do our best to restore Urakami" (SHIRABE 1972, p. 158). However, when John Paul II visited Japan in 1981, he obliquely denied Nagai's interpretation, stating that "war is the work of man. War is destruction of human life. War is death."<sup>10</sup> While the majority of the Urakami Catholics embraced Nagai's interpretation of the bomb as God's Providence, some other Catholics as well as non-Catholics began to challenge this understanding.

### *The Catholic Response to Nagai*

Although common Urakami Catholics tacitly embraced Nagai's understanding, voices disagreeing with Nagai's interpretation gradually emerged. Akizuki

9. Shirabe Raisuke led the sixth relief team on the day of the bombing as a doctor and assistant professor at the Nagasaki Medical School, while Nagai led the eleventh relief team.

10. This quote from Pope John Paul II appears engraved in stone at Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum upon his visit on 25 February 1981. He also visited Nagasaki, but never publicly mentioned the relationship between the Nagasaki bombing and Catholic faith, according to Itō Akihiko (1993, pp. 301–303).

Tatsuichirō (1916–) was one such voice. Like Nagai, Akizuki was a medical doctor.<sup>11</sup> Interestingly, he once worked with Nagai, undertaking a job at the Radiology Department at the Nagasaki Medical School, when Nagai was an assistant professor for a year. Akizuki also converted from True Pure Land Buddhism to Catholicism much later in his experience of the atomic bombing.<sup>12</sup> Before his conversion to Catholicism, Akizuki criticized religious leaders and their institutions, claiming that they could not provide practical solutions for dealing with atomic bomb issues. “Thinking about the atomic bomb was a fundamental issue of human nature in general and was crucial to the integrity of any religious sect. Nonetheless, religious leaders remained silent and devoted themselves to prayer alone” (AKIZUKI 1972, pp. 244–45). After his conversion, he continued to criticize religious leaders’ incapability to engage this issue, as well as Nagai’s understanding, not from a theological point of view but from the perspective of a peace activist.

In the beginning of his engagement with the atomic bomb issue, Akizuki was more involved in disseminating information about the experience of the bomb, but later he became active in the struggle to abolish nuclear weapons. Frustrated with the failed efforts at nuclear disarmament and unceasing nuclear production, Akizuki began to attribute the ineffectiveness of the anti-nuclear movement to certain interpretations of the bombing, such as that of Nagai. Citing several paragraphs from *Manira no higeki* マニラの悲劇 (Japanese atrocities in Manila) attached to NAGAI’s *Nagasaki no kane* (1984) when the piece was first published, Akizuki accused the “SCAP (the Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers) narrative” in this piece of being a major factor rendering the atomic bomb experience forgotten. Akizuki summarizes this SCAP narrative:

If all of a sudden a man becomes violent, and murders whomever he encounters on the street, a police officer must capture him. This is the assignment that Japan imposed on the United States and the rest of the world. In order to terminate such indiscriminate atrocities and end the war, the United States and the rest of the world were compelled to use atomic bombs. By doing so, we were able to save innumerable lives in Japan and other countries. The war that Japan inaugurated in Rokokyo Bridge in 1937, and in the sudden attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, was brought to an end by the complete destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. (AKIZUKI 1972, p. 250)

While Akizuki acknowledges Japan’s aggression, he tries to argue for the disproportional destruction of the bomb. All in all, his statements are based upon

11. Akizuki was born in Nagasaki, trained to be a doctor at Kyoto University, and returned to Nagasaki to become a tuberculosis specialist in 1940. Akizuki had tuberculosis himself and lost two sisters to the same disease. The misunderstanding that tuberculosis was hereditary meant that having tuberculosis, or family members with tuberculosis, rendered one a pariah in prewar Japanese society (see AKIZUKI 1972, pp. 21–22).

12. Akizuki received baptism in a Catholic Church in October 1953.

theoretical, rather than theological, claims. He maintains, for example, that placing the bomb in a framework of cause-and-effect constitutes a misunderstanding whereby one deduces that Japanese transgression was the justification for the bomb. According to him, the bomb cannot be justified for its indiscriminate disposition.<sup>13</sup> His criticism against Nagai is that Nagai's understanding, though not necessarily justifying the use of the bomb, nevertheless encourages the Urakami *hibakusha* to passively accept the bomb as God's will, rather than being active in voicing their hardships and in banning such weaponry. Since Akizuki and Nagai take different viewpoints and address different audiences, there are limits to comparing their understanding of the bomb. A limit of Nagai's understanding, for example, is that it unfortunately resulted in confining the experiences of Urakami Catholics to themselves for a long time.

Another limit to Nagai's understanding was shown by Inoue Hisashi, a well-known playwright, who has written three plays concerning the atomic bombings. At the time of the war, he was a young catechumen residing in a Catholic nursing institute in Sendai, a city in the northern part of Japan. After he read a series of Nagai's books when they were published in the late 1940s and early 1950s, Nagai became a role model for Inoue as a Catholic intellectual. In fact, Nagai was becoming well known to the public through his works after the war.<sup>14</sup> In 1948, Nagai's *Konoko o nokoshite* この子を残して (Leaving my children) was ranked the ninth best-selling book of the year. In the following year, it placed first, and *Nagasaki no kane* 長崎の鐘 (The bells of Nagasaki) placed fourth. Nagai, thus, represented "a cultural hero at the forefront of the times, and a religious leader who had transcended life and death" (INOUE 1995, p. 59). Despite Nagai's fame reaching its peak and Inoue sharing the same faith as Nagai, Inoue struggled to accept Nagai's interpretation of the bomb. He recalls his discomfort when reading Nagai's books, especially regarding Nagai's explanation that those killed by the bomb were a sacrifice holy enough to atone for human sins. Remembering his acquaintances who were also killed in the war as victims of air raids or as soldiers, Inoue felt uncomfortable with the idea that their deaths were inadequate for God (INOUE 1995, p. 60). In other words, Nagai's granting of a privilege to the dead in the Nagasaki bombing inevitably makes other victims inferior to them. Even though Inoue identifies himself with the Catholic church, he is unable to identify himself with the Urakami Catholics, which demonstrate a limit of Nagai's understanding.

13. "I claim that each case of mass death caused by humans should not be encompassed together due to its similarities, but be treated individually with respect for its uniqueness." This statement by Akizuki, however, contains the danger of privileging the atomic bomb incident due to its "uniqueness" over that of other cases.

14. In 1949, for example, the Emperor visited Nagasaki and wished Nagai a swift recovery; Pope Pius XII sent an envoy, praising Nagai as a model Catholic of Japan; the city of Nagasaki acclaimed him as an honored citizen; the Diet commended him; and *Nagasaki no kane* was made into a hit movie by Shindō Kaneto in 1950, and its theme song swept Japan.

As Inoue illustrates above, Nagai's interpretation is difficult to adopt without sharing the history of Urakami Catholics. Motoshima Hitoshi, former Nagasaki mayor and a Catholic, places Nagai's thoughts in a historical context. Tracing the Urakami Catholics' history through the persecution in the Tokugawa period (1604–1868) up to their suffering under the fascist regime during the war (1937–1945), Motoshima claims the atomic bombing brought religious freedom. He states that the attainment of true freedom of religion was the only good fortune that befell the Urakami Catholics, since they had never enjoyed it before 1945 (*Nagasaki shinbun*, 4 August 2000). His words are quite convincing, considering that his own grandfather had his ankle damaged due to the persecution. He continues to say that the idea of "God's providence" alone encouraged the Urakami Catholics to restore their community. This is not to say that the sense of "privilege" gave them hope, but that the belief of Catholics that one should appreciate fortune as well as misfortune as gifts from God kept them going. "[I]f mishaps [as well as good fortune] are also from God, Catholics should overcome this affliction of the bomb, appreciating God. Nagai would have liked to claim that we Catholics must have the strength to do so" (*Nagasaki shinbun*, 4 August 2000). Their association to the past taught them that even in the midst of despair, they are God's creation. Instead of focusing on Nagai's understanding of the bomb as God's Providence, Motoshima draws attention to Nagai's insight, wherein Nagai asserts that the war initiated by the Japanese was unjust. This perspective was remarkable, explains Motoshima, especially at a time when most Japanese were still in a stage of self-claimed victimization. Motoshima does not criticize Nagai, but demonstrates that it may be meaningless to argue against Nagai's understanding apart from the theological and historical standpoints. In fact, the criticisms from non-Catholics circles will demonstrate this point.

Most of the criticism, besides attacking Nagai's personality, can be summed up in the notion that Nagai's writing intentionally catered to the Japanese government and SCAP in three ways (see especially TAKAHASHI 1994). First, Nagai's theory exonerated the Japanese government from taking responsibility for prolonging the war. Had the government ended the war sooner, the bomb would not have been dropped. Yet, in his theory, the chosen lambs atoned for such sins. Second, Nagai's interpretation created the sentiment among the Urakami Catholics of tolerating the atomic bombing as God's will, rather than condemning it as an indiscriminate weapon. Third, Nagai's written pieces, in which he expressed his faith in nuclear technology as a peaceful source of future energy, conveniently fit the United States' program of producing more powerful nuclear weapons and testing them in order to win the arms race against the Communist camp. Regardless of Nagai's intention, SCAP used Nagai's writing to divert the *hibakusha's* anger from them.<sup>15</sup> In fact, Nagai's first book was published in 1949,

15. For example, the Nagasaki *hibakusha* and poet Yamada Kan was dissatisfied with the mass media's treatment of Nagai. "Only a few years after the bombing, a number of *hibakusha* were dying

though with a condition that it should be accompanied with a story about Japanese atrocities in the Philippines (see page 9), while SCAP carried out censorship,<sup>16</sup> especially on writings concerning the atomic bomb experiences. Inoue comments on the SCAP's approval of Nagai's book; "the SCAP must have considered that Nagai's theorization of the dropping of the bomb as God's grace and providence was useful [in justifying the bomb]" (INOUE 1995, p. 61).

### *Responses Among Urakami Catholics*

Like Akizuki and others, there are Catholics other than Nagai who attempted to make sense of the meaning of the destruction from the atomic bomb. For example, Monsignor Paul Yamaguchi, bishop of Nagasaki, stated that "God's ways are not our ways" (WILLIAMS 1956, p. 125), as he beheld the destruction of Urakami. Since Yamaguchi rarely spoke of the bomb afterwards, it remains unclear whether this statement should be taken as claiming that the bomb was actually God's providence, or rather that what human beings have done is not God's will. Shirabe Raisuke summarizes the general view of the atomic bomb among the Urakami Catholics as follows: "Why was the atomic bomb dropped on Urakami? It was God's providence.... Both man's happiness and unhappiness are from God's providence. God always grants us blessings and ordeals, just as we discipline our own children" (SHIRABE 1972, p. 159). Together with the testimonies by *hibakusha* in Urakami compiled in Itō Akihiko's *Genshiya no "yobuki"* (1993), it can be concluded that the interpretation of the bomb as God's providence is a common view of Urakami Catholics.

Kataoka Chizuko is one who defended Nagai against these criticisms.

---

in agony in Nagasaki. Under such circumstances, I always wondered why Nagai alone received attention as if he represented all the *hibakusha*" (*Nagasaki shinbun*, 2 August, 2000). Yamada also feels that the SCAP's occupation policy used Nagai's work and his reputation to distract people's resentment. Reproving this policy, Yamada states, "Nagai's works played a role in diverting the Japanese people's attention away from the criminality of dropping the bombs. SCAP created circumstances whereby the common *hibakusha* were discouraged from questioning the justification for the atomic bomb by embellishing Nagai's works, which resulted in making any criticism of Nagai taboo" (*Nagasaki shinbun*, 2 August 2000). YAMADA (1972) put these thoughts into words in an appeal to the public, which was originally titled *Seija: Manekarezaru daibensha* 聖者—招かれざる代弁者 [The Saint: An unwelcome representative]. (The current title is *Gizensha: Nagai Takashi e no kokuhatu* [A hypocrite: Accusing Nagai Takashi].) Yamada is said to be a former Catholic. On its publication, the essay drew some attention, yet Yamada, looking back at the time of publication, remarks that "all in all, Nagai's pretentious image was too prevalent to draw adequate attention to criticism against him in my essay" (*Nagasaki shinbun*, 2 August, 2000). On the one hand, Yamada was quite disturbed by media attention paid to Nagai and was critical of Nagai's writings. On the other hand, however, he greatly valued the medical records Nagai left while leading the relief unit, primarily because the records appeared to Yamada less subjective than essays, and thereby less manipulative. Yet Nagai was fully aware that the mass media was exploiting him with such praise and criticism, but was also mindful of its usefulness in earning attention and sympathy as well as financial and material aid that could be used to restore Urakami.

16. As for the censorship by SCAP, see Monica BRAW 1991; HORIBA Kiyoko 1995a and 1995b.

Kataoka claimed that the criticism has overlooked the viewpoint of the Urakami Catholics, and argued that Nagai's interpretation of the bomb should be discussed within a Catholic framework, since Nagai exclusively addressed to the Urakami Catholics. Kataoka continued that most of the criticisms do not take into account Nagai's theological interpretation of the atomic bombing, but only his political agenda and its postmortem influence over the Nagasaki narrative. She began her defense with the Catholic understanding of suffering, and explained that it is only within the Catholic viewpoint that Nagai's understanding makes sense theologically. "The fundamental Catholic teaching is that Jesus Christ came down to earth to save mankind, redeemed human sins by suffering on the cross, and has brought everlasting life to us by His resurrection. Human beings are able to participate in the Savior's task by projecting their suffering onto that of Christ. Suffering becomes worthy [to Christians] only by laying it over Christ's" (KATAOKA Chizuko 1996, p. 74). Therefore, maintained Kataoka, "the Urakami Catholics acknowledge that the deaths of their fellow villagers were the sacrifice they had to make to atone for the unprecedented affliction caused by the bombing and the aftermath.... This is the very reason that God required the Urakami Catholics to mediate between men and God in Christ" (KATAOKA Chizuko 1996, p. 75). Almost fifty years later, we see the shift in the focus of the understanding of the bomb from searching for the meaning for death by the bomb to the meaning for the survivors to be alive.

Kataoka also expresses her frustration over recurrent Nagai bashing: "such criticism against Nagai reappears in the same fashion over and over again. They criticize him based upon his employment of the term 'God's providence,' but they take the term not as possessing religious significance, but political connotations" (*Nagasaki shinbun*, 3 August 2000). It is an injustice to Nagai to argue about a common religious term such as "providence" outside of its religious framework, argues Kataoka, and therefore Nagai's interpretation should be contextualized within the boundaries of its religious framework. Not referring to the Urakami history, Kataoka rather stresses the meaning of the atomic bomb from a general Catholic point of view. However, as Inoue confides, even within a Catholic framework, Nagai's understanding of the bomb creates a boundary by which non-Urakami Catholics find it hard to share the experience of the bombing.

Another scholar, Kataoka Yakichi, refutes the claim that Nagai's interpretation prevented the Nagasaki *hibakusha* from becoming actively involved in the anti-nuclear movement. Kataoka gives two historical and geographical reasons for Nagasaki's relatively passive attitude regarding the anti-nuclear movement, which have nothing to do with Nagai's interpretation. First, Nagasaki has an idiosyncratic history of being the only port open to other countries during most of the Tokugawa period. According to Kataoka, this physical openness, more so than other Japanese cities, has nurtured the philanthropic, rather optimistic,

and future-oriented characters of Nagasaki residents, who cultivate an atmosphere of putting misfortune behind them (KATAOKA Yakichi 1972, p. 141). Second, the first atomic bomb destroyed the whole of Hiroshima almost uniformly, and the citizens of the city were able to identify with each other as *hibakusha*, which aided them in uniting in the anti-nuclear movement. The second bomb in Nagasaki, on the other hand, left the center of the city relatively unharmed. As a result, the *hibakusha* consciousness did not spread evenly throughout the city of Nagasaki, as it did in Hiroshima.<sup>17</sup>

Kataoka, then, makes a counter-argument by turning his readers' attention to the contradiction that the anti-nuclear movement embodied. As we have seen, one of the criticisms against Nagai's understanding is that it helped the Urakami *hibakusha* accept the bomb as God's will and prevented them from being actively involved in the anti-nuclear movement based upon their own experiences. Kataoka, however, points out that the anti-nuclear movement itself had internal conflicts and ended up splitting. As Kataoka indicates, the peace movement in Japan, from the experience of the nuclear attacks, invariably revolves around the anti-nuclear agenda. Nevertheless, after the eighth World Peace Conference in 1962, the peace movement dissolved into two groups, that supported by the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and Japan Communist Party (JCP) respectively, due to their disagreement on the Soviet Union's nuclear tests.<sup>18</sup> Kataoka criticizes the way these two groups antagonized each other while working simultaneously for the "peace movement" (KATAOKA Yakichi 1996, p. 143).

Furthermore, Kataoka Yakichi distinguishes the peace movement from the atomic bomb experience, claiming that participation in the movement in establishing peace has been the goal for all humankind, not the privilege of *hibakusha*. By this statement, Kataoka attempts to exonerate the *hibakusha* from being always identified by their experiences alone. In other words, Kataoka tries to emancipate *hibakusha* from social expectation, which expects *hibakusha* to react and behave in a certain way.<sup>19</sup> The dilemma lies in the fact that conveying the experience of the atomic bombing has elevated people's consciousness of the fear and absurdity of nuclear war, and thereby contributed greatly to the

17. Discrimination against Catholics, the Koreans, and outcasts (*buraku*) before and after the bombing needs to get more attention in public discourse. On discrimination in Nagasaki, see NAGASAKI-KEN BURAKUSHI KENKYŪSHO 1995.

18. The SDP supported the tests as a powerful anti-American demonstration, while the JCP was opposed to "any" nation's possession of nuclear weaponry. The former preserved the reprimand against nuclear tests by the Soviet Union, while the latter neglected to protest nuclear tests made by the People's Republic of China. For a discussion of the chaotic environment caused by the spirit of peace conference, see *Hiroshima Notes* by Ōe Kenzaburō (1981), especially Chapter one on "My First Journey to Hiroshima."

19. For example, a *hibakusha* Ōe cites in his *Hiroshima Notes* exclaims: "Must all surviving A-bomb victims eventually meet a tragic death caused by radiation aftereffects? Is it not possible for the victims to overcome their illnesses, and their psychological anxiety and inferiority complexes, and thus die a natural death like other people?" (1981, p. 17).

peace movement. Is it the *hibakusha's* responsibility to be active in speaking out concerning their experiences (BRAW 1997)? At the same time, active *hibakusha* feel helpless in encountering inveterate nuclear deterrent supporters, who believe in a nuclear deterrent while they disapprove of any peace that assumes the existence of nuclear weapons. Also to the point is Robert J. KISALA's sharp comments on the naïveté of the Japanese peace movement; he states that Japanese peace activists need to explicate a concrete vision of their account for peace and its relation to nuclear issues to be effective (1999, 180–81). These observations are what peace activists in Japan seriously need to take into consideration.

Tadokoro Tarō, a journalist, has analyzed the relationship between Nagasaki's relatively low interest in the peace movement and Nagai's interpretation of the bomb (TADOKORO 1965, p. 43). On the one hand, as others suggest, Nagai's interpretation made Catholics hesitant to participate actively in the anti-nuclear movement. If dropping the bomb was God's providence, as Urakami Catholics tend to think, taking part in the anti-nuclear movement indicated an indirect dissatisfaction with God's plan. Tadokoro introduces a Nagasaki librarian's utterance: "[t]he fact that Mr. Nagai's books sold so well became a disadvantage to Nagasaki [in terms of the peace movement]" (TADOKORO 1965, p. 43). Another point that Tadokoro suggests is Nagai's other face as a scientist, not as a man of faith.

Despite the destruction the bomb brought out, explains Tadokoro, Nagai as a scientist believes in the good use of atomic power in science as well as everyday life. Tadokoro continues the analysis of Nagai's understanding in comparison to *hibakusha* in Hiroshima and states that Nagai sublimated the grief and agony caused by the atomic bomb into God's glory, but Hiroshima writers such as Hara Tamiki, Yamashiro Tomoe, and Tōge Sankichi turned such suffering into an anti-war spirit (TADOKORO 1965, p. 44). Is this because Hiroshima *hibakusha* are not religious? A Hiroshima poet, Kurihara Sadako argues that religious differences between Hiroshima and Nagasaki cannot excuse Nagasaki's relative passivity in relation to the peace movement. "While Nagasaki is known for Catholic perseverance and repentance," writes the poet, "Hiroshima is also known for *Aki-monto*, or the rebellious Pure Land Sect followers, which is the religion of karmic retribution and resignation. Both Nagasaki and Hiroshima were under the same spell of tradition" (KURIHARA 1970, pp. 59–60).

While the Catholic population in Japan constitutes only less than one percent, Nagai's books became best sellers, and his life story was made into a movie. Even though there are criticisms against his understanding of the bomb, as we have seen, the criticisms themselves prove that his interpretation has been influential. In contrast, Shinto and most of Buddhist sects have not yet produced a narrative on the atomic bomb for the majority to share or, for that matter, to criticize. It is extremely hard to answer questions of why there seems no attempt to come to terms with the atomic bombing from a Shinto perspective, and why Buddhist



interpretations do not seem to be widely shared, despite the large number of Buddhist residents in Japan. This issue touches upon a more profound question of the role of religion in the face of human suffering, a subject that needs to be addressed in more detail. In this paper, I confine myself to addressing questions of the possibilities and limitations that religious interpretations provide in cases of mass death, and I will now turn to another religious thinker, Kōji Shigenobu, a Jōdo Shinshū (True Pure Land) priest.

*Jōdo Shinshū and Kōji Shigenobu*

Unfortunately, in comparing Nagai's Catholic understanding of the atomic bomb experiences to that of other religious traditions, there is no equivalent figure to Nagai, who was a prolific writer and whose life biographers have been visited in detail. Considering the number of Buddhist and Shinto adherents in Japan that constitutes an overwhelming majority (eighty to ninety percent) of the Japanese population, the absence of written documents itself is an interesting issue to be studied. For the purpose of this paper, I have found one written piece and one speech that is transcribed on the Internet by Kōji Shigenobu. Aside from testimonies of the atomic bomb experiences, this is the only written piece to grapple with the incident from a Buddhist viewpoint, and I have not yet encountered any by Shinto theologians. Thus, even though the essay is rather short, Kōji's brief piece is significant.<sup>20</sup>

Before examining his True Pure Land understanding of the atomic bomb in comparison with Nagai's Catholic interpretation, I will briefly introduce Kōji's life and his experiences of 1945 in Hiroshima, followed by an abridged history of the Jōdo-shin tradition in Japanese Buddhism. Kōji was born in 1935 into a priest family of the Jōdo Shin sect at Kōryūji 光隆寺 near the downtown area of Hiroshima. At the time of the bombing in August 1945, Kōji had evacuated with other students to Kuruhara village (now Midori town), approximately sixty miles north of the city. Such mass evacuation of children was commonly practiced in order to protect young children from air raids often targeting the crowded residential and commercial areas in Japan, especially toward the end of World War II. On 6 August, Kōji remembers witnessing the flash from the detonation, and feeling even the warmth of the heat from the beam.<sup>21</sup> Then, sometime later, he and other children heard the explosive noise from the bomb, and another student saw a mushroom cloud in the sky over the mountains. Not knowing what had happened, Kōji recollects the cloud being so white and beau-

20. There is a transcription of his theological understanding of the atomic bombing explained at the Peace Exhibition in 1995, held by the Aki District of Jōdo Shin sect. See also the material at [www.heiwaten.org/9001-9.html](http://www.heiwaten.org/9001-9.html).

21. His experience of the bomb is from the transcription of Kōji's testimony at the Peace Exhibition; see [www.heiwaten.org/9001-91.html](http://www.heiwaten.org/9001-91.html).

tiful, like a cream puff. The image of the cloud still remains quite vivid in his mind. Gradually, the bottom of the cloud was dyed a pinkish color, and made an attractive contrast to the white layer on the top. It was not until the evening that that Kōji and his teachers learned of the destruction of the city from the injured who reached the village. Yet, it still took them a full week to realize the actual scale of the damage. Kōji finally returned home in October of this year.

Kōji himself experienced the atomic bombing afar from the hypocenter, but his two sisters happened to be in the city at the time of detonation. The second-oldest sister, who was five years older than Kōji, was on a street car, approaching the Aioi bridge at 8:15 AM on 6 August. Suffering from a cold, she was on her way to the hospital. Had she gone to the Hiroshima Army Clothing Depot<sup>22</sup> with other fellow students for compulsory labor service, which was imposed on school children and general citizens during the war, she would have survived the bomb. She miraculously had no visible injury but a small cut on her cheek and fled to Koi, the western part of the city, where she was found by Kōji's oldest sister, who was looking for her missing sisters. After the bomb, Kōji's family took refuge in a temple in Itsukaichi, as their house and temple in the city were burnt down by fire. On 14 August, this second oldest sister woke up from her bed and told her father that she would go on a pilgrimage (*mairashite morau*). Pure Land and True Pure Land Buddhism, as I will explain later, teaches that believers go to Amida's Pure Land after their death, thanks to Amida's mercy.

Being surprised and disturbed by his daughter's remark, Kōji's father told her not to make such an inauspicious utterance. Contrary to her father's wishes, she was ready to go and continued to utter her friends' names and teacher's name to thank them. Finally realizing that his daughter's death was inescapable, Kōji's father whispered to her ear, "bring Teruko to the Pure Land with you" (*teruko o saido shitareyo*). Then, she breathed her last as if she acceded to her father's request. Teruko was the third sister of Kōji, and she is one of many who disappeared without a trace after 6 August. Teruko was three years older than Kōji, and she went to Dobashi, only half a mile away from the hypocenter, to do compulsory work on that day. Since the family never knew what had happened to her, it was extremely hard, according to Kōji, for his father to give up on Teruko. There always remains a slight hope in his family, however small, that they will see her again, since they never obtained any proof of her death. Kōji's father, who looked for Teruko throughout the city almost every day, died from radiation disease seven years after the bombing (KŌJI 1988, pp. 129–30). Reflecting on his father's death, Kōji is convinced that his father would never have been at ease without his firm belief in Amida's mercy and salvation that must have reached his missing daughter. Now, I will turn to explain Amida worship and its

22. "The Imperial Army's facility, located in Minami-machi, for the manufacture and storage of military uniforms and other clothing to send to the battlefield" (OGURA 1995, p. 223).

belief system, together with some historical facts about Pure Land Buddhism in Japan as a background to Kōji's beliefs.

Buddhism was introduced to Japan in the sixth century. During the seventh and eighth centuries, the center of practice was located in Nara. When Emperor Kanmu (737–806, r. 781–806) moved the capital to Heian (now Kyoto) in 794, the influence of the Nara priests declined. This became more obvious when the Heian court endowed the authority to ordain priests to the newly established Enryakuji. This temple was founded by Saichō (767–822),<sup>23</sup> who transmitted the Tendai (T'ien-t'ai) teachings from China. This new Tendai teaching appealed to Japanese Buddhists, and with the support of the Heian court, Tendai became a dominant sect. Both Hōnen (1133–1212), the founder of Jōdo (Pure Land) sect and Shinran (1173–1262), the founder of Jōdo-shin (True Pure Land) sect were once trained at Enryakuji.

By the time Enryakuji had grown to become the largest cultural and economic institution of Japan, it was facing moral decay among high ecclesiastics. Under such circumstances, young clergymen sought spiritual guidance outside traditional Tendai teaching, and were attracted to the Amida cult. The Amida cult was introduced as early as the tenth century from China, and based upon a belief that there is a world called the Western Paradise, governed by the Buddha Amida. Differentiating this paradise from our worldly, impure realm, this paradise is also called the "Pure Land." Prior to attaining enlightenment, it is said that Amida made forty-eight vows (*hongan*, or Original Vows), in which Amida swore not to become a buddha unless all the people on earth who wish to be reborn in Amida's Pure Land can do so. When one has absolute faith in Amida's mercy, one is reborn in the Pure Land, where one's enlightenment is promised in the next life. In Japan, Genshin (942–1017), another Tendai priest, is well known for devoting himself to Amida belief.

Hōnen, having realized that the path of sanctification and enlightenment by means of precepts, meditation, and knowledge was theoretically possible but practically impossible, sought for a Buddhist way beyond the authority of Enryakuji and its elite-oriented teachings. Coming across Genshin's *Essentials of Salvation* (*Ōjōyōshū* 往生要集), Hōnen realized that "he was to seek not 'enlightenment' but 'salvation in the Pure Land'" (KITAGAWA 1966, p. 112). This distinction between enlightenment and salvation marked a revolutionary departure from the fundamental Buddhist teaching, in which enlightenment is prerequisite for salvation. Hōnen, who was concerned for the common people's salvation, was also dissatisfied with the elite oriented Enryakuji. He was convinced that the common people also needed salvation, and the means to attain salvation must not lie in a life of interpreting scriptures, secluded from the real world, which common people were unable to do.

23. The permission for authority to ordain priests was given shortly after Saichō's death.

His concerns for the non-elite population led him to emphasizing the practice of *nenbutsu* 念仏 (chanting)—*Namu Amida butsu* 南無阿弥陀仏 (Venerable Amida Buddha). *Nenbutsu*, thus, is a manifestation of one's faith in Amida. Since chanting does not require profound philosophical discourse or time-consuming training for understanding the texts; *nenbutsu* can be practiced by common people while they are engaged in daily activities. By stressing *nenbutsu* practice, Hōnen made Buddhism available to a wider population.

It is not certain whether Hōnen had in mind the establishment of a new sect or school, but his charisma attracted disciples to form a new religious society even after his ex-communication from Enryakuji and his subsequent death in exile. As one of Hōnen's disciples, Shinran furthered Hōnen's theology of Amida worship, and developed a doctrine of salvation by faith alone, and thereby his sect is called Jōdo Shin (True Pure Land), as opposed to Hōnen's Jōdo (Pure Land). Faith, for Shinran, indicates a total surrender to Amida's mercy. By realizing the absolute truth of helpless human nature, Shinran asserts, we learn to depend not on ourselves, but solely on Amida. And Amida's power or "other power" (*tariki* 他力) alone leads us to salvation. As Kitagawa explains: "after testing all other paths and disciplines, there was nothing left for him [Shinran] except to believe in the mercy of Amida. Accordingly, he believed it is not man who 'chooses' Amida, but rather it was Amida's Original Vow which 'chose' all beings to be saved" (KITAGAWA 1966, p. 115).

Thus, breaking from the doctrine of enlightenment as indispensable to salvation, the soteriology of Pure Land and True Pure Land Buddhism requires nothing but unconditional devotion to Amida, which is expressed in the practice of chanting Amida's name. This single-minded devotion<sup>24</sup> to Amida reveals a monotheistic character, rather idiosyncratic among Buddhist teachings. Belief in Amida's salvation, thus, composes the basis of the Jōdo and the Jōdo-shin faith. One of the distinctive differences between Hōnen's teaching and that of Shinran that lies in the understanding of practice. While Hōnen encouraged believers to practice *nenbutsu* as often as possible, Shinran stresses one's intentionality so much that a single truly sincere recitation of *nenbutsu* is sufficient for salvation. I will discuss Kōji's understanding bearing in mind this basic teaching of Jōdo-shin.

### *Kōji's Interpretation: Rebirth in the Pure Land*

In relation to the three questions I previously posed—interpretive, anthropological, and soteriological—I encapsulate Nagai's understanding of the atomic

24. True Pure Land is also called "Ikkō-shū" 一向宗. Ikkō indicates single-mindedness. From their profound belief in Amida's salvation, the Pure Land adherents had no fear of death in this world, and often became formidable opponents to feudal lords during the sixteenth century on in cases of rebellion.

bombing as follows: the bombing was a manifestation of God's Providence; the bombing was the result of the fact that human beings failed to love each other; yet those who were killed by the bomb were unblemished lambs atoning for human sins. In contrast to Nagai's explanation to the first point that the bombing was God's will, Kōji claims that it was human beings who brought out the "error" (*ayamachi* 過ち) of the atomic bomb disaster. He develops his notion of "error" into three levels: the error of the Hiroshima residents, the error of the Japanese people, and the error of human beings. Among these notions, I will begin with the error of the Hiroshima residents, as the error of human being involves Jōdo-shin understanding of human beings, requiring anthropological analysis.

Kōji begins his notion with the error of the Hiroshima residents. Explaining his own experiences of witnessing the mushroom cloud and the loss of his family members, as noted above, Kōji reduces the error of the Hiroshima residents to the "survivors' guilt" of the *hibakusha*. While Nagai also mentions that the dead, contrary to the survivors, are holy, Kōji presumes the survival was possible only by their selfish behavior. Whether or not this generalization contains any truth, it is in fact true that many survivors never stop blaming themselves for their selfishness—having abandoned their loved ones in the flames, having left the injured behind, or having stayed at home while other classmates went to the downtown area for compulsory labor. Kōji believes that the pain of the survivors should be shared by all Hiroshima residents as part of the Hiroshima experience.

In referring to the error of the Hiroshima residents, however, Kōji fails to mention that Hiroshima was the second largest military base during the war. If there is an error that can be said as the error of the Hiroshima residents, I would argue that we cannot ignore the fact that Hiroshima was the location of a large military base. The Ujina port, located 1.5 miles away from the hypocenter, is known as a port that sent innumerable soldiers to the Korean Peninsula, the Chinese Mainland, and other Pacific Islands to invade these regions during the war (SORA 1994). This also suggests that Hiroshima may have been chosen as a target city partly because of its military function, though the bomb obliterated the commercial and residential center as a result.<sup>25</sup>

In examining the "error" of the Japanese, Kōji first clarifies that Americans dropped the bomb, not Buddha or God. Yet he also refers to the bomb as a consequence of the imbecilic war, which the Japanese government initiated and in

25. This, in fact, touches upon a sensitive issue in differentiating combatants from civilians, and shows the contradictory nature of nuclear weapons as indiscriminate arms used in total war. I will return to this point later. The distinction of combatant from non-combatant has been one of the criteria in Just War Theory, based largely upon the Christian understanding of war and peace. However, under total war it has become problematic, especially since there are many cases in which the criteria no longer apply.

which the Japanese people were deeply involved. He recalls that, as a little boy, he was delighted to hear news of American losses and Japanese gains (KŌJI 1988, pp. 130–31). As a result, a large number of people, both in and out of Japan, became victims. Reminding his readers that the sudden attack on Pearl Harbor by the Japanese initiated the war between the United States and Japan, Kōji asserts that having participated in the war is the error of the Japanese people. Here it is important to draw attention to his argument. Though admitting the error of the Japanese, Kōji is not suggesting that the Japanese deserved the dropping of the bomb as a result. Drawing on the *Dhammapada*, he argues that it is meaningless to discuss who attacked first: “Not by enmity are enmities quelled, whatever the occasion here. By the absence of enmity are they quelled. This is an ancient truth” (Chapter 1, Verse 5; CARTER and PALIHAWADANA 1987, p. 13). What is important is to realize that Japan took the “destructive action” (*hakai kōdō* 破壊行動) of attacking Pearl Harbor, while the United States took the “destructive action” of attacking Hiroshima. Neither action can be praiseworthy. Yet, we human beings were engaged in such lamentable “collective behaviors” (*shūgōteki kōi* 集合の行為, or, using Buddhist terminology, *gūgō* 共業). Asserting that any kind of destructive behavior is the error of human beings, Kōji concludes the section by positing that “war is explicitly the action of mankind” (KŌJI 1988, p. 131).

So far, I have shown that Kōji’s interpretation of the atomic bomb regards the bomb not as the will of a transcendental being, but as the error of human beings. What, then, are humans who engage continuously in destructive actions? I now turn to the anthropological question in examining Kōji’s understanding of the mankind in relation with the error of human beings. Kōji first analyzes what human beings are in connection to other beings, including non-organic ones. This is because, explains Kōji, “Buddhism preaches that all the lives and entities [including the land and the earth] happen to take a different shape temporarily by ‘causes and conditions’ (*in’nen* 因縁)” (KŌJI 1988, p. 132). By stated thusly, he explains Buddhist anthropology, in which all lives are related to each other, and this relations are continuous beyond time and space. Some Buddhist thinkers analogize this view of life-relatedness to one’s palm and fingers. We human beings, for example, see fingers and their shapes and functions differently and independently. However, if we lower our gaze down to the palm, all fingers are connected there. In other words, Buddhism maintains that there is force (palm) that lets each being exist independently (fingers), but there are no fingers without the palm. Within our limited capacity, we perceive each individual separately, yet they are ultimately connected to each other. Drawing upon this understanding of relatedness, Kōji asserts that the differences of process made the differences of forms, functions, races, and individuals, but they are not evolution in a sense associated with “progress,” but accumulation of merely different appearances (KŌJI 1988, p. 132).

Another interesting contrast to Christianity in general is that Kōji states that living beings as well as non-organic beings have dignity (*songensei* 尊嚴性). “[As *The Nirvana Sutra* states,] any living beings on earth, non-organic beings, and even the earth itself have the same dignified lives as human beings do. All beings thus exist in the midst of Amida Buddha’s absolute impartial mercy” (Kōji 1988, pp. 132–33). With such an ontology, Kōji poses the question of what separates humans from non-organic beings. In Buddhism, according to Kōji, human beings are often expressed as *ki* 機, signifying an accident or chance, including the possibility for the better or the worse. In other words, asserts Kōji, “human figures [expressed in Buddhist texts] are not willed, proud, and infallible beings” (Kōji 1988, pp. 132–33). In sum, he concludes that we are all morally fragile, and become culpable by chance. As is mentioned above in a brief summary of Jōdo-shin teaching, Shinran stresses the weakness of human beings. Humans cannot save themselves. Therefore we need to sincerely seek for Amida’s mercy. Interpreting Shinran’s masterpiece, *Tan’nishō* 歎異抄 [Notes lamenting differences], Kōji stresses the frailty of man’s moral capacity. “Even when I am determined to behave righteously or not to make any mistakes, some accidental factor makes me commit error. It is human [not to be certain of one’s moral capacity]” (Kōji 1988, p. 133). A close analogy to explain this point may be driving a car. Despite confidence in one’s own driving ability, one can never be certain about avoiding accidents. A person may run in front of the car, and one may turn the wheels to avoid hitting the person, which may cause another accident.

Stressing human beings’ moral fallibility, Kōji brings in the notion of reincarnation in discussing the atomic bomb. In Buddhism, one reincarnates until one attains enlightenment. Based upon this understanding, Kōji hypothesizes that he might have been born in the United States during the war, he might have been the pilot in charge of pressing the button for the bomb. He was born into the Kōji family by mere chance, but the same “chance” could have made him born as an American pilot. If he were a pilot at the time, confesses Kōji, he would, for sure, have pressed the button. For Kōji, the invention of the atomic bomb also represents human weakness, not scientific superiority, since the weapon aimed solely at obliterating human lives and civilization. Again, Kōji’s argument is not to blame the United States in inventing the bomb, as he acknowledges that Japan as well as Germany had pursued the completion of a nuclear weapon. Instead of seeing the incident of bombing from the “Japanese” point of view as opposed to the “American” point of view, Kōji proposes another viewpoint—that of “human beings.” “Not to mention people in Hiroshima and Nagasaki who were damaged by the bombs, the atomic bombs also left a psychological scar in the minds of Americans. The bombing was the sorrowful result of human beings who are fundamentally weak and ignorant of *summa bonum*” (Kōji 1988, p. 134). This is his analysis of bombing as the error of humans, and his attempt to go beyond

a dualistic understanding of “American versus Japanese” is based on Buddhist philosophy.

Analyzing the three levels of errors, Kōji seeks for a way to build a constructive future for all, and present a Buddhist view of the relatedness of lives. In fact, according to Kōji, we are not just related, but are interdependent as a “collective body” (*dōtai* 同体). As an example, Kōji refers to a food chain. Our existence is only possible at the expense of other lives. “To eat means to kill, which indicates to deprive other beings of life” (Kōji 1988, p. 135). Unfortunately, continues Kōji, humans have come to the point where we feel too numbed to feel the suffering and pain of others in order to sustain our own lives. On the contrary, we even forcibly cause such pain on each other in order to ameliorate the sufferings and pains of others. Thus, the “collective body” of which we are also constituent is, in fact, a misled collective body. Interestingly, Kōji explains that this collective body includes Amida Buddha, even when it goes astray. Because Amida is a part of this collective body, all of our delusion, suffering, pain, and sorrow concern Amida, and thereby Amida is too merciful to abandon concern for the collective body.

As the enlightened one, Amida participates in the collective body in its own way. Kōji illustrates that Amida’s wisdom and mercy enable us to transform suffering into comfort, pain into console, and sorrow into delight. It is important to note that this takes place through transformation, but not through abolishment. For example, when one mourns the loss of one’s mother, it is rarely helpful, especially in the long run, to eliminate the feelings of sorrow completely from one’s mind. Rather, when one embraces one’s sorrow, one can find comfort in the midst of sadness. This is a kind of transformation that Amida executes. Since Amida’s mercy shines equally upon those who died from the bombs and those who dropped the bomb, Kōji suggests that we should “transform” the pain of both the victimizer and the victimized into something more meaningful, creating a world beyond a dichotomy of the victimizer and victimized.

So far, Kōji’s understanding of the atomic bomb can be summarized as the consequences of the errors of humans who are morally culpable. There remains a soteriological question, concerning his understanding of the bomb, to be examined. Kōji convincingly states that the dead from the bomb have “returned” to Amida’s Pure Land, which is “a true world and a world of perpetual life, yet not a visible form” (Kōji 1988, pp. 137–38). Those who died from the bomb went to “this absolute authentic world beyond suffering and delight, beyond love and hate, beyond good and evil, and beyond beauty and ugly in the relative human world” (Kōji 1988, p. 138). Put differently, Kōji suggests that their grievous deaths were redeemed, and their salvation is accomplished. This is accomplished not from a reward given to the victims’ sufferings, but from Amida’s mercy.

It is important to stress this point that salvation in the Pure Land is not achieved by the victims of the atomic bombs because they suffered so tremen-



dously that they could enjoy the afterlife in the Pure Land, but because Amida, full of mercy, never fails to abandon them. What, then, happens to the dead in the Pure Land? Kōji answers that the dead are not leading a life dissociated from the sufferings on earth. On the contrary, now that the dead belong to the collective body together with Amida, they are concerned about our distress as well. From Amida's Pure Land, the dead work for us ceaselessly so that truth and peace are realized in this world. On the other hand, we ordinary humans, through working toward this goal with the dead in the Pure Land, are more profoundly related to Amida, and able to participate in Amida's vows.

### *Conclusion*

I have examined interpretations of atomic bomb experiences from a religious perspective, focusing on two thinkers—Nagai Takashi, a lay Catholic, and Kōji Shigenobu, a Jōdo-shin priest. While constructing their arguments centering upon three questions (What is the atomic bombs in a religious context? What does it mean to die from the atomic bomb? What does the incident tell us about human nature?), I have shown an alternative framework to the currently dominant atomic bomb discourse. As the Smithsonian debate mentioned in the opening section demonstrates, the atomic bombings are too often discussed within a framework of nation-states, which has prevented us from fully grasping the indiscriminate character of nuclear weapons, as well as the whole picture of victimhood. Thus, I argue that employing different frameworks to examine the discourse allows us to see those who are invisible behind a nation-state framework. Retrieving the long dismissed experiences guides us to a more complete picture of the incident.

However, religious interpretations alone are insufficient to retrieve the voices of the excluded victims from the nation-state discourse. By presenting a different framework, they can merely provide a couple of missing pieces of a whole picture. Nagai's understanding of the bomb comforted the Urakami Catholics, who are rather tacit in expressing their experiences, but it did not help the Catholics in different regions in and out of Japan to understand the incident better. Kōji, standing firmly on his Jōdo-shin belief, suggests nourishing a sense of *dōtai*, or a collective body, through which we understand the incident as the error of human beings, rather than that of a particular people. While agreeing with his approach to cultivate the sense of a collective entity, I also find several issues that must be addressed in his argument. The most difficult issue perhaps would be a question of identity. In such an inclusive entity, for example, how does Kōji maintain his identity as a Buddhist without separating himself from others who do not depend upon his Buddhist convictions? Or does this entity presuppose Buddhist anthropology? What if someone does not share the same worldview of human existence of interdependence? Moreover, his anthropology

that humans are morally culpable—that an error is committed by accident, and our collective body is astray—raises the moral question of where we look for accountability for one’s actions.<sup>26</sup>

Nonetheless, it is enormously important to examine these understandings of the atomic bomb experiences. In addition to the reasons given above, these interpretations reveal a rather troublesome fact that religious institutions have not yet properly responded to this important issue. As I mentioned earlier, criticism against Nagai almost always refutes Nagai’s interpretation from outside the religious framework. It is regrettable that there is not enough theological discussion taking place on this issue. Similarly, while different Buddhist sects in Japan are involved in the peace movement in their own terms, a theological discourse on the atomic bomb experience and nuclear issues has not yet taken shape, with Kōji’s pieces being the few exceptions. Even more disturbingly, Shinto institutions and priests have maintained their silence on this issue. As far as I have been able to determine, there has not been even a single line appearing publicly on this issue. I hope that this small paper will provoke their response.

While Shinto theologians remain silent, Kōji has commented on Emperor Shōwa’s haiku: “The fullness of summer, Lotus blooms in the water, Thinking of Buddha’s words” (*Natsu takete, Hori no hasu no hanami tsutsu, Hotoke no oshie omou asa kana* 夏たけて 堀の蓮の花見つつ 仏の教え思う朝かな; see [www.heiwaten.org/9001-95.html](http://www.heiwaten.org/9001-95.html)). Strictly speaking, the successive emperors are supposedly descendents of gods who are worshipped in Ise Shrine. However, in the course of Japanese history, emperors maintained a close relationship with Buddhism. In fact, the retired emperors often became Buddhist monks. Reflecting on the losses during World War II, interprets Kōji, the Shōwa emperor felt helpless. Kōji convincingly states that “the Shōwa emperor must have thought of depending on Buddha’s salvation, especially when it comes to the salvation of innumerable soldiers who died under the cruel circumstances for the name of the emperor” ([www.heiwaten.org/9001-95.html](http://www.heiwaten.org/9001-95.html)). Regardless of the accuracy of Kōji’s interpretation, the absence of discourse itself compels us to consider the momentous responsibility for interpreting mass death caused by humans within a religious context. Are religions, which often theorize on the mysteries of life and death, equipped to explain the unprecedented incidents of mass death in the twentieth century? Can religious explanations move beyond scenarios in which the dead are honored as self-sacrificial martyrs, as was the case during World War II, when State Shinto deified the *kamikaze* pilots?

Keeping these questions open, I will conclude this paper by pointing out both the possibilities and limitations of religious approaches to the bombings, and that

26. Shibata Shingo makes a similar claim in attempting to understand the atomic bomb incident from a religious perspective. Stating that human beings are intrinsically “sinful” obscures the distinction between the assailants and victims, and detracts from the effort to prevent another case of mass death caused by humans occurring; see SHIBATA 1978, pp. 161–62.

they offer a richer, more inclusive understanding of this event than that provided by the restrictions of the nation-state discourse.

## REFERENCES

- AKIZUKI Tatsuichirō 秋月辰一郎  
1972 *Shi no dōshin'en* 死の同心円. Tokyo: Kōdansha.
- BOXER, C. R.  
1951 *The Christian Centuries in Japan: 1549–1650*. Berkeley: The University of California Press.
- BRAW, Monica  
1991 *The Atomic Bomb Suppressed: American Censorship in Occupied Japan*. New York: M. E. Sharpe.  
1997 Hiroshima and Nagasaki: The voluntary silence. In *Living with the Bomb: American and Japanese Cultural Conflicts in the Nuclear Age*. Edited by Laura Hein and Mark Selden, pp. 155–72. New York: M.E. Sharpe.
- CARTER, John Ross, and Mahinda PALIHAWADANA, ed. and trans.  
1987 *The Dhammapada*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- DOWER, John W.  
1986 *War Without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War*. New York: Pantheon Books.
- GLYNN, Paul  
1990 *A Song for Nagasaki*. Glasgow: William Collins Sons & Co.
- HARWIT, Martin  
1996 *An Exhibit Denied: Lobbying the History of Enola Gay*. New York: Springer-Verlag.
- HORIBA Kiyoko 堀場清子  
1995a *Kinjirareta genbaku taiken* 禁じられた原爆体験. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten.  
1995b *Genbaku hyōgen to kenetsu: Nihonjin wa dō taiō shitaka* 原爆表現と検閲—日本人はどう対応したか. Tokyo: Asahi Shinbunsha.
- ICHIBA Junko 市場淳子  
2001 “Yuiitsu no hibakukoku” kara “hirakareta hibakukoku” e 「唯一の被爆国」から「開かれた被爆国」へ. *Sekai* 692: 89–95.
- INOUE Hisashi 井上ひさし  
1995 *Bestoserā no sengoshi* ベストセラーの戦後史, vol. 1. Tokyo: Bungei Shunjū.
- ITŌ Akihiko 伊藤明彦  
1993 *Genshiya no “Yobuki”*: Katsute kaku sensō ga atta 原子野の「ヨブ記」—かつて核戦争があった. Tokyo: Komichi Shobō.

KATAOKA Chizuko 片岡千鶴子

- 1996 Nagai Takashi to Nagasaki no kane 永井隆と長崎の鐘. In *Hibakuchi Nagasaki no saiken* 被爆地長崎の再建, Kataoka Chizuko and Kataoka Rumiko, ed., pp. 53–79. Nagasaki: Nagasaki Junshin Daigaku Haku-butsubukan.

KATAOKA Yakichi 片岡弥吉

- 1996 Nagasaki wa naze damatte irunoka 長崎はなぜ黙っているのか. In *Hibakuchi Nagasaki no saiken*, Kataoka Chizuko and Kataoka Rumiko, ed., pp. 139–46. Nagasaki: Nagasaki Junshin Daigaku Hakubutsukan.

KISALA, Robert J.

- 1999 *Prophets of Peace: Pacifism and Cultural Identity in Japan's New Religions*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.

KITAGAWA, Joseph M.

- 1966 *Religion in Japanese History*. New York: Columbia University Press.

KŌJI Shigenobu 光寺重信

- 1988 Bukkyōto to shite no hibaku taiken to heiwa no negai 仏教徒としての被爆体験と平和の願い, In *Ningen no kokoro, Hiroshima no kokoro* 人間の心 ヒロシマの心, Akiba Tadatoshi, ed., pp. 127–43. Tokyo: Sanyū Shuppan.

KURIHARA Sadako 栗原貞子

- 1970 *Hiroshima 24nen: Dokumento Gendai no kyūsai* ヒロシマ24年—ときゆめんと現代の救済. Tokyo: Shakai Shinpōsha.

LINENTHAL, Edward T.

- 1996 Anatomy of a Controversy. In *History Wars: The Enola Gay and Other Battles for the American Past*, Linenthal, Edward T., and Tom Engelhardt, eds., pp. 9–62. New York: Metropolitan Books.

NAGAI, Takashi 永井隆

- 1984 *Nagasaki no kane* 長崎の鐘 (translated by William Johnston as *The Bells of Nagasaki*). Tokyo: Kodansha International.
- 1996 *Horobinu mono o* 滅びぬものを. Tokyo: San Paolo.

NAGASAKI-KEN BURAKUSHI KENKYŪSHO 長崎県部落史研究所, ed.

- 1995 Furusato wa isshun nishite kieta: Nagasaki, Urakami-chō no hibaku to ima ふるさとは一瞬にして消えた—長崎、浦上町の被爆と今. Kyoto: Kaihō Shuppansha.

ŌE Kenzaburō 大江健三郎

- 1981 *Hiroshima Notes (Hiroshima nōto* ヒロシマノート). Edited by David L. Swain. Translated by Toshi Yonezawa. Tokyo: YMCA Press.

OGURA, Keiko 小倉桂子, et al.

- 1995 *Hiroshima hanndobukku* ヒロシマハンドブック. Hiroshima: The Hiroshima Interpreters for Peace.

- SHIBATA Shingo 柴田進午  
 1978 The Role of Religion in the Prevention of Nuclear Extinction: The Possibility of the Total Annihilation of Humankind and the Implication for Religion.” In *Hiroshima Heiwa Kagaku* (Hiroshima Peace Science), vol. 2, pp. 153–64. Hiroshima: Hiroshima Daigaku Heiwa Kagaku Kenkyū Sentā.
- SHIRABE Raisuke 調来助, ed.  
 1972 *Nagasaki: Bakushinchi fukugen no kiroku* 長崎—爆心地復元の記録. Tokyo: Nippon Hōsō Shuppan Kyōkai.
- SORA Tatsuo 空辰男  
 1994 *Kagaikichi Ujina: Atarashii Hiroshima gakushū* 加害基地字品—新しい広島学習. Tokyo: Chōbunsha.
- SPAE, Joseph J.  
 1964 *Catholicism in Japan: A Sociological Study*. Tokyo: ISR Press.
- TADOKORO Tarō 田所太郎  
 1965 Heiwa ni tsunagaranu genbaku 平和につながらぬ原爆. *Asahi Journal* 7/50: 42–46.
- TAKAHASHI Shinji 高橋真司  
 1994 *Nagasaki ni atte tetsugaku suru* 長崎にあつて哲学する. Tokyo: Hokuju Shuppan.
- TOBY, Ronald P.  
 1984 *State and Diplomacy in Early Modern Japan: Asia in the Development of the Tokugawa Bakufu*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- VAN HECKEN, Joseph L.  
 1963 *The Catholic Church in Japan Since 1859*. Tokyo: Herder Agency.
- WILLIAMS, Frederick Vincent  
 1956 *The Martyrs of Nagasaki*. Fresno: Academy Library Guild.
- YAMADA Kan 山田 かん  
 1972 Gizensha: Nagai Takashi e no kokuhatsu 偽善者—永井隆への告発. Ushio [February]: 231–37.
- YONEYAMA, Lisa  
 1999 *Hiroshima Traces: Time, Space, and the Dialectics of Memory*. Berkeley: University of California Press.