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THE EARTH STILL SHAKES: A HISTORY OF DISASTER MEMORIALS IN MODERN JAPAN

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To the victims and survivors of disaster in Japan, as well as those who work to preserve their memory.

CONTENTS

IMAGES

ABBREVIATIONS

CSCI	Chicago Sister Cities International
DRI	Disaster Reduction and Human Renovation Institution
FKK	Fukkō Kinen-kan
HAT Kobe	Happy Active Town Kobe
IRIDeS	International Research Institute of Disaster Science
MLIT	Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, and Tourism
SKRH	Surviving Katrina and Rita in Houston
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization

ABSTRACT

How should we remember a disaster? This dissertation explores how this question was answered in modern Japan in the wake of four earthquake and tsunami disaster events across the 20th and 21st centuries by examining disaster memorial sites and practices. In this examination of disaster memorials, I weave together two important aspects of life, and areas of academic study, on the Japanese archipelago: disaster and memory. In linking disaster and memory, I draw together the fields of environmental history, environmental humanities, disaster studies, and memory studies to further understanding about Japan's place in global history.

I argue that Japanese disaster memorials were important sites where Japanese sought to understand themselves, their environment, and their place in the globalizing world of the 20th and 21st centuries. I show that modern Japanese disaster memorials developed in relation to the intertwined currents of local and global memory culture. This also allows me to make a novel intervention in the field of memory studies. The existing scholarship on memorials and memorialization has prioritized the importance of war memorials and memorials to human-perpetuated atrocities. By analyzing disaster memorials in modern Japan built following seismic catastrophes I intervene in this largely war and atrocity-centric field in two ways. First, I decenter war and atrocity memorials as well as their related concerns in memory studies. Whereas memorials to victims of human violence often center human-to-human relationships like comrade and enemy, enslaver and enslaved, perpetrator and victim, disaster memorials are often articulated as spaces where humans grapple with their relationship to their past, present, and future environmental hazards. Second, I show that disaster memorials in modern Japan exist in the larger circulation of a global memory culture dominated by war and atrocity memorialization. This intervention disabuses us of the notion that disaster memorialization is

somehow a manifestation of *Nihonjinron*, or Japanese uniqueness. Instead, I show disaster memorials in Japan are an expression of a complicated web made up of the realities of the archipelago's environment, how the environment's hazards can affect vulnerable populations on the islands, and how survivors of disasters make use of both local and global memory cultures to cope with those hazards.

In addition to the weaving together of environmental history and memory studies, I make a practical intervention in the field of history through my study of modern Japanese disaster memorials. In other words, I believe the stakes of this dissertation are more than historiographical. I argue that the case studies presented here offer models and lessons for how the modern memorial form can be mobilized in response to the most pressing disaster of our time: climate change.

Chapter 1 examines the controversy of the design competition for the 1923 Great Kantō Earthquake Memorial Hall in the larger context of an emerging global memory culture in the early 20th century. Following the 1923 earthquake that struck Tokyo, the Honjo Former Army Depot, a site where many victims were burned to death in earthquake-sparked fires, was set aside as the location of a future memorial hall and park. To garner public support and attract fundraising for the memorial the Memorial Committee held a design competition and architects from around Japan submitted their plans for the site. The initial selection of Maeda Kenjirō's neoclassical and art deco inspired design by the committee sparked a controversy, especially among Buddhist organizations who argued that the proposed memorial did not sufficiently reflect Japanese spirituality. In response the committee commissioned a design by Itō Chūta, an architect famed for his synthesis of western and eastern styles. Using previously unexamined design submissions to the competition, I explore what designers were trying to accomplish in

terms of architecture, collective memory, and emotion through their memorial designs. I place this disaster memorial effort in the larger history of global memory culture, which had entered a productive new era following WWI. I show that designers navigated both global memory culture and Japanese traditions of mourning in their submissions. I also show that despite the variety of articulations of the global and local in the designs, designers were in relative agreement in their pursuit of an emotional forgetting of the event. I argue the design competition, subsequent controversy, and resolution in Itō Chūta's memorial hall shows that memorial design was a delicate navigation of international trends, local desires, and the limits of what was deemed appropriate.

Chapter 2 tells the history of Miyagi Prefecture's Tsunami Memorial Halls (*Shinshōsai kinenkan* or *Kaishō kinenkan*). Built in the wake of the 1933 Showa-Sanriku Earthquake and Tsunami as part of the Miyagi Prefectural government's reconstruction effort, these memorial halls commemorated disaster victims and were also designed to be social settlement houses, serving as disaster education spaces, future evacuation sites, and community meeting halls. I use the history of the memorial halls as a case study to grapple with the incommensurability of the human timescales of collective memory and the geologic timescales of seismic activity that periodically sets off disaster on Tōhoku's Pacific coast. Exploring the tension between these irreconcilable timescales as a productive space of inquiry to interrogate the "middle temporality" of disaster on the Sanriku coast. Centering the memorial halls themselves, I examine their "memorial life cycles" from creation to second lives as repurposed public buildings, and eventually to varied deaths as they were demolished or forgotten. I argue that the history of the 1933 Tsunami Memorial Halls is a cautionary tale for disaster memorials that emphasizes the

necessity to reckon with issues of scale when designing future disaster memorials in Japan and beyond.

Chapter 3 examines the significance and functions of annual memorial events by studying 25 years of memorials in the wake of the 1995 Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake in Kobe. I approach annual memorial events through the lenses of ritual and emotion to understand how they operate for participants as the disaster event recedes further into the past and the make-up or participation changes to include younger generations. Specifically, I compare the development and character of two types of annual commemorative events held in honor of the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake. One type are the memorial services, referred to as *tsudoi* held on the anniversary of the earthquake event. Using event materials and commemorative messages left by participants I show how participants relationship to and emotions towards the event change over time. The other type of commemorative event I explore is the famous *Kobe Luminarie* a wintertime illumination installation donated by an Italian artist. In the history of the *Luminarie* I explore the transnational aspects of Kobe's disaster commemoration and the effort to use disaster memory as a driver of economic and cultural recovery. Like the insights of Chapter 1, I argue in Chapter 3 that space for both mourning the past and hope for the future were key in building durable ritual practices to commemorate disaster events.

Chapter 4 revisits disaster memorialization in Tōhoku by examining the efforts of memory workers in the wake of the triple disaster of 3.11. Following the disaster there was a flurry of new memorialization efforts. These efforts were diverse in nature and aim. National, prefectural, and local authorities were involved in various memorial activities and sites in addition to grassroots organizations and individuals. I use the term "memory worker" to analyze a wide variety of individuals engaged in the process of post 3.11 memorialization together. I

historicize these efforts by showing how 3.11 memory workers memorialized the disaster in a post-WWII memory culture that emphasized survivor experience, witness, and testimony. I explore how memory workers engaged in emotional management and emotion work to create appropriate emotional experiences of memorials for visitors. I also explore of the emphasis on the recreation of disaster experiences for non-survivors. I interrogate this practice of experiential memorialization and explore its efficacy for gaining disaster knowledge and inculcating disaster awareness/preparedness. I argue that the emotional work done by memory workers was a central part of the cultivation of experiential memorialization. I also argue that while the experience of disaster was often understood as transformative by survivor memory workers, it is uncertain whether experiential memorialization evoked a similar transformation in visitors.

The epilogue ties together the public historical lessons provided by the four case studies of the dissertation and uses them as a jumping off point to think about the possibilities of disaster memorials in the era of climate change. To start, I address the role of historians in disaster memorialization, exploring professional historians' relative absence in the process of disaster memorialization and providing thoughts about what historians could offer as practitioners of memory work. Next, I explore the potential of disaster memorials as sites of emotional healing, opportunities to promote economic and material recovery, and vehicles for disaster justice and solidarity. I end by reflecting on my own experiences as a practitioner engaged in Japanese disaster memorialization, meditating on the potential disaster memorials hold for fostering human connection in face of calamity.

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As a Kizuna Project volunteer I was given the opportunity to visit various disaster affected communities in Fukushima, Miyagi, and Iwate Prefectures and interview 3.11 survivors for Kizuna 8: Artisans of Tōhoku and Kizuna 9: Memory. This was possible thanks to many tireless volunteers on The Osaka Committee, staff at CSCI, and generous donors. While I cannot thank them all by name here, I would like to express my gratitude to Kizuna Project founder Yoko Noge Dean, Osaka Committee Chair Kimiyo Naka, and Ella McCann at CSCI. I want to thank the Kizuna Project exhibition teams I worked with in Tōhoku, especially Mayumi Lake, Chiba Seiran, Kumasaka Daisuke, Shishido Kiyotaka, and Sugai Rie.

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Introduction:

Archipelago of Disaster, Archipelago of Memory

> "The 'shaking' of the earthquake continues even now…amidst that, every day is 1/17 for us disaster victims."[1]
>
> —Statement by the Chuō Kōen Fureai Sentā in 1997

Two Pilgrimages

On April 9, 1933, the *Kahoku Shinpō*, a newspaper serving the Tōhoku region published in Sendai, Miyagi Prefecture, ran a photograph of three official-looking men dressed in hats and heavy overcoats standing next to a monolith. The corresponding headline read "Deeply Moved in Front of Memorial Stone, Vice Minister Saitō Heads to Kesennuma." The short article itself detailed the tour of the Home Ministry's Parliamentary Vice Minister on the Sanriku coast, which had been struck by an earthquake and tsunami a little more than a month prior.[2]

In the middle of the night at 2:33 AM on March 3, 1933, the Sanriku Coast, a roughly 600 kilometer stretch of Pacific coastline in northeastern Japan, was struck by an earthquake. The quake was enough to wake coastal residents from their sleep and measured a moment magnitude of 8.4. The shaking of the earth itself did little damage, but the subsequent tsunami waves wreaked havoc on the rural towns and villages scattered along the sawtooth coast.[3] The recovery effort was seized upon by local, prefectural, and national authorities alike as an opportunity to

[1] "Ireisai no oshirase," Box 122 *Iki-iki kurasō-kai (Wakabachō kasetsu jutaku C・D tō)*, File 001014, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[2] "Kinenhi no mae ni fukaki-kangeki," *Kahoku Shinpō* April 9, 1933, Morning Edition.
[3] Gregory Smits, *Seismic Japan: The Long History and Continuing Legacy of the Ansei Edo Earthquake* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2014), 19.

rebuild rural Tōhoku and reform an area long considered to be the "sick man" of Japan.[4] Vice Minister Saitō represented one such authority (in this case national), as he surveyed the early recovery efforts by various communities in the Sanriku area.

Why amidst a tour that included discussions with local leaders about the scale of destruction, the reconstruction efforts, and mitigation measures like seawalls was a commemorative stone marker singled out for a photo-op? The Vice Minister's automobile caravan made a point on the afternoon of April 7th to stop at the stone as they made their way north to Kesennuma. The stone was located near the prefectural road in the village of Ōya-mura and was built to commemorate an earlier earthquake-tsunami disaster on the Sanriku coast in the Meiji-Era. The Meiji-Sanriku Earthquake occurred on June 15, 1896 at 7:32 PM JST, causing tsunami waves that reached heights of up to 38.2 meters that destroyed thousands of homes and causing at least 22,000 deaths on the Tōhoku coast.[5] Part of the response to the death and destruction caused by the 1896 tsunami by local communities was to erect memorial stones across the affected coast like the one Vice Minister Saitō visited at Ōya-mura. These stones were often intended to serve a dual purpose. One purpose was commemorative, recording and memorializing those who died in the disaster for posterity. Another purpose was pedagogical and preventative, often linking memorialization with messages that instructed coastal communities to avoid building in certain areas or to be aware of the threat of tsunami in the event of an earthquake and evacuate to higher ground. There is even some evidence that the memory of the Meiji-era event, which occurred a little under four decades earlier, played a factor in saving lives during the 1933 Showa-Sanriku disaster.[6]

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[4] Nathan Hopson, *Ennobling Japan's Savage Northeast: Tōhoku as Postwar Thought, 1945-2011* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Published by the Harvard University Asia Center, 2017), 64-66.
[5] "Kinenhi no mae ni fukaki-kangeki," *Kahoku Shinpō* April 9, 1933, Morning Edition., Smits, *Seismic Japan* 19.
[6] Smits, *Seismic Japan*, 19.

By stopping at the memorial stone, Vice Minister Saitō was acknowledging the longer history of disaster and recovery on the Tōhoku coast and perhaps paying his respects to victims of the 1896 disaster. *Kahoku Shinpō* reported that the vice minister "gazed at the stone and was deeply moved."[7] In the context of the vice minister's larger survey of the damage and initial recovery from the Showa-Sanriku disaster, the emotional experience of visiting the memorial stone can also be read as a show of sympathy for the Showa-Sanriku disaster victims.

On the surface, the vice minister's stop in Ōya-mura seems like it served little practical purpose. In terms of public infrastructure, Saitō's meeting with the village head of Utatsu-mura about the scale of destruction or his site visit to the seawall at Isatomae were more legible as tangible disaster-related policy concerns.[8] In contrast, the stop at the memorial stone in Ōya-mura seemed ceremonial, even ritualistic. We can read his visit to the disaster memorial as a type of pilgrimage. Scholars of monuments have noted the act of traveling to see monumental architecture or memorial sites has much in common with ritual action.[9] Scholars also note that creating records or mementos of visits to these important sites, like the photograph in the *Kahoku Shinpō*, are common commemorative practices.[10]

In the summer of 2012, I made a similar pilgrimage in the wake of yet another earthquake and tsunami on the Sanriku Coast. Just over a year earlier, on March 11, 2011, a magnitude 9.0-9.1 earthquake struck east of the Oshika Peninsula, shaking the Tōhoku region violently. The earthquake triggered devastating tsunami waves that quickly followed the shaking. The surging water washed away entire communities with waves reaching as high as 40.5 meters and as far as

[7] "Kinenhi no mae ni fukaki-kangeki," *Kahoku Shinpō* April 9, 1933, Morning Edition.
[8] "Kinenhi no mae ni fukaki-kangeki," *Kahoku Shinpō* April 9, 1933, Morning Edition..
[9] Robert S. Nelson and Margaret Olin eds., *Monuments and Memory, Made and Unmade* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 6.
[10] Nelson and Olin, 11.

10 km inland. In Fukushima Prefecture the tsunami waves were the primary trigger of the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster, where three reactors melted down leading to the release of radiation into and subsequent evacuation of the surrounding area. This cascading set of disasters are known together as *san-ten-ichi-ichi* or "3.11" in Japan. The triple disaster of 3.11 created its own sites of pilgrimage where survivors, volunteer relief workers, and visiting officials alike stopped to pay their respects and were deeply moved.

A year after the events of 3.11, a team of disaster relief volunteers drove me to see the then famous *Kyotoku Maru No. 18* in the city of Kesennuma, Miyagi Prefecture. The *Kyotoku Maru* was a 200-foot fishing trawler washed inland by the giant tsunami of 3.11. In the aftermath of March 11, the boat became symbolic of the disaster. Its hulking and misplaced physical presence on dry land was a testament to the destructive power of the waves and the tremendous human loss that followed. Visitors came to pray, leave flowers, take pictures, and pay their respects at the site. When I exited our group's van to see the boat up close for myself, I was struck by the enormity of the vessel. It was easy to see why the boat became famous. The *Kyotoku Maru* seemed to work naturally as a disaster memorial because of its monumental scale. What makes something an appropriate and/or effective memorial site or object, however, is not a natural process.

After paying my own respects—clasping my hands together as if in prayer, closing my eyes, and silently bowing my head—at the improvised altar built aside the *Kyotoku Maru*, I walked around the area where the ship had come to rest. During my stroll I slowly realized I was walking through, or more accurately over, the remains of people's homes. Even though the structures were stripped down to the foundations and covered in debris, it was evident that where I stood was at one point a kitchen, an entryway, or a bathroom. As my focus shifted from staring

up at the ship to considering the ground beneath my feet, I realized the debris was made of broken plates, pieces of appliances, and roofing tiles. We had come to see a monumental example of the destruction wrought by the tsunami, but in 2012 the landscape itself was still a monument to the disaster.[11]

However, like with any disaster, the post-destruction landscape proved ephemeral. Over the course of time the wreckage and debris would be cleared so that people could rebuild homes, lives, and livelihoods. Amidst the recreation of a place where people could live and work, choices would have to be made about what would be appropriate reminders of the disaster. What could be left or built to evoke the landscape of destruction while accommodating the desire of people to return to normal life? In what sites would memory be concentrated? There were talks following the disaster in Kesennuma of preserving the *Kyotoku Maru* indefinitely as a reminder of the disaster, to change it from an impromptu and informal memorial to a permanent and recognized monument. However, in 2013 most residents in Kesennuma voted to have the boat removed, saying it evoked bad memories and difficult emotions.[12]

At the heart of the story of the *Kyotoku Maru* is the question, "how should we remember a disaster?" This is a common question asked after disaster events in modern Japan, where disaster memorials have a long and robust history. As the differences between Vice Minister Saitō's visit to the Sanriku Coast in 1933 and my own in 2012 show, this question has been answered in various ways throughout the 20th and early 21st centuries. Separated by almost 80 years, but only around 15 kilometers in terms of physical location, the sites of our respective

[11] Some attempts at preserving at least part of disaster landscape have been made across Tohoku. For example, see Sendai's preservation of the ruins of the Arahama residential area: Sendai-shi, "Shinsai ikō Sendai-shi Arahama chiku jūtaku kisō," accessed February 26, 2022, https://www.city.sendai.jp/kankyo/shisetsu/arahama_residentialfoundation.html.
[12] Rupert Wingfield-Hayes, "Japanese town to scrap marooned 'tsunami boat,'" *BBC News* August 13, 2013, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-23678723.

pilgrimage differed significantly. Saitō's memorial stone was an intentional marker of an even earlier earthquake-tsunami disaster and mine an improvisational, and relatively temporary, marker created by the tsunami waves.

How did Japanese memory culture get from inscribed stone marker to beached fishing vessel? Why was one preserved and the other dismantled? What makes each an appropriate disaster memorial? How are pieces of debris even chosen as appropriate objects of remembrance at all? These questions, and their variety of answers show that what constitutes a memorial for a community at any given time is historically contingent and culturally constructed. This dissertation seeks to track the changing answers to these questions through the examination of important case studies of disaster memorialization in Japan from the early 20th to the early 21st century.

Disaster and Memory in Modern Japan

In this examination of disaster memorials, I weave together two important aspects of life, and areas of academic study, on the Japanese archipelago: disaster and memory. As a modern, industrialized nation Japan is at risk for and experiences disasters born of a combination of both environmental hazards (earthquake, tsunami, volcanic, landslides, floods, typhoons, etc.) and anthropogenic hazards (industrial pollution and related illnesses, radiation leaks, train derailments, etc.), each of which have their own important histories of disaster memorialization. In this dissertation I focus on the memorialization of seismic disaster events, like earthquakes and tsunami. This allows me to contribute to important recent conversations in environmental history and the environmental humanities. Operating on geologic (rather than human) timescales, seismicity has been an environmental hazard to humans on the archipelago since they began to

populate the islands around 30,000 BCE, and thus have a deep and longstanding impact on the archipelago's human history and culture. While I focus on memorial developments in the 20th and 21st centuries, barely yesterday in terms of geologic time, the interaction of disaster memory with seismic timescales allows me explore problems of scale (specifically in Chapter 2) that have caught the recent attention of environmental historians and disaster scholars alike.[13] Some of these scalar concerns, like Dipesh Chakrabarty's theorization of the global and the planetary as well as human and natural history, were born out of thinking about the Anthropocene and the problem of climate change.[14] Focusing on seismicity allows me to exhibit how events like earthquake and tsunami, which do not have their origins in the Anthropocene or climate crisis, have always "erupted into our humanist narratives," and prove human history has truly "never [been] distant from deep time and deep history."[15]

Focusing on human memory of the archipelago's seismicity also allows me to make important contributions to scholarship on the intimate relationship between Japanese identity, ideas about nature, and the natural environment in the still growing field of Japanese environmental history. As Brett Walker argues, scholars exploring the environmental history of modern Japan have the potential to "set the tone for scholarship on Japan for a generation" akin earlier projects (like the modernization theorists of the mid-20th century) by "expanding the previous focus on Japanese modernization to explore Japan's role in global transformation."[16] This dissertation contributes to this new generation of scholarship on Japan, showing how

[13] See: Dipesh Chakrabarty, *The Climate of History in a Planetary Age* (Chicago ; London: University of Chicago Press) 2021, Gabrielle Hecht, "Interscalar Vehicles for an African Anthropocene: On Waste, Temporality, and Violence," *Cultural Anthropology* 33, no. 1, (2018), 109-141, and Scott Gabriel Knowles and Zachary Loeb "Chapter 1: The Voyage of the Paragon: Disaster as Method" pg 11-31 in Jacob A.C. Remes and Andy Horowitz eds., *Critical Disaster Studies* (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press) 2021.
[14] Chakrabarty, *The Climate of History in a Planetary Age*.
[15] Chakrabarty, 7.
[16] Brett Walker writing in: Ian Jared Miller, Julia Adeney Thomas, and Brett L. Walker, *Japan At Nature's Edge: The Environmental Context of a Global Power* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2013), xii.

disaster memorials were important sites where Japanese sought to understand themselves, their environment, and their place in the globalizing world of the 20th and 21st centuries.

In my study of disaster memory, and disaster memorials, I intervene in another key site of modern Japan's place in global changes. As scholars of collective memory, the invention of tradition, and national identity have shown, "participatory historical culture[s]" where people engaged in the construction "of their own pasts" can be linked to the rise of the nation-state in the modern era.[17] The use of history to construct national pasts and cultivate national identities among newly formed citizens, particularly in Europe, from the late 18th and early 19th centuries onward has been explored by many academics.[18] The process of inventing tradition and national historical narratives have often included "public rituals, museums, landscapes, monuments, and memorials."[19] While there existed a rich memory culture in its own right on the archipelago (which we will see traces of throughout the dissertation), the advent of Japan's modern nation state during the Meiji-era saw the beginning of a new flurry of commemorative, memorial, and other participatory historical activities. These activities, which in some cases were inspired by global trends and in other cases developed in parallel to them, helped create a modern Japanese national identity in ways that mirrored its European counterparts. As such the scholarship on modern Japanese memory, history, and identity mirrors the topics and themes of corresponding

[17] Ashton and Trapeznik, 2. Ronald J. Grele, "Whose Public? Whose History? What is the Goal of a Public Historian?" *Public Historian* 3, no. 1 (1981): 44-46. Ashton and Trapeznik, 2. David Thelen, "The Nation and Beyond: Transnational Perspectives on United States History," *Journal of American History* 86, no.3 (1999), 965. David Christian, "History and Global Identity" in *The Historian's Conscience: Australian Historians on the Ethics of History*, ed. Stuart Macintyre (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2004), 149.

[18] For example see seminal works that explore this process in Europe: Benedict R. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London ; New York: Verso, 2006). E. J. Hobsbawm, and T. O. Ranger. The Invention of Tradition. Canto ed. Cambridge [Cambridgeshire] ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992. And the application of these theories in Japan: Susan L. Burns, *Before the Nation: Kokugaku and the Imagining of Community in Early Modern Japan*. (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003).Takashi Fujitani, *Splendid Monarchy: Power and Pageantry in Modern Japan.* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), Kenneth J. Ruoff, *Imperial Japan at Its Zenith: The Wartime Celebration of the Empire's 2,600th Anniversary* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2014).

[19] Ashton and Trapeznik, 2.

scholarship on the Western context, focusing on issues like the collection of folklore to find evidence of a past national essence and the invention of traditions associated with organs of the modern state, like the imperial family.[20]

In terms of the study of memorials and memorialization, the scholarship on/in the West has prioritized the importance of war memorials and memorials to human-perpetuated atrocities. With memory scholars' larger focus on how history, tradition, and collective memory helps form national identity, this prioritization of war and human-atrocity memorials makes sense given the centrality of war and atrocity to many modern nations' senses of self.[21] In addition, the increasingly global nature of war (in the events of WWI and WWII) and particular systems of atrocity (like the Trans-Atlantic slave trade, colonial/imperial expansion, and genocides like the Shoah/Holocaust) make memorials to these instances of human-caused violence subjects for important comparative and transnational analysis.[22]

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[20] See: Fujitani, *Splendid Monarchy*, Ruoff, *Imperial Japan at it's Zenith.* For the collected works of Yanagita Kunio see: Yanagita, Kunio, and Kazuko Tsurumi. *Yanagita Kunio Shū* (Tōkyō: Chikuma Shobō, 1975). See: Ruoff 7-8, and Chapter 3, "Imperial Heritage Tourism," 82-105.

[21] For example, see these texts on memorialization of the American Civil War: Thomas J. Brown, *Civil War Monuments and the Militarization of America* (Raleigh: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 2019), Adam H. Domby, *The False Cause: Fraud, Fabrication, and White Supremacy in Confederate Memory* (Charlottesville: The University of Virginia Press, 2020) or Kirk Savage, *Standing Soldiers, Kneeling Slaves: Race, War, and Monument in Nineteenth-century America* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1997). For texts on the memorialization of World War I: Elena Lamberti and Vita Fortunati, eds. Memories and Representations of War: The Case of World War I and World War II. Amsterdam; New York: Rodopi, 2009. Jay Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998). For texts on the memorialization of World War II see: Francesca Capelletto ed., *Memory and World War II: An Ethnographic Approach* (New York: Berg, 2005), Daniel Chirot, Gi-Wook Shin, and Daniel C. Sneider. *Confronting Memories of World War II: European and Asian Legacies* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2014), Stephan Jaeger, *The Second World War in the Twenty-First-Century Museum: From Narrative, Memory, and Experience to Experientiality* (Berlin ; Boston: De Gruyter, 2020), Jeremy Hicks, *The Victory Banner over the Reichstag: Film, Document, and Ritual in Russia's Contested Memory of World War II* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2020). Debra Ramsay, *American Media and the Memory of World War II* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2015). Marianne Stecher-Hansen, *Nordic War Stories: World War II as History, Fiction, Media, and Memory* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2021). For a text on the Memorialization of the Vietnam War: Kristin Ann Hass, *Carried to the Wall: American Memory and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998.

[22] For comparative Holocaust memory see: Paul Carrier, *Holocaust Monuments and National Memory Cultures in France and Germany since 1989,* New York: Berghahn Books, 2005), Harold Marcuse, "Holocaust Memorials: The Emergence of a Genre," *The American Historical Review* 115/1 (2010), 53-89.
Michael Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization* (Stanford: Stanford Univ. Press, 2009). For work on the Transatlantic Slave Trade: Madge Dresser, "Set in Stone? Statues and

We also see this emphasis on war and atrocity in scholarship on Japanese memorials and memorialization.[23] Although some Japanese scholars of memorialization have sought to expand beyond questions of war, atrocity, and national identity, that they make such an intervention speaks to the continued strength of scholarship on war memory and memorials.[24] This reflects the extent to which Imperial Japan's defeat in World War II greatly shaped Japan's postwar memory culture, national identity, and correspondingly the attention of memory scholars of Japan. The focus on WWII in scholarship of Japanese memorials and collective memory has also allowed researchers to connect Japan to the larger circulation of global memory culture. Scholars like Ran Zwigenberg, who examines the transnational connections between the memorialization of the Hiroshima and the Shoah, and C. Sarah Soh, who compares the Japanese and Korean memory politics of the Comfort Women issue, both connect Japanese WWII memory with the wider world.[25]

In my work on modern Japanese disaster memorials, I intervene in this largely war and atrocity-centric field in two ways. First, I decenter war and atrocity memorials as well as their

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Slavery in London," *History Workshop Journal* 64 (2007), 162-199. Alan Rice, *Creating Memorials, Building Identities: The Politics of Memory in the Black Atlantic* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2010), Nicola Frith and Kath Hodgson, eds., *At the Limits of Memory: Legacies of Slavery in the Francophone World* (Liverpool: Liverpool Univ. Press, 2014).

[23] For work on collective memory and the Sino-Japanese War/the Pacific theatre of WWII see: John W. Dower, *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1999), John W. Dower, *Ways of Forgetting, Ways of Remembering: Japan in the Modern World* (New York: New Press, 2012); Yoshikuni Igarashi, *Bodies of Memory: Narratives of War in Postwar Japanese Culture, 1945-1970* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2000); Yuki Miyamoto, *Beyond the Mushroom Cloud: Commemoration, Religion, and Responsibility After Hiroshima* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2012); Murakami Kōkyō, and Nishimura Akira. *Irei No Keifu: Shisha O Kioku Suru Kyōdōtai* (Tōkyō: Shinwasha, 2013); Nishimura, Akira. *Sengo Nihon to Sensō Shisha Irei: Shizume to Furui No Dainamizumu* (Tōkyō: Yūshisha, 2006); Philip A. Seaton, *Japan's Contested War Memories: The 'memory Rifts' in Historical Consciousness of World War II* (London ; New York: Routledge, 2007); Franziska Seraphim, *War Memory and Social Politics in Japan, 1945-2005* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Asia Center, 2006) and Yoshibumi Wakamiya, *The Postwar Conservative View of Asia: How the Political Right Has Delayed Japan's Coming to Terms With Its History of Aggression in Asia* (Tokyo, Japan: LTCB International Library Foundation, 1999).

[24] Murakami and Nishimura, 7-20.

[25] Chunghee Sarah Soh, *The Comfort Women: Sexual Violence and Postcolonial Memory in Korea and Japan* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), Ran Zwigenberg, *Hiroshima: The Origins of Global Memory Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

related concerns in memory studies. Whereas memorials to victims of human violence often center human-to-human relationships like comrade and enemy, enslaver and enslaved, perpetrator and victim, disaster memorials are often articulated as spaces where humans grapple with their relationship to their past, present, and future environmental hazards. This is not to say that human relationships are not also important in disaster memorialization. The attendance to deceased victims, healing of survivors, and education/warning of future generations, all can and have been important parts of Japanese disaster memorials. However, it is the inclusion, to greater or lesser degrees, of a consciousness around the (in this case seismic) environment and humanity's vulnerabilities within it, that make disaster memorials in Japan a compelling and fresh addition to memorial scholarship.

I do not want to suggest that the concerns of war and atrocity memorials are trivial. On the contrary, the second way I intervene in memory studies is to show that disaster memorials in modern Japan exist in the larger circulation of a global memory culture dominated by war and atrocity memorialization. This intervention disabuses us of the notion that disaster memorialization is somehow a manifestation of *Nihonjinron*, or Japanese uniqueness. Instead, I show disaster memorials in Japan are an expression of a complicated web made up of the realities of the archipelago's environment, how the environment's hazards can affect vulnerable populations on the islands, and how survivors of disasters make use of both local and global memory cultures to cope with those hazards.

Like other critical disaster scholars, I use this history to show that war and disaster, in this case as part of a larger circulation of global memory culture, can be surprisingly connected. This should further encourage us to answer the calls of disaster scholars like Andy Horowitz, Scott Gabriel Knowles, Jacob Remes, and Ted Steinberg, and dispense with categories of "human-

made" and "natural" disaster.[26] These political "conceits" cleave disasters, like famine, accidents, and war, from others, like earthquakes, floods, and hurricanes.[27] This formulation, in turn, renders the former "acts of man" resistant to being analyzed according to disaster studies methodologies that emphasize the social construction of systemic risk and vulnerability.[28] It also naturalizes the latter "acts of nature" or "acts of God," in ways that allow those in power to obscure human culpability and the role of the status quo in generating disaster events. Read disingenuously, or perhaps cynically, this move on the part of critical disaster scholars can be seen as an intellectual land-grab, an ambitious effort to bring all human suffering under the purview of disaster researchers. I choose to interpret it generously, as a radical invitation to analyze events, like war or earthquakes, in ways that borrow insights from fields or perspectives that have historically been thought to be unrelated or irrelevant to the issues at hand.

By decentering war memorials in, while simultaneously showing how they are connected to, my telling of the history of modern Japanese disaster memorialization, I do not intend to belittle the tragedies or trivialize the goals of war and atrocity memorials as equal to or less than those of disaster memorials. Instead, like my fellow critical disaster scholars, I hope this intervention is received as a radical invitation to researchers, theorists, and practitioners of memorialization to further plumb the depths of connection between memorials to war, atrocity, and disaster. I came to this interpretation unintentionally during my dissertation research. While I thought that scholarly works on and comparative examples of war and atrocity memorials around the global would help inform my theoretical approach to disaster memorials in Japan, at a certain

[26] See Horowitz, Knowles, Remes, and Steinberg articulate this in their contributions to: Jacob A. C. Remes and Andy Horowitz, *Critical Disaster Studies* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2021), also see: Ted Steinberg, *Acts of God: The Unnatural History of Natural Disaster in America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.
[27] Remes and Horowitz, 184-192.
[28] Remes and Horowitz, 184-192.

point I could not ignore the consistent references of and connections with memorials to war, terrorism, and genocide in both my archival and ethnographic fieldwork. In the coming chapters I will show the various ways disaster memorials were connected (at different points) to WWI memorials (Chapter 1), WWII memorials (Chapter 3), and the post-WWII emphasis on witness testimony (Chapter 4).

Disaster Memorialization, Climate Change, and the Historian

In addition to the weaving together of environmental history and memory studies, I make a practical intervention in the field of history through my study of modern Japanese disaster memorials. In other words, I believe the stakes of this dissertation are more than historiographical. I argue that the case studies presented here offer models and lessons for how the modern memorial form can be mobilized in response to the most pressing disaster of our time: climate change. This argument is born of my own interest, training, and practice in public history, and my understanding of memorials in general as works of public history.
This understanding of memorials is grounded in the development of public history itself.

Early public historians in academia in the 1970s, like Robert Kelley, saw the field as a "professional…movement" and defined public history as "the employment of historians and historical method outside of academia."[29] However others, like Ronald J. Grele, argued this "narrower idea of the profession" of public history envisioned by the thinkers of the "new" movement was only possible because academic historians ignored the history of public history. Rather than engaging in a new venture, professional historians were engaging in work long done

[29] Paul Ashton, and Alex Trapeznik, eds. *What Is Public History Globally?: Working with the Past in the Present*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2019), 1, 4, and Robert Kelley, "Public History: Its Origins, Nature, and Prospects," *Public Historian* 1, no. 1 (1978): 16.

non-academic historians before public history was being theorized in the academy. [30] In contrast to Kelley, Grele saw public history as part of the lineage of the participatory historical culture, mentioned above, that played a role in the rise of the nation-state and construction of national identity, and made use of public rituals, museums, monuments, and memorials.[31]

This focus on public history also reflects my own positionality, and commitment, as a historian engaged in the practice of Japanese disaster memorialization. During my PhD program and dissertation research I participated in public history projects like the Kizuna Project, a Chicago-based initiative run by the Osaka Committee of Chicago Sister Cities International (CSCI), and Humans of Minamisanriku, a yearly oral history project run by my former Japanese language instructor Dr. Yuko Prefume at my undergraduate alma mater Baylor University, both of which focused on making the experiences of 3.11 survivors accessible to English-speaking audiences.[32] My work on these projects had two purposes. In part, I engaged with both projects as an exercise in participatory observation research and ethnographic fieldwork, to understand how contemporary organizations dedicated to disaster memorialization and memory practice operate and to contemplate their aims. As such, my experiences working on these projects by conducting and translating interviews, producing commemorative photo exhibitions, and coordinating memorial events, informed my approach towards disaster memorialization, especially the more temporally recent case studies in this dissertation. Secondly, I viewed my

[30] Ashton and Trapeznik, 2. Ronald J. Grele, "Whose Public? Whose History? What is the Goal of a Public Historian?" *Public Historian* 3, no. 1 (1981): 44-46.
[31] Ashton and Trapeznik, 2. David Thelen, "The Nation and Beyond: Transnational Perspectives on United States History," *Journal of American History* 86, no.3 (1999), 965. David Christian, "History and Global Identity" in *The Historian's Conscience: Australian Historians on the Ethics of History*, ed. Stuart Macintyre (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2004), 149.
[32] For information on Humans of Minamisanriku see: Yuko Prefume, "BIJ in Minamisanriku: How We Got Started" January 16, 2021, accessed July 14, 2022, https://sites.baylor.edu/bijm/2021/01/16/baylor-in-japan-in-minamisanriku/. For information on the Kizuna Project see: Kizuna Project Archive, "About Us," accessed July 14, 2022, https://www.311kizunachicago.com/about-us.

participation as part of a larger, career-long commitment to being, what I term, an engaged historian. As an engaged historian I have endeavored to practice history both within and outside academia, with a particular interest in making history accessible and applying it in response to practical problems and concerns.

My public history approach to disaster memorials is also born of my own consciousness of and, frankly, anxiety over the climate crisis. As climate change accelerates and interferes with systems of infrastructure designed and built with different climatic baselines in mind, disasters are disrupting, and will continue to disrupt, society more frequently. Even scholars on the forefront of disaster studies who recognize that disaster is an "analytical conceit" admit that it is a "conceit that suits our age."[33] Unfortunately, as climate change worsens our disastrous age is likely to extend into the future and disaster will remain a critical issue for new generations. For example, projections show that a child born today, like my son, will experience on average more extreme climate events in their lifetime than individuals of earlier generations.[34]

As an engaged historian I wanted to think about the roles historians can play in response to climate change. This impulse is not unique. Climate change has led other historians, especially environmental historians, to question what impact the crisis will have on how we do history. For scholars like Dipesh Chakrabarty, climate change as a biproduct of the Anthropocene has consequences for the philosophy of history.[35] Others have debated if the historian's (especially environmental historian's) role is to narrate the decline towards climate change and ecological degradation. Others still argue that environmental history should move beyond such

[33]. Remes and Horowitz, 1.
[34] Wim Thiery, et al., "Intergenerational inequities in exposure to climate extremes" *Science* Sept 26, 2021, pp. eabi7339, accessed Sept. 29, 2021.
[35] Chakrabarty.

"declensionist" narratives.[36] Japanese history itself has been a key site of study for environmental historians who look to the archipelago as home to both historical case studies of environmental hope and peril.[37]

With this dissertation I make a novel contribution to these debates on the role of historians amidst the climate crisis by exploring what lessons we can learn from the modern tradition of Japanese disaster memorialization. In many ways the animating question of this dissertation is the same as the question asked by post-disaster communities in modern Japan: "How should we remember a disaster?" In the various political, ritual, didactic, preventative, and emotional functions of Japanese disaster memorials I find a great deal of inspiration for an effective practice of disaster memory. What I offer in the final chapter of this dissertation (Epilogue) is a preliminary meditation on how historians can do history, practically and publicly, with disaster memorials in response to climate change and climate-related disasters. Here too, I hope that fellow scholars see this intervention as an invitation to engage, through application as well as analysis, with disaster memorials and memorialization.

Archipelago of Disaster

"Environmentally, the Japanese islands are a dangerous place to live."[38] This is how archaeologist and art historian of Japan, Gina L. Barnes introduces the archipelago.[39] As

[36] For a critique of "declensionist narratives" see Ted Steinberg, "Down, Down, Down, No More: Environmental History Moves beyond Declension," *Journal of the Early Republic* 24 no. 2 (Summer, 2004), 266. For a defense of declensionist narrative in environmental history see the introduction of Brett L. Walker Toxic Archipelago: A History of Industrial Disease in Japan. (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2010).
[37] For a case study of hope see: Conrad D. Totman, *The Green Archipelago: Forestry in Pre-Industrial Japan*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), for a case study of peril see the referentially titled Brett Walker, *Toxic Archipelago: A History of Industrial Disease in Japan* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2010)
[38] Gina L. Barnes, "Chapter 1: Vulnerable Japan: The Tectonic Setting of Life in the Archipelago," in Bruce Loyd Batten and Philip C. Brown eds., *Environment and Society in the Japanese Islands: From Prehistory to the Present* (Corvallis, Or.: Oregon State University Press, 2015.), 22.
[39] Barnes, 21-42.

touched on above, the humans who have populated the archipelago since the neolithic era have had to contend with various environmental hazards presented by the geography and climate of the Pacific Island chain. In addition to earthquakes and tsunami residents of the archipelago have a had to cope with other seismic hazards like volcanic eruptions with both direct and indirect hazards (like lava flows, pyroclastic surges, forest fires, and the emission of volcanic gases).[40] These seismic forces, which compress the tectonic faults along the archipelago, produce Japan's mountainous terrain that gives rise to other hazards like landslides.[41] Both heavy seasonal rainfall and typhoons from the Pacific can lead to floods along rivers and marshlands as well as interact with loose soil in mountainous areas to produce mudslides.[42] Both long-term and short-term climatic changes have also historically produced famine on the archipelago. Agrarian practice, politics, and governmental institutions have also interacted with climate to either exacerbate or mitigate climate hazards.[43]

Given the various dangers the archipelago has posed to human life, it is no surprise that disaster has been an influential force in the development of Japanese history and culture. For example, as historian of religion Yamaori Testuō notes, two of the most important works of medieval Japanese prose, Kamo no Chōmei's *Hōjōki* and Nichiren's *Risshō Anokokuron* were shaped by the authors' experiences of disaster. A variety of disasters, (a fire, famine, windstorm, and earthquake) befell the capital of Kyoto in the late 12th century. Chōmei described these calamities in the *Hōjōki*, interpreting them as inevitable and evidence of Buddhist teachings on

[40] Barnes, 23.
[41] Barnes, 22.
[42] Philip C. Brown, "Chapter 5: Floods, Drainage, and River Projects in Early Modern Japan," in Batten and Brown, 98.
[43] Osamu Saito, "Chapter 11: Climate, Famine, and Population in Japanese History: A Long-Term Perspective," in Batten and Brown, 212-213.

the impermanence (*mujō*) of life.[44] The background of Nichiren's tract was the 1257 Kamakura Earthquake. In contrast to Chōmei's more fatalistic interpretation, disasters in Nichiren's reading were the result of the state of internal strife within and threat of foreign invasion upon the island nation, and thus were ultimately supernatural warnings about societal problems.[45] At the same time disasters influenced Japanese thinkers like Chōmei and Nichiren, they also served as events that could be interpreted through existing ideas and beliefs.[46]

These environmental hazards continued to threaten the Japanese population, to varying degrees, with the advent of modern Japan and the modern Japanese nation state starting in the mid-19th century. As an industrializing power engaged in both imperial and capitalistic competition these environmental hazards were overlaid by anthropogenic hazards that came with industrialized production, urban development, and population growth throughout the 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries. Academics, like Brett Walker and Robert Stolz, as well as popular writers, like Alex Kerr, have written at length about the environmental degradation and industrial disasters (both fast and slow), that have plagued Japan in its modern era.[47] As we will see later in the dissertation, disasters continued to be influential as events that both shaped and were shaped by the prevailing political, economic, religious, cultural, and ideological currents of the given moment.[48] Finally, as Walker chillingly points out, the death and disruption that has accompanied these various disasters throughout Japanese history has all occurred within a relatively stable climate. With climate change, Walker argues, the relatively predictable, if still

[44] Brett L. Walker, *A Concise History of Japan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 298, and Yamaori Tetsuō, *Kanashimi no seishinshi* (Tōkyō: PHP Kenkyūjo, 2002), 71.
[45] Yamaori, 71.
[46] Walker, *A Concise History of Japan*, 298.
[47] See: Alex Kerr, *Dogs and Demons: Tales from the Dark Side of Japan* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2001), Robert Stolz, *Bad Water: Nature, Pollution, and Politics in Japan, 1870-1950*. Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2014), and Walker, *Toxic Archipelago*.
[48] Walker, *A Concise History of Japan*, 290-302.

potentially disruptive climate, of Japan will become more volatile. Factors like rising sea levels will further supercharge already familiar, but still dangerous, hazards like typhoons and tsunami on the archipelago.[49] This continued potential for disaster will make Japan an "important bellwether" for the rest of the globe as it pushes further into an uncertain future.[50]

Against this background of the larger context and longer history of disastrous Japan, our main concern is the "tectonic setting of life" for those who make the island chain their home that Barnes describes in her chapter. [51] This tectonic setting consists of four to five different tectonic plates, upon which the archipelago is situated. At this convergence of plates, the oceanic Pacific and Philippine plates are subducted under the island chain, which sits on the continental Eurasian and North American plates.[52] Japan is subject to earthquakes caused by both compression faults (like in the case of the 1995 Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake examined in Chapter 3) and slab subduction (as in the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake a.k.a. 3.11, analyzed in Chapter 4).[53]

As explained earlier these earthquakes occur on geologic timescales that outstrip common human conceptions of time (an issue explored in Chapter 2). The faults that cause earthquakes in Japan, rupture cyclically, in what is called a "recurrence interval."[54] While the cyclicity of fault lines, and thus their recurrence intervals can be monitored using palaeoseismology, the scale of temporal variability in the interval renders them relatively useless for short-term human planning. For instance, the Rokkō-Awaji Fault Zone, unknown before it caused the 1995 Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake, has an estimated recurrence interval of 900-

[49] Walker, *A Concise History of Japan*, 283-287.
[50] Walker, *A Concise History of Japan*, 304.
[51] Barnes, 21-42
[52] Barnes, 22.
[53] Barnes, 22-23.
[54] Barnes, 23, and Gregory Smits, *When the Earth Roars: Lessons from the History of Earthquakes in Japan* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014), 4.

2,800 years along one segment and 1,800-2,500 years along another.[55] The ranges of variability for these recurrence intervals are 1,900 and 700 years, respectively. This is relatively accurate in terms of geologic time, but also meaningless for the time scales of human decisions that could put one at seismic risk, like buying real estate in Kobe in the next couple years. The complexity of plate tectonics and the lack of accuracy of recurrence intervals for the purposes of human timescales, means that earthquakes cannot yet be reliably predicted and, as some argue, may never be forecasted with precision that is meaningful for near-term human decisions.[56]

When earthquakes and their resulting tsunami do "erupt" into human life on the archipelago, they, like other disasters as was shown above, both influence and are apprehended by existing societal conditions. In the Early Modern and Modern periods earthquakes and tsunami have been variably interpreted as indictments of the existing political order (like during the Ansei-era quakes in the 1850s in waning years of the Tokugawa Shogunate), evidence of Japanese exceptionalism (particularly in the relation to the anti-seismic abilities of native architecture in the wake of the Nōbi Earthquake of 1891), or opportunities for national renewal after periods of stagnation and decadence (seen in the wake of the 1923 Great Kantō Earthquake and 3.11).[57] Disaster memorials were one such set of social practices that were simultaneously influenced by and used to understand earthquakes and tsunami in 20th and 21st century Japan.

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[55] Smits, *When the Earth Roars*, 4.

[56] The impossibility of earthquake prediction is Gregory Smits' core argument in *When the Earth Roars*. I do not share Smits' pessimism about the future possibilities of seismological prediction, after all many problems are impossible and impenetrable until they suddenly are not, but his critique of the current situation illustrates the problem of seismic and human timescales well. Barnes, 23, and Smits, *When the Earth Roars*, xi-xv.

[57] See: Gregory K. Clancey, *Earthquake Nation: The Cultural Politics of Japanese Seismicity, 1868-1930* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006). J. Charles. Schnecking, *The Great Kantō Earthquake and the Chimera of National Reconstruction in Japan* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), Gregory Smits, *Seismic Japan: The Long History and Continuing Legacy of the Ansei Edo Earthquake* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2014), and Walker, *A Concise History of Japan.*

Archipelago of Memory

As I will show in this dissertation the disaster memorials used to cope with earthquake and tsunami events in the last roughly 100 years of Japanese history developed within and alongside the increasingly global memory culture of the 20th and 21st centuries. This does not suggest, however, that modern Japanese disaster memorials are reducible to merely an interesting local expression of a larger international phenomenon. On the contrary, the transnational trends in memorials and memorialization that would be interpreted and localized in Japanese post-disaster contexts, entered a society with its own rich memory culture. While we catch glimpses of that memory culture throughout the narrative of the dissertation, it deserves at least a short introduction.

Ever since the commission of the first myth-histories of Japan, like the *Kojiki*, by the Japanese imperial family who took inspiration from the Chinese imperial annals, issues of history and memory on the archipelago have been intimately connected with the intersection of politics, religion, and the arts.[58] One such expression of this intersection in early Japan was in the art of native poetry or *waka*, which was often used by poets to memorialize the passing of friends, loved ones, and important figures with numerous examples of death poems in the collections of the *Man'yoshū*, *Kokin-wakashū*, and *Shin kokin-wakashū*.[59] The commemorative quality of poetry continued to be articulated in medieval and early modern Japan with poets like *haiku* master Mastuo Bashō using verse to mark special occasions, events, or locations.[60] Literary practices like these would even sometimes be inscribed on the memorial landscape in

[58] For the *Kojiki* in translation see: Ō, Yasumaro, and Gustav Heldt. *The Kojiki: An Account of Ancient Matters* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014).
[59] Inaoka Kōji, *Man'yōshū* (Tōkyō: Gakuseisha, 1975), *Kokin wakashū* (Tōkyō: Shōgakkan, 1994), and *Shin-kokin wakashū* (Tōkyō: Shōgakkan, 1995).
[60] See: Matsuo Bashō, and Sam Hamill, *Narrow Road to the Interior and Other Writings* (Boston: Shambhala, 2000).

the form of "poetry stones" (*ka-hi*, *ku-hi,* or *shi-hi*). These commemorative markers would include an inscription of the verse and were often built where the poem was composed. Another expression can be seen in medieval Japanese military epics or *gunkimono* like the famous *Heike Monogatari*.[61] Often written about the losing side of a conflict, like the titular Heike, or Taira clan, in the Genpei War (1180-1185), these military epics were composed to be both read (*yomimono*) or ritualistically recited (*katarimono*). These ritualistic recitations were conducted, in part, to sooth the potentially dangerous and angry spirits of warriors violently slain in past conflicts. Recitations were taken up by performers like *biwa hōshi*, traditionally blind Japanese lute players, or *kataribe*, professional storytellers.[62] *Kataribe*, would go on to be used as a term for disaster survivors who share testimony of their disaster experience or serve as disaster area guides as part of modern disaster memorialization (explored in Chapter 4).

Japanese memory culture was expressed in more quotidian and intimate settings as well. One such example is the practice of *tzuka*; mounds where everyday items like glasses, kitchen knives, or other tools, that had been used or worn to the point of disrepair could be brought and ritualistically honored for their service rather than unceremoniously thrown away. Another memorial practice that has touched the lives of many Japanese since at least the early modern period is the memorialization of aborted fetuses, known as *mizuko*, by women and families. Statues of the Boddhisatva *Jizō*, known in lay belief as the protector of lost and deceased children, are one way these terminated pregnancies are commemorated and are still a common sight across Japan.[63]

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[61] For the Heike Monogatari in translation see: Helen Craig McCullough, *The Tale of the Heike*. (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1988), or for a newer translation: Royall Tyler, *The Tale of the Heike*. New York: Viking, 2012.
[62] For a discussion of the cultural and ritual uses of the *Heike Monogatari* see: McCullough, 1-11.
[63] For a monograph length discussion of the memorialization of *mizuko* see: William R. LaFleur, *Liquid Life: Abortion and Buddhism in Japan*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1992.

In terms of the collective remembrance, memorialization, and mourning of disaster victims, premodern and early modern Japanese relied on practices based on the complementary syncretism of native folk religion and Buddhism imported from the continent.[64] These overlapped sets of practices each had their unique attributes, with folk practice emphasizing community relationships and Buddhist practice being based in universalistic principles and doctrine, but both centered on the transformation of "restless dead" (*ukabarenai shisha*) into the "peaceful dead" (*yasurakana shisha*).[65] At the heart of both was the belief that those who died violent or rough deaths, especially those who might die without anyone to personally mourn them (*muen*, literally, "without bonds"), could become malicious spirits that could harm the living and needed to be pacified through collective ritual action.[66] While the collective memorial and mourning rituals of modern Japan have undergone a process of modernization and secularization (which I explore in Chapter 3), they bear the mark of this religious lineage.[67]

This diversity of Japanese memory culture is represented, in part, in the translation of Japanese memorial terminology into English. English terms like memorial, monument, or memory circulate in their Japanese transliterations *memoriaru*, *monyumento*, and *memorii* and are used within the context of disaster memorialization. Other common terms reveal the complexity of Japanese memory culture, with constellations of meanings that are hard to capture in English. For example, one of the most common words I encountered in my research was *kinen*, a Japanese word combining the characters *ki* (chronicle, account, narrative, history, annal)

[64] Fukuda Yu, "Sai ka no gireiron ni mukete – gendai nihon ni okeru ireisai ya tuitōshiki no jirei kara," *Kansai gakuin daigaku sentan shakai kenkyūsho kiyō* 8 (2012): 74-75.
[65] Drawing on the work of Ikegami Yoshio, Fukuda Yu lays out the *tatari-matsuri*/*kegare-harai* system of folk practice related to communal memorialization and the *kuyō/chōboku* system of Buddhist memorial practice. Fukuda, 74-75.
[66] Fukuda, 74-78.
[67] Fukuda, 76-78.

and *nen* (wish, sense idea, thought, feeling, desire, attention). In this form, *kinen*, broadly means the marking or celebration of a past event and could be translated as memorialization, commemoration, or remembrance in English. This can be seen in a number of compound words commonly associated with disaster memorialization, such as *kinenkan* (memorial hall), *kinenbutsu* (memento), *kinenhi* (memorial stone), or *kinenbi* (memorial day, anniversary). This version of *kinen* is largely secular, has a neutral emotional valence, and does not contain any explicit religious or spiritual connotations. The related homonym *kinen* combining the characters *ki* (pray, wish) and *nen* (wish, sense idea, thought, feeling, desire, attention) and with the meaning "prayer," complicates the secular commemorative connotations of the other "time marking" *kinen*. Although it is less common than its partner homonym, *kinen* as "prayer" is also used regularly in Japanese disaster memorials such as during *kinen-shiki* (memorial service) or *kinen-jigyō* (memorial event). While these words can also appropriately be glossed as memorials in English, there is a connotation of spiritual meaning and ritual, if not overt reference to a specific religious sect or practice.

Translation becomes further complicated with terms like *tsuitō* and *irei*. *Tsuitō* is a word written with the characters *tsui* (chase, drive away, follow, pursue) and *tō* (lament, grieve) and is one of the common words used for memorial service (*tsuitō-shiki* or *tsuitō-kai*). Whereas both forms of *kinen* point to marking time or prayer, repectively, *tsuitō* seems to center the emotional function of memorialization. Still, memorialize, or perhaps mourn, are the most accurate translations for *tsuitō* in English. *Irei* is another word that could often be translated as memorial, and commonly used in the disaster memorialization. Made up of the characters *i* (consolation, comfort, console) and *rei* (spirits or soul) a more direct translation would be "consoling the spirits of the dead." *Irei* used commonly in the words *irei-sai* (memorial service) or *irei-hi*

(memorial stone, cenotaph) emphasizes the spiritual function, based on the earlier religious practices explicated above, of memorial events, practices, or objects in modern Japan. Put simply, the souls of those who died in each disaster event need to be comforted through ritual action by the living to ensure peaceful rest of the dead. In *irei* there is an understanding that the living (both survivors and bereaved) have a social and spiritual obligation to the dead. In Japanese memorial terminology we can see the complicated knot of meanings and functions connecting time, memory, commemoration, mourning, and spirituality. These nuances are obscured by the surprising capaciousness of the English word "memorial."

Disaster Memory in Theory and Practice

In the depth of Japanese memory culture and the breadth of memorial terminology laid out above, we can see that disaster memorials lie at the intersection of several interrelated cultural structures. I analyze disaster memorials in modern Japan as being the result of the navigation of aesthetic, ideological, religious, socio-economic, emotional, and public historical concerns.[68] These concerns have been configured and reconfigured to do political work in various post-disaster moments in modern Japan, with certain formations emphasizing some concerns over others. I show that instances of that political work have included the glorification of national reconstruction (Chapter 1), the promotion of longstanding bureaucratic goals of social welfare and social settlement (Chapter 2), top-down urban recovery according to neoliberal,

[68] This understanding of memorials is indebted to the approach that Mattias Frihammer and Helaine Silverman articulate in their exploration of the "Heritage of Death" in Mattias Frihammar, and Helaine Silverman, eds., *Heritage of Death: Landscapes of Emotion, Memory and Practice* (Abingdon, Oxon; New York, NY: Routledge, 2018), 3-16.

market-based, and cosmopolitan logics (Chapter 3), and the emphasis of disaster experience as the most effective means of promoting healing and disaster preparedness (Chapter 4).

In my analysis I draw on the work of memory scholars who go beyond the reading of memorials as just works of art and political symbolism and take disaster memorials seriously as spaces and practices that individuals interact with affectively and emotionally.[69] In doing so I try to explain what makes a number of disaster memorials appropriate or out of place, meaningful or meaningless, effective or ineffective, and what makes them succeed or fail at various historical moments in modern Japan. There is, after all, no natural form that a memorial must take. As was illustrated at the beginning of this introduction a memorial may be an engraved monolith, designed and placed with intention, or it could be a piece of debris that attracts the attention of survivors. A memorial only derives meaning if it is noticed, that is, if it elicits an affective and attentive response.

This analysis is informed by the multiple and overlapping positionalities I inhabit in relation to disaster memorials. As mentioned above, I contemplate both the historiographical and public historical implications of disaster memorials in modern Japan while utilizing an interdisciplinary research methodology. Specifically, I engage four interrelated roles, historian, ethnographer, public historian, and practitioner, to analyze and assess the case studies presented in this dissertation. It is worth briefly explaining these positionalities, and how I inhabit them, because they have implications for my research, analysis, and narration of the history covered in this dissertation.

The most influential role in shaping my approach to this dissertation is historian. This reflects my primary training in the discipline of history, which informs the organizational and

[69] Frihammer and Silverman, 3-16, and Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning,* 78-79.

methodological foundations of the project. Put simply, the specialty of historians is understanding the dynamics of continuity and change over various scales of time and space.[70] As such, this training led me to organize the dissertation as a history—a linear narrative of disaster memorials in Japan and their development alongside global memory culture over time. Other methods of organization of these case studies are certainly possible. For example, a synchronic analysis organized according to common themes or structures of disaster memorialization is one, potentially fruitful, possibility. Instead, by writing about modern Japanese disaster memorials diachronically, I historicize the memory sites, practices, and work that follow these four disasters. This allows me to illustrate the iterative and cumulative aspects of disaster memorialization in modern Japan and show that these memorials are products of long and ongoing processes of cultural change. Methodologically my role as historian also led me to rely on archival materials, both textual and visual, as the main means to construct the linear narrative that connects the memorial responses to these disparate, yet linked, disaster events.

My historical approach and organization are augmented both methodologically and stylistically by my role as an ethnographer. While historians continue to debate the potential merits and pitfalls of engaging with the present as historians, ethnographers have developed a robust methodological tradition that grapples with the intimate relationship between the researcher and research subject.[71] This tradition recognizes that the knowledge produced by the ethnographer is influenced both by the ethnographer's life experience as well as the "co-constitutive relationship" between the ethnographer and the individuals/areas that they live

[70] Jo Guldi and David Armitage, *The History Manifesto* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 14-15.
[71] For a recent example of this debate see Daniel Steinmetz-Jenkins "Introduction: Whose Present? Which History?" in Forum: History and The Present *Modern Intellectual History* (2022), 1-12.

amongst and study.[72] As an ethnographer I engaged in participant-observation research and wrote field notes on various aspects of disaster memorialization process, including memorial ceremonies, public memorial planning meetings, and the production of memorial projects. Importantly, I did so reflexively, recognizing and considering the "feedback effect" of such experiences on how I engaged with my larger research project.[73] In practice, this meant that my archival research and ethnographic field work informed each other. I brought my historical knowledge to the conversations and events I participated in, and I let those experiences shape my reading of primary source materials.

I found this interdisciplinary approach particularly critical for attending to the emotional and affective aspects of disaster memorials. By allowing my ethnographic experiences to inform my analysis of disaster memorial's emotionality I sought to build upon the insights of historians like Jay Winter, who seriously consider the emotional aspects of memorials, and work towards an "emotional history" of disaster memorialization. In her formulation of "emotional history" Deborah Gould seeks to keep "the multiple meanings of that phrase intact," recognizing both the emotional content of a historical subject and the potential for that history to be emotionally evocative for the researcher.[74] This emotional engagement of the researcher is then ideally used heuristically to prompt further questions and insights about the emotional work done by the historical actors being analyzed. Ethnography, with its attentiveness to reflexivity, is well suited to Gould's heuristic approach and one can easily see resonances with her method in the work of anthropologists of emotion.[75]

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[72] Roberto E. Barrios, *Governing Affect: Neoliberalism and Disaster Reconstruction* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2017), 10.
[73] Barrios, 10.
[74] Deborah Gould, *Moving Politics: Emotion and Act Up's Fight Against Aids* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2009), 10.
[75] For example see: Renato Rosaldo, "Grief and the Headhunter's Rage" in *Culture and Truth: The Remaking of Social Analysis* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1989), see also Yutaka Suga writing in the context of Japan about the power

The role of ethnographer also influenced my decision to be more transparent about my positionalities vis-à-vis the history of Japanese disaster memorials. Importantly, this informed my stylistic choice to include myself, when appropriate, in the historical narrative. While historians often opt for detached narration that obscures the writer within the prose, ethnographers are much more comfortable incorporating themselves as characters within their stories.[76] I practice this transparency both by narrating relevant experiences I have had with Japanese disaster memorialization, like I did at the beginning of the introduction, and by intentionally using pronouns like I, my, and me throughout the text.

As a public historian, I build on my analysis of disaster memorials as a historian and ethnographer by considering the implications for the practice of disaster history and memory aimed at non-academic audiences or "publics." This focus often leads me to ask different questions than purely analytic researchers, like whether a particular disaster memorial was successful or durable and I consider the implications of these case studies for the application and practice of public disaster history. While the main exploration of the public historical implications of my dissertation occurs in the epilogue, I also discuss the practical and applied implications of these case studies throughout the dissertation. In doing so I take seriously my role as a professional historian in the larger participatory historical culture of disaster memorialization and think about how to use memorials as a means of communicating disaster history.

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of empathy for post-disaster researchers: Yutaka Suga, "Into the Bullring: The significance of "Empathy" after the earthquake," in "We are All Survivors: Verbal, Ritual, and Material Ways of Narrating Disaster and Recovery" ed. Carl Lindahl and Michael Dylan Foster, special issue, *Fabula* 58, Issue 1-2 (2017): 25-38.

[76] For an example of this see the section entitled "An Ethnographer's Journey, a Book's Roadmap," in Barrios, 10-25.

Finally, each of these positionalities inform and are informed by my role as a practitioner of disaster memorialization. As I touched on above, throughout the course of my doctoral training and research, I actively participated in the production of disaster memorial materials for organizations devoted to the memory of 3.11 such as Humans of Minamisanriku and the Kizuna Project. My motivation to participate as a practitioner of disaster memorialization was driven in part by my desire to deepen my knowledge of memorial practice through hands-on experience in the field. In this way, taking on the role of practitioner was an embrace of ethnographic methodology and participant observation research. However, I do not view my role as a practitioner as merely subordinate to my research interests. Instead, I recognize that my experience as a practitioner also influenced my analysis within and goals for the dissertation. Many of concerns of the memorial organizations and the questions I asked myself during the production of various memory projects are reflected within the dissertation.

Importantly, as a practitioner I was invested in the success of the memorial projects I participated in and helped create. I brought my skills as a historian, ethnographer, and public historian to bear to help build successful memorials, but my efforts also went beyond my identity as a researcher. I earnestly and sincerely joined my interlocutors in their work to remember disaster and disaster victims. In other words, I am not merely a dispassionate observer in disaster memorialization, but have a foot in both worlds, which has informed my approach to this project.

Ultimately, I use this theory of and multi-positional approach to disaster memorials to explore practical concerns of disaster memory in the epilogue of this dissertation. How can historians effectively and ethically use disaster memorials amidst the climate crisis? What affects and attentions can disaster memorials cultivate, and which would promote eco-consciousness, environmental justice, and climate action? Drawing on the case studies of modern Japanese

disaster memorials these questions receive tentative and preliminary answers in the epilogue. I view those answers as an exploratory step towards putting the lessons of disaster memorials into practice.

Chapter Outline

Chapter 1 examines the controversy of the design competition for the 1923 Great Kantō Earthquake Memorial Hall in the larger context of an emerging global memory culture in the early 20th century. Following the 1923 earthquake that struck Tokyo, the Honjo Former Army Depot, a site where many victims were burned to death in earthquake-sparked fires, was set aside as the location of a future memorial hall and park. To garner public support and attract fundraising for the memorial the Memorial Committee held a design competition and architects from around Japan submitted their plans for the site. The initial selection of Maeda Kenjirō's neoclassical and art deco by the committee inspired design sparked a controversy, especially among Buddhist organizations who argued that the proposed memorial did not sufficiently reflect Japanese spirituality. In response the committee commissioned a design by Itō Chūta, an architect famed for his synthesis of western and eastern styles. Using previously unexamined design submissions to the competition, I explore what designers were trying to accomplish in terms of architecture, collective memory, and emotionally through their memorial designs. I place this disaster memorial effort in the larger history of global memory culture, which had entered a productive new era following WWI. I show that designers navigated both global memory culture and Japanese traditions of mourning in their submissions. I also show that despite the variety of articulations of the global and local in the designs, they were in relative agreement in their pursuit of an emotional forgetting of the event. I argue the design competition,

subsequent controversy, and resolution in Itō Chūta's memorial hall shows that memorial design was a delicate navigation of international trends, local desires, and the limits of what was deemed appropriate.

Chapter 2 tells the history of Miyagi Prefecture's Tsunami Memorial Halls (*Shinshōsai kinenkan* or *Kaishō kinenkan*). Built in the wake of the 1933 Showa-Sanriku Earthquake and Tsunami as part of the Miyagi Prefectural government's reconstruction effort, these memorial halls commemorated disaster victims and were also designed to be social settlement houses, serving as disaster education spaces, future evacuation sites, and community meeting halls. I use the history of the memorial halls as a case study to grapple with the incommensurability of the human timescales of collective memory and the geologic timescales of seismic activity that periodically sets off disaster on Tōhoku's pacific coast. Exploring the tension between these irreconcilable timescales as a productive space of inquiry to interrogate the "middle temporality" of disaster on the Sanriku Coast. Centering the memorial halls themselves, I examine their "memorial life cycles" from creation to second lives as repurposed public buildings, and eventually to varied deaths as they were demolished or forgotten. I argue that the history of the 1933 Tsunami Memorial Halls is a cautionary tale for post-disaster memorials that emphasizes the necessity to reckon with issues of scale when designing future post-disaster memorials in Japan and beyond.

Chapter 3 examines the significance and functions of annual memorial events by studying 25 years of memorials in the wake of the 1995 Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake in Kobe. I approach annual memorial events through the lenses of ritual and emotion to understand how they operate for participants as the disaster event recedes further into the past and the make-up or participation changes to include younger generations. Specifically, I compare the development

and character of two types of annual commemorative events held in honor of the Great Hanshin Awaji Earthquake. One type are the memorial services, referred to as *tsudoi* held on the anniversary of the earthquake event. Using event materials and commemorative messages left by participants I show how participants relationship to and emotions towards the event change over time. The other type of commemorative event I explore is the famous *Kobe Luminarie* a wintertime illumination installation donated by an Italian artist. In the history of the *Luminarie* I explore the transnational aspects of Kobe's disaster commemoration and the effort to use disaster memory as a driver of economic and cultural recovery. Like the insights of Chapter 1, I argue in Chapter 3 that space for both mourning the past and hope for the future was key in building durable ritual practice to commemorate disaster events.

Chapter 4 revisits disaster memorialization in Tōhoku by examining the efforts of memory workers in the wake of the triple disaster of 3.11. Following the disaster there was a flurry of new memorialization efforts. These efforts were diverse in nature and aim. National, prefectural, and local authorities were involved in various memorial activities and sites in addition to grassroots organizations and individuals. I use the term "memory worker" to analyze a wide variety of individuals engaged in the process of post 3.11 memorialization together. I historicize these efforts by showing how 3.11 memory workers memorialize the disaster in a post-WWII memory culture that emphasizes survivor experience, witness, and testimony. I explore how memory workers engage in emotional management and emotion work to create appropriate emotional experiences of memorials for visitors. I also explore of the emphasis on the recreation of disaster experiences for non-survivors. I interrogate this practice of experiential memorialization and explore its efficacy for gaining disaster knowledge and inculcating disaster awareness/preparedness. I argue that the emotional work done by memory workers was a central

part of the cultivation of experiential memorialization. I also argue that while the experience of disaster was often understood as transformative by survivor memory workers, it is uncertain whether experiential memorialization evoked a similar transformation in visitors.

The epilogue ties together the public historical lessons provided by the four case studies of the dissertation and uses them as a jumping off point to think about the possibilities of disaster memorials in the era of climate change. To start I address the role of historians in disaster memorialization, exploring professional historians' relative absence in the process of disaster memorialization and providing thoughts about what historians could offer as practitioners of memory work. Next, I explore the potential of disaster memorials as sites of emotional healing, opportunities to promote economic and material recovery, and vehicles for disaster justice and solidarity. I end by reflecting on my own experiences as a practitioner engaged in Japanese disaster memorialization, meditating on the potential disaster memorials hold for fostering human connection in face of calamity.

Chapter 1

Structuring Memory:
Competing Visions for Memorials to The Great Kanto Earthquake

Introduction: The Tower of Pisa in Tokyo

By early spring 1926 the effort to commemorate the victims of the 1923 Great Kantō Earthquake with a grand memorial hall had run into trouble. Just a year earlier in 1925, a design by architect Maeda Kenjirō (1892-1975) had been chosen by the Tokyo Association for the Earthquake Memorial Project as the winner of a nationwide design competition.[1] Maeda, known contemporaneously as "Competition Maeda" for winning numerous design contests, had succeeded with his submission of a memorial that captured the modernizing ferment popular across the globe as well as in the earthquake devastated imperial capital of Tokyo.[2] Maeda's design, dominated by a large cylindrical tower built atop a hall with a columned rectangular façade and featuring a minimalist approach to ornamentation, drew on modernist trends in memorials and monuments that had gained popularity with architects in the wake of WWI.[3] Like Home Minister Gotō Shinpei's grand reconstruction plan to make Tokyo a model modern city, Maeda's design signaled an ambition to memorialize the national tragedy that was forward looking, cutting edge, and drew on international examples and trends.[4] However, also like Gotō's bold reconstruction plan, Maeda's design attracted opposition and would ultimately never be realized.[5]

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[1] "Shinsai kinendō no sekkei-zu," *Asahi Shinbun* March 17, 1925, Tokyo Edition, Evening Edition.
[2] Weisenfeld, 271.
[3] See: Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning*.
[4] For example, Gotō's plan was based in part on Barcelona's urban planning. Makoto Iokibe and Tony Gonzalez, *The Era of Great Disasters: Japan and Its Three Major Earthquakes* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2020), 41-53.
[5] Iokibe and Gonzalez, 41-53.

As early as April 1926 the Allied Buddhist Association (Bukkyō Rengōkai) had protested Maeda's design with a letter that argued the proposed memorial was "too modern and too Western to express the profoundly national and spiritual nature of the quake tragedy."[6] The support of organizations like the Allied Buddhist Organization was critical culturally, politically, and economically for the memorial project. As of March 1925, only 120,000 of the estimated 1 million yen necessary had been collected for the construction of memorial.[7] By mid-August 1926 the fundraising effort for the memorial was still stalled at 300,000 yen. At this point an ecumenical collection of Buddhist, Shinto, and Christian groups stepped up efforts to collect donations, illustrating the critical role that religious groups played in garnering moral and economic support for the effort.[8] Without this support, especially from organizations that represented the main funerary religion of Japan (Buddhism), fundraising would likely be difficult.[9]

This essentially traditionalist argument against the modernist design was not just taken up by Buddhist organizations but reflected objections amidst the public as well. Echoing the critique of the Allied Buddhist Organization, the Honjo Ward Association issued a statement that Maeda's memorial "compromise[ed] on the distinct ethnic characteristics of spiritual culture."[10] A resident of Fukagawa Ward critical of the proposed memorial put it more bluntly, complaining to the *Asahi Shinbun* that "the design looks like the Tower of Pisa."[11] Essentially, Maeda's memorial hall was deemed by certain organizations and members of the public as insufficiently Japanese.

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[6] Weisenfeld, 274.
[7] "Shinsai kinendō no sekkei-zu," *Asahi Shinbun* March 17, 1925, Tokyo Edition, Evening Edition.
[8] Weisenfeld, 274.
[9] Weisenfeld, 274.
[10] Weisenfeld, 274.
[11] "Shinsai kinendō shin-sekkei naru," *Asahi Shinbun* December 4, 1926, Tokyo Edition, Evening Edition.

In response to the protests of both community and religious organizations the winning design was set aside, and the association sought out an architect who could answer the desires for a more traditionalist memorial hall. The committee did not have to look far. By early December 1926 they asked a member of the design competition jury, Itō Chūta (1867-1954), a professor of Architecture at Tokyo Imperial University, to submit a new design.[12] Itō was part of a cohort of architects trained in the 1880s and 1890s that argued for the integration of Japanese architectural traditions into modern design. He was critical of the mere importation of Western styles and methods by the previous generation of architects. In response Itō developed his signature "shrine and temple style" (*shajiyō*), so named because it drew inspiration from "traditional religious" architecture across Asia. As a constructive critic of simple mimicry of the West, Itō embodied a potential compromise between the traditionalist desires of the public and the audacious modernist vision of Maeda.[13]

Using his "uncanny" skill for mixing traditional and modern, as well as Eastern and Western, design elements Itō delivered a more aesthetically, and (presumably) spiritually, acceptable design, which broke ground in November of 1927.[14] Completed in 1930 Itō's Earthquake Memorial Hall was a perfect example of the architect's ability to fuse his Pan-Asian ornamentation with Western design elements and state of the art anti-seismic engineering. In the case of the Earthquake Memorial Hall a large stupa, Indian-inspired finial, and roofing elements that evoked various Japanese styles combined to give the structure a traditional feel. This ornamentation masked the layout of the building that seemed to draw on the cruciform format of

[12] "Shinsai kinendō shin-sekkei naru," *Asahi Shinbun* December 4, 1926, Tokyo Edition, Evening Edition, and Weisenfeld, 274-275.
[13] Sharon A. Minichiello ed., *Japan's Competing Modernities: Issues in Culture and Democracy, 1900-1930* (Honolulu Hawaii: University of Hawai'i Press, 1989), 233-234, Weisenfeld, 275.
[14] "Shinsai Kinendō kikō-shiki," *Asahi Shinbun* November 26, 1927, Tokyo Edition, Evening Edition, and Weisenfeld 275

Christian cathedrals.[15] Beneath these aesthetic elements the hall was built using steel reinforced concrete, meant to be earthquake resistant and fire retardant.[16] This hall, now known as the Tokyo Metropolitan Memorial Hall (Tōkyō-to irei-dō) stands to this day in Ryōgoku-ward's Yokoamichō Park.

Image 1: Photograph of Itō Chūta's Earthquake Memorial Hall in 1930. *Source:* "Shinsai kinendō (Sekkei・Itō Chūta)," Wikimedia Commons, accessed July 17, 2022, https://ja.wikipedia.org/wiki/東京都慰霊堂#/media/ファイル:Great_Kanto_Earthquake_memorial_hall.jpg.

The controversy over the design of a memorial to victims of the Great Kantō Earthquake illustrates how disaster memorials and disaster memorialization operated at critical and emotionally contested nexus points of the global and national, the secular and religious, the traditional and modern, as well as the past and the future in interwar Japan. In the various design

[15] Weisenfeld, 276.
[16] Weisenfeld, 275-276.

visions for the Earthquake Memorial Hall, and the passionate reactions to them on the part of Japanese institutions and individuals, we can see arguments over how disaster memory *could* and indeed *should* be structured during the interwar period. As such, designing the Earthquake Memorial Hall presents an appropriate starting point for the narrative of this dissertation and provides a solid foundation for the examination of the dissertation's central concerns.

This chapter builds on important existing work on the Great Kantō Earthquake Memorial Hall by analyzing previously unused manuscript sources and placing the design of the hall within the history of Japanese and global memorialization. The past twenty years has seen a flurry of new work by historians on seismicity in Japan and the Great Kantō Earthquake in particular.[17] While the memorial hall serves as a kind of epilogue to Gregory Clancey's examination of Meiji and Taishō Japan as an "earthquake nation" (where seismicity intersected with architecture, knowledge transfer, and national identity), the development of and controversy surrounding the memorial receives ample treatment in the monographs of J. Charles Schencking and Gennifer Weisenfeld on the Great Kantō Earthquake.[18] Schencking, who analyzes the memorial hall controversy in the larger context of urban reconstruction, and Weisenfeld, who studies the visual culture of the earthquake, both use newspaper articles and sources published by the memorial association to tell the story of the hall's design and construction. In this chapter I analyze

[17] Alex Bates, *The Culture of the Quake: The Great Kanto Earthquake and Taishō Japan* (Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese Studies/The University of Michigan, 2015). Janet Borland, *Earthquake Children: Building Resilience from the Ruins of Tokyo* (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2021), Clancey, *Earthquake Nation*, Schencking, *The Great Kantō Earthquake and the Chimera of National Reconstruction in Japan* Smits, *Seismic Japan* and *When the Earth Roars*, Weisenfeld, *Imaging Disaster: Tokyo and the Visual Culture of Japan's Great Earthquake of 1923*.

[18] Clancey argues the Great Kantō Earthquake and the destruction of Tokyo was a moment when the concept of "earthquake nation," where Japanese architects defined their cultural identity and even superiority in relation to the West by the ability to build structures that withstood the archipelago's seismic environment, was "submerged." While the anti-seismic techniques and knowledge of Japanese architects would grow, Clancey asserts that they no longer had the same cultural meaning as during the period between the Nōbi Earthquake of 1891 and the Great Kantō Earthquake of 1923. As a result, Itō Chūta's memorial hall is only mentioned in passing by Clancey. In contrast, Schencking and Weisenfeld both devote considerable sections of the books to the memorial hall, the design competition, and the controversy. See: Clancey, *Earthquake Nation*, 212, 231, 253. Schencking, 293-300, and Weisenfeld, 268-293.

surviving manuscripts of design proposals submitted to the Earthquake Memorial Hall design competition, collected from the archives of the Great Kantō Earthquake Memorial Museum (*Fukkō kinenkan shiryō-shitsu*).[19] These design proposals, some of which were recognized with prizes by the competition jury and some of which were not, were all ultimately set aside, and like Maeda's winning design, never materialized into physical memorials.

Why focus on designs that never became reality? Historians of memorials and monuments have shown that analysis of competing and unrealized visions for commemorative architecture can help reveal the prevailing politics, economics, ideologies, and desires around memorialization.[20] I argue this is true of the submissions to the Earthquake Memorial Hall design competition and the larger debate over what constituted an appropriate, desirable, and effective memorial to the victims of the Great Kantō Earthquake in the interwar period. By placing these competing visions and debates within the longer history of Japanese disaster memorials and wider context of global memory culture, I show that disaster memory in modern Japan has long interacted with international trends in memorialization since its first "national disaster."[21]

Like other unrealized memorials, the designs submitted to the competition jury were a "paradoxical measure" of the cultural politics, ambitions, and emotions that surrounded Japanese disaster memorials.[22] Designers' visions reflected the contradictions of nationalism and cosmopolitanism, traditionalism and modernism, religiosity and secularity, as well as grief and

[19] For information on this archive see: Tōkyō-to irei kyokai, "Shiryō-shitsu no riyō uketsuke," accessed April 28, 2022.https://tokyoireikyoukai.or.jp/press/library.html.
[20] For an example of this, see Grace Elizabeth Hale's work on the fits and starts of designing the Stone Mountain Confederate Monument, the original design for which, was never realized. The original plan, Hale argues, revealed a "paradoxical measure" of the anxieties, ideologies, and desires of southern whites in early 20th century America. Grace Elizabeth Hale, "Granite Stopped Time: The Stone Mountain Memorial and the Representation of White Southern Identity," *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* Vol. 18 no. 1 (Spring 1998), 22-44.
[21] J. Charles Schencking specifically examines how the image of The Great Kantō Earthquake was crafted as a national disaster in *The Great Kantō Earthquake and the Chimera of National Reconstruction in Japan*, 5.
[22] Hale, 25.

hope in the wake of the Great Kantō Earthquake. I show that the range of these visions foreshadowed the tensions and controversies that would eventually sink Maeda's winning design.

I also argue that underneath these tensions we can see a broad agreement among designers about how disaster memorials should function for visitors. Drawing on the work of Jay Winter, I look beyond the politics and art of memorial design and take memorials seriously as emotional objects and spaces.[23] This focus is warranted by the rhetoric used by the architects within their design submissions. Not only did the contestants articulate how their memorials would *look* but also explained how these buildings would make people *feel*. I argue that architects largely agreed on the ideal affective function of their disaster memorials. While the memorial halls would be designed as sites of remembrance and mourning, architects also hoped they would also help visitors emotionally recover from and even forget the earthquake.[24] This envisioned affective function, which I term "emotional forgetting," is reflective of the larger tensions emerging within the memorial form in the wake of WWI, in which modernism and traditionalism as well as hope and grief jockeyed for dominance.[25] These contradictory, but not always incommensurable, currents in modern memory culture (and Japanese disaster memorials in particular), continued to be arranged and rearranged in various ways across the 20th and early 21st centuries as I will show throughout the dissertation. The competing designs for the Earthquake Memorial Hall give us a glimpse into how people thought disaster memory should be

[23] Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning*, 78-79.
[24] Winter in his work on WWI memorials in Europe is particularly interested in war memorials as "foci of rituals, rhetoric, and ceremonies of bereavement," or, in other words, memorials as "sites of mourning." Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning,* 78-79.
[25] Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning,* 1-5, 93.

structured after the 1923 quake, setting the stage for how it would be restructured again and again following subsequent disasters in modern Japan.

A National Disaster in Imperial Japan

The Great Kantō Earthquake struck Tokyo at 11:58 a.m. JST on September 1, 1923. A magnitude 7.9 earthquake, the shaking was felt throughout the Kantō region including Tokyo's neighbor city of Yokohama and the surrounding rural areas. Because it struck around noontime, cooking fires started across the city by residents preparing for lunch before the earthquake fueled larger fires amid the post-quake wreckage. These fires were then exacerbated by strong Typhoon season winds to create raging infernos that engulfed the urban areas of Tokyo and Yokohama. [26] Over 100,000 people perished and over 10,000 more were proclaimed missing in the quake and the ensuing fires. Many of those who managed to survive would struggle with homelessness and joblessness in the following months.[27]

Throughout its history Tokyo (formerly Edo), had not been a stranger to disaster. Despite some commentators framing the Great Kantō Earthquake as an "unprecedented disaster since the dawn of history" (*yūshi irai mizō no dai-saihen*), others saw it as part of a long legacy of disaster including the Great Meireki Fire of 1657 and the (relatively) more recent Ansei-Edo Earthquake of 1855.[28] Both disasters had struck Edo during its time as the seat of the *bakufu* military government under the Tokugawa Shogunate. Catastrophe striking the political capital of the Japanese archipelago had an even longer tradition, with Kamo no Chōmei famously describing

[26] Schencking, 1-2.
[27] Schencking 38-46.
[28] Nagata Hidejirō, Mayor of Tokyo during the quake, describes the disaster as unprecedented in the preface of Tōkyō shinsai kien jigyō dōkai seisan jimushō, *Hifukusho-ato: Tōkyō shinsai kien jigyō dōkai jigyō hōkoku-sho* (Tōkyō Insatsu kabushiki kaisha, Tōkyō 1932), 1-2. In contrast the earthquake is placed in the longer lineage of the Ansei-Edo Earthquake of 1855 and the Great Meireki Fire of 1657 in the preface of Kawamura Karyō and Yamamura Kōka, eds. *Taishō musashi-abumi* (Tōkyō: Hōchi Shinbunsha shuppan-bu, 1924).

the multiple disasters that struck Kyoto in the late 12th century.[29] What made the Great Kantō Earthquake unprecedented, in part, was that it struck Tokyo when it served as the capital of a modern Japanese nation state engaged in imperial expansion on the Asian continent.[30]

For many Japanese political, social, academic, and media elites, as well as the public, the destruction of the capital during the quake and fires was seen as a "great national calamity."[31] Tokyo's power as a symbol of the Japanese nation and empire was even reflected in the experience of children. For example, one child named Yamaji Sakue in a written recollection of his disaster experience remembered thinking amongst the wreckage "this is the end of the entire nation of Japan."[32] Some earlier disasters that struck capitals on the archipelago, like Chōmei's calamities or the Ansei-Edo quake, helped destabilize the then prevailing political orders. In contrast the Great Kantō Earthquake was used to consolidate power in ways that presaged the turn to hyper-nationalism and militaristic imperialism in the early 1930s.

These cultural, social, and political currents were expressed in various ways. For some elites the earthquake was a "divine punishment" (*tenken* or *tenbatsu*) that provided an opportunity for moral and spiritual renewal. This renewal would turn Japan away from hedonism, individualism, materialism, and decadence and towards modesty, thrift, and diligence guided by the state.[33] Reactionary elements throughout society also used the quake to violently reenforce ethnic and ideological discipline according to Japanese imperialist logics. In the chaos of the immediate post-quake period Koreans and other ethnic minorities were scapegoated and

[29] Yamaori, 71.
[30] Schencking 4-6.
[31] Schencking, 5.
[32] Kum Byongdong ed., *Chōsenjin Gyakusatsu kannren jidō shōgen shiryo* (Tōkyō: Ryokuin Shobō, 1989), 113.
[33] For information on the earthquake as "divine punishment" for interwar Japan's societal decadence see "Chapter 4 Admonishment: Interpreting Catastrophe as Divine Punishment" in Schencking, 116-152. For efforts at spiritual renewal in response to said divine punishment see: "Chapter 7 Regenereation: Forging a New Japan Through Spiritual Renewal and Fiscal Retrenchment" in Schencking, 226-262.

massacred by vigilante groups and police engaged in opportunistic assassinations of anti-imperial leftists.[34] The earthquake and immediate chaos was also a moment when the state exercised new modes of control by imposing martial law. Various elites articulated a politics of "emergency" (*hijōji*) that would become an "important keyword" for Japanese militarists in the 1930s.[35]

The coalescing of this interpretation of the Great Kantō Earthquake as a national disaster meant that a memorial to the victims of the catastrophe would take on national prominence. What location would serve as an appropriate venue for such a monumental task? In a city ravaged by tremors, fires, and social unrest, there was no shortage of sites of tragedy, but one location stood out among the rest. Following the earthquake many evacuees flooded into the Former Honjo Army Clothing Depot (*Rikugun honjo hifukusho-ato*) with their belongings, which had been cleared to create a city park. This temporary haven quickly became one of the most spectacular and devastating examples of the human trauma caused by the disaster. A firestorm entrapped the refugees on all sides and thousands of people were burned alive with their belongings.[36] This site in the following days, months, and ultimately years would become almost metonymic in its representation of the entire disaster.[37] Survivors of the quake like Itō Sumie, an

[34] For information on the Korean Panic and Massacre (*Chōsenjin sawagi* and *Chōsenjin gyakysatsu*) see: Jinhee Lee, "Instability of Empire: Earthquake, Rumor, and the Massacre of Koreans in the Japanese Empire," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Illinois, 2004) and Sonia Ryang "The Great Kantō Earthquake and the Massacre of Koreans in 1923: Notes on Japan's Modern National Sovereignty" *Anthropological Quarterly* 76 no. 4 (Autumn, 2003) 731-748. For information on the Kameido Incident and Amakasu Incident, high profile killings of leftists in the wake of the disaster see: Alex Bates 10-11.
[35] For info on the declaration of martial law see: Schencking 51-55 for information on how "emergency" was gripped by right wing thinkers following the earthquake see: Gregory Clancey and Minami Orihara "The Nature of Emergency: The Great Kantō Earthquake and the Crisis of Reason in Late Imperial Japan," *Science in Context* 25 (1) 2012, 103-126.
[36] Tōkyō-to irei kyōkai, *Tokyo Metropolitan Yokoamichō Park*, (Tokyo: Tokyo Commemoration Association), 1.
[37] Weisenfeld, 260.

elementary student at the time, would often highlight the exceptional tragedy of the Clothing Depot in their later recollections. [38]

> Oh, when I think about the great earthquake of September 1, 1923, especially the havoc at the Army Clothing Depot in Honjo, it is heartbreaking even just hearing about it. Indeed, it is unlikely anyone could forget that day. For us, it is a day we cannot forget. [39]

Just three days after the disaster, large scale Buddhist memorial services were held at the Clothing Depot. People brought flowers and burned incense for the dead at temporary memorials to those burned alive.[40] The reasons for the mass veneration of the dead at the Clothing Depot were both practical and religious. On-site mass cremations and religious ceremonies were necessitated because of the "logistical impossibility" of moving the deceased to be cremated elsewhere. The Depot was also already earmarked to become a public park, and would be easy to convert into a space for a public memorial. This logistical dimension also intersected the religious belief that ground that contained human remains was an "open grave" and thus "sacred ground."[41] The sheer scale of death also meant the site accrued even more spiritual meaning for the survivors of the quake. Adding to this was the longstanding Japanese belief that the souls of those who suffered particularly violent deaths (like during disasters) needed to be ritually soothed and consoled. Otherwise, these "restless" souls could become societally disruptive by returning as angry ghosts.[42] These logistical and spiritual dimensions of the Honjo Clothing Depot made it a natural choice for a permanent national memorial to the disaster.[43]

[38] Kum, 1,11.
[39] Kum, 284.
[40] Weisenfeld, 277.
[41] Weisenfeld, 301.
[42] Fukuda, 74-75.
[43] Weisenfeld, 260.

Post-WWI Memory Culture and Memorializing the Great Kantō Earthquake

Mourners and those who sought to memorialize earthquake victims and the sacred ground of the Former Honjo Army Clothing Depot found themselves in a moment when both Japanese and global memory culture were torn between "traditional" and "modern" forms of memory. In many ways it was a moment primed for innovations in memorialization and mourning. As we will see, it was also a time ripe for fierce debates over those innovations. The world had only recently started to recover from the mass death of World War I (also known contemporaneously as "The Great War" or "The First World War") from 1914-1918 and the 1918 Influenza Pandemic. These events were intertwined, with international troop movements aiding spread of the virus, but they became uncoupled in collective memory.[44] While the losses incurred by both overlapping catastrophes precipitated a period of grief and mourning in Europe, the United States, and beyond, the pandemic was little memorialized while the war tied the combatants together in a new culture of memory.[45]

For some historians WWI marked a shift to "modern memory."[46] In this understanding the experience of WWI validated modernist artistic expressions that pre-dated the war and were utilized in various media, including memorial architecture, to engage in remembrance of the war dead.[47] Designers of memorials to the war dead in Europe expressed modernism through abstraction and minimalism, hoping to create spaces that would be universal, timeless, and

[44] For the intersection of disease and military mobilization in the 1918 Influenza see: Kathleen M. Fargey, "The Deadliest Enemy" *Army History* 111 (Spring 2019), 24-39, and James E. Hollenbeck, "The 1918-1919 Influenza Pandemic: A Pale Horse Rides Home From War," *Bios* 73 No. 1 (Mar. 2002), 19-27.
[45] The lack of memorialization of the pandemic gained relevance during the COVID-19 pandemic, for instance: David Segal, "Why Are There Almost No Memorials to the Flu of 1918?" *New York Times* May 14, 2020, https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/14/business/1918-flu-memorials.html. For an academic treatment of this issue see: Alfred W. Crosby, *America's Forgotten Pandemic: The Influenza of 1918* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).
[46] Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning*, 1-3.
[47] Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning*, 1-3.

secular. They favored simple elemental shapes and limited ornamentation while avoiding traditional Christian or romantic iconography. Many now take the ecumenical, abstract, and universal character of monuments for granted; however, the style is rooted in the memorials of interwar era. Examples of the Post-WWI modernist memorial style include The Trench of Bayonets at Verdun designed by Andre Ventre, the Whitehall Cenotaph and Thiepval Memorial to the Missing both by Edwin Lutyens, and The Grieving Parents at Vladslo by Käthe Kollwitz.[48] The inspiration behind these designs was often eclectic and avant-garde. For example, Lutyens, in search of ecumenical, universalist, and abstract forms that would get beyond what he considered the limitations of "Christian symbolism," drew on geometry, ancient Greek architecture, and statuary from Ming tombs to create the "Stone of Remembrance" used in war cemeteries across the British Commonwealth.[49]

This modern style in memorial architecture was complemented by a collection of memorial practices that endeavored to be similarly simple, secular, and universalist. These practices were undergirded by a symbolic system that embraced elemental symbols like fire, water, flowers, and trees that would be recognizable and understood across cultural and religious boundaries and were subsequently copied an adopted across the world.[50] Prime examples of this symbolic system are rites of silence.[51] Although rituals of silent prayer and contemplation have various providences and histories, the modern practice of observing moments of silent tribute to the dead gained popularity during and after WWI in Great Britain and the Commonwealth.[52] Inspired by a practice initiated in South Africa during the war of a "three minutes' pause," that

[48] Winter, *Sites of Memory Sites of Mourning*, 83-116.
[49] Winter, *Sites of Memory Sites of Mourning*, 105-107.
[50] Fukuda, 81-92. Also see: W. Lloyd Warner, *The Living and the Dead: A Study of the Symbolic Life of Americans* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959).
[51] Awazu Kenta, "Rituals of Silence: The Shaping of Memorial Services in Wartime and Postwar Japan," *Nanzan Institute for Religion and Culture Bulletin* 37 (2013) 52-63.
[52] Awazu, 53.

occurred every day at noon in war time to contemplate Commonwealth soldiers both living and dead, the moment of silence was "enthusiastically" supported as a memorial practice for the commemoration of the first anniversary of Armistice Day on November 5, 1919 in Great Britain.[53] These rituals of silence were a part of the post-WWI zeitgeist, with the funeral of American President Theodore Roosevelt in March of 1919 including a one minute "pause" as well.[54] Like other elemental symbols of modern commemoration, such as fire or water, silence was seen as straightforward, ecumenical, and easily adaptable to a number of local and national contexts.[55]

These innovations in memory culture that aimed to be abstract, inclusive, and internationally adoptable were not universally accepted. Although modern minimalist and abstract memorial forms were popular in Europe following the Great War, designers also faced backlash by those who favored more traditional monuments. Memorials like Lutyens' Whitehall Cenotaph that were consciously created "without the slightest mark of Christian or contemporary patriotic or romantic symbolism," were subsequently criticized by Christians and other traditionalists.[56] Instead of marking the beginning of "modern memory" historian Jay Winter argues instead that post-WWI memory culture shows the rise of modernism alongside a simultaneous reassertion of traditional memorial forms.[57] The explanation Winter gives for this incomplete "rupture" is that modernism, while innovative and somber, could not offer the same healing qualities that traditional forms and motifs achieved for the bereaved.[58] I will show that

[53] The War Cabinet decided ultimately that three minutes was too lengthy and shortened the moment of silence to two minutes for the Remembrance Day Ceremony. Awazu, 53.
[54] Awazu, 53.
[55] Awazu, 53-54.
[56] Winter, *Sites of Memory Sites of Mourning*, 104.
[57] Winter, *Sites of Memory Sites of Mourning*, 1-5.
[58] Winter, *Sites of Memory Sites of Mourning*, 1-5.

similar advocacy for the aesthetics of modern memory as well as resistance to this new commemorative style were reflected in debates over the Earthquake Memorial Hall.

The transmission of this memory culture to the Japanese context was both direct and diffuse. One immediate conduit of these commemorative forms and practices was the Japanese family. The imperial family has long been central to issues of history and memory, from its commissioning of the first myth-histories of the archipelago like the *Kojiki* and *Nihon-gi* and as a key site for the "invention of tradition" in the modern nation-state.[59] Imperial visits and tours to various localities (like during the Six Grand Imperial Tours of the Emperor Meiji) in modern Japan were occasions that were often commemorated with stone markers and memorials.[60] Here again the moment of silence at WWI Memorials proves illustrative. Crown Prince Hirohito (the future Shōwa Emperor) became familiar with the practice during an official visit to the British Royal Family. During the trip he visited the Whitehall Cenotaph, paid respects at the British monument to the unknown soldier and was informed of the significance of the two minutes of silence observed on Armistice Day.[61] Following this visit the imperial family, wary of endorsing any single religious tradition, adopted the secular ritual. The first anniversary of the Great Kantō Earthquake then became a key moment in the dissemination of the moment of silence (styled *mokutō* in Japanese) in Japan. Preceding the anniversary announcements were circulated about the moment of silence in the media and then at 11:58am JST on September 1, 1924, various signals (like the ringing of bells at shrines and temples) indicated residents of Tokyo should engage in silent remembrance of the victims.[62]

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[59] Takashi Fujitani, *Splendid Monarchy: Power and Pageantry in Modern Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996).
[60] For treatment of these imperial tours and other imperial processions see: Fujitani, 2, 116-117, 191-192, 274.
[61] Awazu, 54.
[62] Awazu, 55.

The imperial family's adoption of the moment of silence provides a clear narrative of one way global memory circulated into Japan. How some Japanese architects seized on new trends in memorial architecture and design is more unclear but warrants further research in the future. What is clear from existing research is that Maeda, as well as some of the other contenders in the design competition, were not outliers in their exploration of modern memorial techniques. As Gregory Clancey argues, the pioneering generations of architects in modern Japan most wanted to "share the identity 'architect' with Europeans."[63] Japanese architects' idea of sharing this identity was not one of pure mimicry, as we will see in the design's submitted to the competition, but also an exercise in developing a unique Japanese "national style."[64] This Japanese preoccupation with architecture as an expression of national character was itself also influenced by European thought, and was part of the "complex contradictions" of cultural appropriation and distinction in Japan's (architectural) modernization.[65]

The architects that submitted designs to the Tokyo Association for the Earthquake Memorial Project, navigated these desires and concerns as they formulated their visions for remembrance. The traditions and innovations in European memorial architecture would have been important benchmarks for these architects, even while they sought to distinguish their designs as original, modern, and Japanese. The debates and controversy surrounding the designs for the Earthquake Memorial Hall are of a piece, with the larger architectural currents in a Japanese intellectual milieu that was synthesize the modern and traditional as well as the international and local.[66] Architectural Design competitions, especially for public buildings like

[63] Clancey, *Earthquake Nation*, 212.
[64] Clancey, *Earthquake Nation*, 212.
[65] Jonathan M, Reynolds "Japan's Imperial Diet Building: Debate over Construction of a National Identity," Art Journal, 55, No. 3, Japan 1868-1945: Art, Architecture, and National Identity (Autumn, 1996), 38.
[66] For example, similar debates animated various proposed (and scrapped) designs for the Imperial Diet Building. In contrast, the Imperial Diet Building would eventually be built in a modern art deco style, speaking to the realms

the Earthquake Memorial Hall, were a central arena in the cultural politics of the interwar Japan, which we can see in the case of the competitions to design Japan's imperial Diet Building, Kanagawa Prefectural Offices, Nagoya City Hall and the Tokyo Imperial Museum.[67]

What set the competition for the Earthquake Memorial Hall apart amidst these wider currents in interwar Japanese architecture was its position at the convergence of disaster, memory, and mourning. So, while the design competition for and controversy around the memorial hall reflected the larger battle for Japanese identity within the architectural sphere, it was also inflected by environmental, public historical, religious, and emotional concerns. In particular, the hall's function as a venue for Buddhist mass memorial rituals (*dai-hōyō*) that were also meant to appeal to an ecumenical public, made the memorial a public space that needed to resonate in ways that went beyond (although not unrelated to issues of) civic and national pride. Other the desire for connection to internationalized practices, what made memorial rituals and forms developed for WWI also appropriate for remembering and mourning earthquake victims?

A partial answer is that the First World War, then unparalleled in terms of modern mass death and material destruction, was seen as comparable to the devastation wrought on the Kantō region by the earthquake. Initially the Great Kantō Earthquake was likened to the 1906 San Francisco Earthquake, then the most recent Pacific Rim quake to strike a major city. However, when the extent of the damage was clear, commentators started to argue that this natural (in multiples senses of the word) analogue was insufficient. Instead, the catastrophe was elevated to the highest level of ruination seen in contemporary times, the "Great War." For example, the

(like governance) in which modernism held sway over the traditionalism that prevailed in the case of the Earthquake Memorial Hall in: Reynolds, 38-47.

[67] Reynolds, 45-46.

economist (and proud Tokyoite) Fukuda Tokuzō argued only the havoc wrought on the European continent in the wake of WWI could compare to the imperial capital's destruction.[68]

This was the larger world in which the design competition took place. This milieu influenced the decisions and reactions of entrants, the jury, and the public as each group tried to determine what a memorial to the victims of the quake *could* and *should* be. A close reading of these visions will reveal that designers were split in their championing of national versus international styles and, as the Allied Buddhist Association, different spiritual cultures. However, they largely agreed about what memorials should ultimately do: enable remembrance and mourning that paradoxically allowed visitors to heal, move on, and forget to a certain extent. That all these visions would ultimately be rejected in favor of Itō Chūta's traditionalist memorial hall, confirms that a truly modern form of disaster memory in Japan was still forming alongside a nascent modern global memory culture.[69] Over the course of the (roughly) century of history covered by this dissertation both would develop in tandem, resulting in different articulations of the ideologies, politics, economics, and emotions of disaster memorials and memorialization.

Competing Commemorations

> "Purpose: To commemorate the earthquake and fire disaster of September 1, 1923. In addition, to eternally mourn the spirits of the victims and construct a memorial building to warn the future. Therefore, it will be a place that can be used as a memorial service site for victims as well as the education of the public."[70]
>
> —Tokyo Association for the Earthquake Memorial Project

[68] Schencking, 4.
[69] As Winter argues, the interwar period was a time of rising modernism, but also a retrenchment of traditionalism in memorial architecture. Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning*, 1-9, 228.
[70] "Tōkyō daishinkasai kinen kenzō sekkei zuan kenshō boshū," Case 22, Folder AA 23-21, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.

When the Tokyo Association for the Earthquake Memorial Project initiated the design competition for the Earthquake Memorial Hall in December 1924, the Former Army Clothing Depot, which would become Yokoamichō Park, had already been established as a site of debate over how to memorialize the disaster. This was reflected in the advertising circulated by the association in newspapers, academic publications, and architectural firms to announce the competition and provide potential entrants with information and contest guidelines.[71] Quoted above, the purpose of the future memorial, as envisioned the Association, was multi-faceted and should serve emotional, ritual, and pedagogical functions. In the ideal set forth by the Association the memorial would serve as a place of mourning, a venue for memorial ceremonies, a beacon for future disaster awareness and mitigation, and a conduit for public history.[72] These various functions would continue to be incorporated in modern Japanese disaster memorials, as the dissertation will show in subsequent chapters, with different functions emphasized or deemphasized at different times.

In the case of designing the Earthquake Memorial Hall the emotional and the ritual emerged as the most prominent concerns. Who would be ultimately responsible for conducting memorials? How should the dead be mourned? What would be an appropriate structure for mourning and how should it make visitors feel? Entrants into the design competition answered these questions in various ways, exhibiting the possibilities and limits of disaster memorialization in interwar Japan.

[71] "Tōkyō daishinkasai kinen kenzō sekkei zuan kenshō boshū," Case 22, Folder AA 23-21, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.
[71] "Tōkyō daishinkasai kinen kenzō sekkei zuan kenshō boshū," Case 22, Folder AA 23-21, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.
[72] "Tōkyō daishinkasai kinen kenzō sekkei zuan kenshō boshū," Case 22, Folder AA 23-21, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.

The Responsibility of Remembrance

The competition was not the first attempt to construct a memorial at the tragic site of the Former Depot. The initial attempts show that there was disagreement over who would be responsible for memorializing the victims. While death had long been mediated by Buddhist institutions in Japan, the lead up to building the Earthquake Memorial Hall happened during a time when the modern state began exercising a new level of control over public memorialization.[73] With this new control the national government emphasized the use of non-religious rituals and forms for public events and monuments. While the Tokyo metropolitan government would ultimately exert similar control and have final say over the memorial hall, they still had to navigate both the secular and religious memorial impulses of the era so the memorial would be agreeable to all the important stakeholders.[74]

Immediately following the quake grieving families, government officials, and Buddhist organizations were already split in how they thought the dead should be mourned and remembered. At first there was even a question of whether the ashes of the victims should remain at the Depot at all, but as explained above practical and religious considerations ruled out the transport of the remains to Buddhist cemeteries. Officials and relatives alike ultimately decided that this site of commemoration, born out of necessity and religious belief, was "too sacred for anything but a monument."[75] The tremendous human loss and suffering experienced on the site justified a memorial that could "house the proper civic funerary rites."[76] These "civic" rights still made use of traditional religious forms and practices. To house and mourn the ashes

[73] For example, the strict regulation of village monuments to the Russo-Japanese War. Awazu, 55.
[74] As Kirk Savage writes in *Standing Soldiers, Kneeling Slaves: Race War, and Monument in Nineteenth-Century America* "public monuments are the most conservative of commemorative forms" because they are designed to be immutable, unchanging, and exist in perpetuity. In addition, they must garner support (both popular and monetary), meaning they must appeal to a wide array of constituencies and interests. Savage 4-7.
[75] Schencking, 293-300.
[76] Weisenfeld, 282.

of the dead a temporary Buddhist-style wooden ossuary (*nōkotsu-dō*) was erected in October 1923 and a traditional 49th day memorial service was held. However, the service was not conducted by a temple or Buddhist organization and instead the Tokyo Municipal Social Education Division conducted the ceremony.[77]

This shows that the city government assumed the primary responsibility of the commemoration of the dead at the Clothing Depot, even though it made use of religious ritual forms. The primacy of government in the commemoration of the disaster was later formally institutionalized. In June 1924, the city government formed the Tokyo Association for the Earthquake Memorial Project to oversee the construction of a permanent monument.[78] The Tokyo municipal government offered to pay for half of the cost of construction. To supplement this financial commitment by the city government the association enlisted the help of Buddhist organizations throughout Japan, further illustrating the intimate interaction of secular and religious institutions following the disaster.[79] The association initially planned a memorial hall designed to emulate classical Nara-style architecture.[80] However, to generate buzz, excitement, and (importantly) donations to fund the construction of the memorial, the association decided in December 1924 to hold a design competition for the earthquake memorial.

As I will show, entrants to the competition seemed to be aware of the complexities and contradictions that surrounded the Clothing depot and sought to answer them with their designs. The design competition ultimately received 221 entries from architects and engineers across Japan. Out of these 221 entries I was only able to find 10 still extant in the Earthquake Memorial Museum Archives, but they represent the winning and running up entries as well as a handful

[77] Weisenfeld, 282.
[78] Schencking, 293-300.
[79] Schencking, 293-300.
[80] Weisenfeld, 292-293.

that went unrecognized.[81] It is evident from these design proposals submitted to the contest that entrants each sought navigate both the secular desire for a didactic commemoration of a national disaster and the religious desire for a spiritually and culturally appropriate place of mourning.

The Twin Submissions of Maeda Kenjirō

The desires of various stakeholders for the memorial, in addition to Japanese architects' own desires to be recognized as peers with their western counterparts, can be seen by closely examining how Maeda Kenjirō, the winning contestant, navigated them himself. While the jury chose Maeda's neoclassical and art-deco inspired design to win the contest (as was touched on above), it was not the only Maeda design under consideration. Maeda submitted another design to the contest. The architectural style and overall design philosophy of Maeda's submissions was consistent. In both designs Maeda's ambition was for the Earthquake Memorial Hall to be an exemplar of modernist memorial trends, minimalist in ornamentation, eclectic in inspiration, and universalist in appeal. However, in his submissions he chose to emphasize, on the one hand, modernist elements of his winning design, and on the other hand traditionalist elements of his unrecognized design. I argue this indicates that Maeda grasped the fraught cultural politics of memorializing The Great Kantō Earthquake. That he hedged by submitting designs that would appeal to multiple currents in international and Japanese memory cultures, also shows that he was unsure which would ultimately prevail.[82]

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[81] These surviving submissions including proposal documents, cipher envelops, and identifying business cards can be found in "Shinsai kinendō kenshō sekkei kanren shiryō," Case 36, Folder 36-18 1/4, FKK, Tokyo, Japan, and "Shinsai kinendō kenshō sekkei kanren shiryō," Case 36, Folder 36-57, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.

[82] Maeda's winning design proposal can be found transcribed in Tōkyō shinsai kinen jigyō kyōkai, *Taishō daishinsai kinen kenzōbutsu kyōgu sekkei zuroku* (Tōkyō: Kōyōsha 1925),7-8, and in manuscript form: "Shinsai kinendō kenshō sekkei kanren shiryō," Case 36, Folder 36-18 1/4, FKK, Tokyo, Japan. His unsuccessful design submission can be found in: "Shinsai kinendō kenshō sekkei kanren shiryō." Case 36, Folder 36-57, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.

Image 2: Sketch of Maeda Kenjirō's winning memorial design, with neoclassical and art-deco elements. Sketch by Maeda Kenjirō. *Source:* Tōkyō shinsai kinen jigyō kyōkai, *Taishō daishinsai kinen kenzōbutsu kyōgu sekkei zuroku* (Tōkyō: Kōyōsha 1925), 9.

In his winning submission, Maeda explained that he wanted visitors, upon entering the main gate to the memorial park to the east, to instantly be struck by grandness of the Earthquake Memorial Hall. Their gaze would be dominated by the Hall itself, a structure with a columned rectangular façade that took up over 1,280 square meters, providing the base for the large cylindrical tower that was later derided as resembling the Tower of Pisa. The tower served as an observation deck for the surrounding city below and would be capped with a prism of glass designed to look like a flame or perhaps a budding flower. The main entrance was designed to be bordered by trees and hedges that would lead visitors to an open area directly, flanked by fountains, in front of the hall meant to be used as the grounds for annual memorial events on September 1st. Maeda explained that on normal day visitor access to this open area should be restricted a temporary fence.[83]

For days other than the anniversary of the disaster, Maeda designed side entrances on the wings of the main hall to be used by visitors. Upon approach visitors could admire the geometric art-deco designs decorating the exterior of the building. In utilizing the art-deco aesthetic Maeda hoped to "totally reject conventional imitative methods" and "avoid unnecessary ostentation."[84] His choice of art-deco for the ornamentation of the façade again illustrated the twin currents of modernism and traditionalism in interwar design, and thus Maeda's savvy finessing of the tensions between new and old in his proposed memorial. As Richard Striner notes, art-deco was a style that sought to harmonize the radical and the traditional in early 20th century design; merging modern machine-like streamlining with ornamentation drawing on ancient cultures like

[83] Tōkyō shinsai kinen jigyō kyōkai, *Taishō daishinsai kinen kenzōbutsu kyōgu sekkei zuroku*, 7-8, Shinsai kinendō kenshō sekkei kanren shiryō," Case 36, Folder 36-18 1/4, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.
[84] Tōkyō shinsai kinen jigyō kyōkai, *Taishō daishinsai kinen kenzōbutsu kyōgu sekkei zuroku*, 7-8, "Shinsai kinendō kenshō sekkei kanren shiryō," Case 36, Folder 36-18 1/4, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.

Egypt and the Aztec Empire.[85] The intended effect, according to Maeda, was for the building to appear completely original. The lack of gratuitous decoration as well as the surrounding foliage and water features of the park were also meant heighten the memorial's beauty.[86]

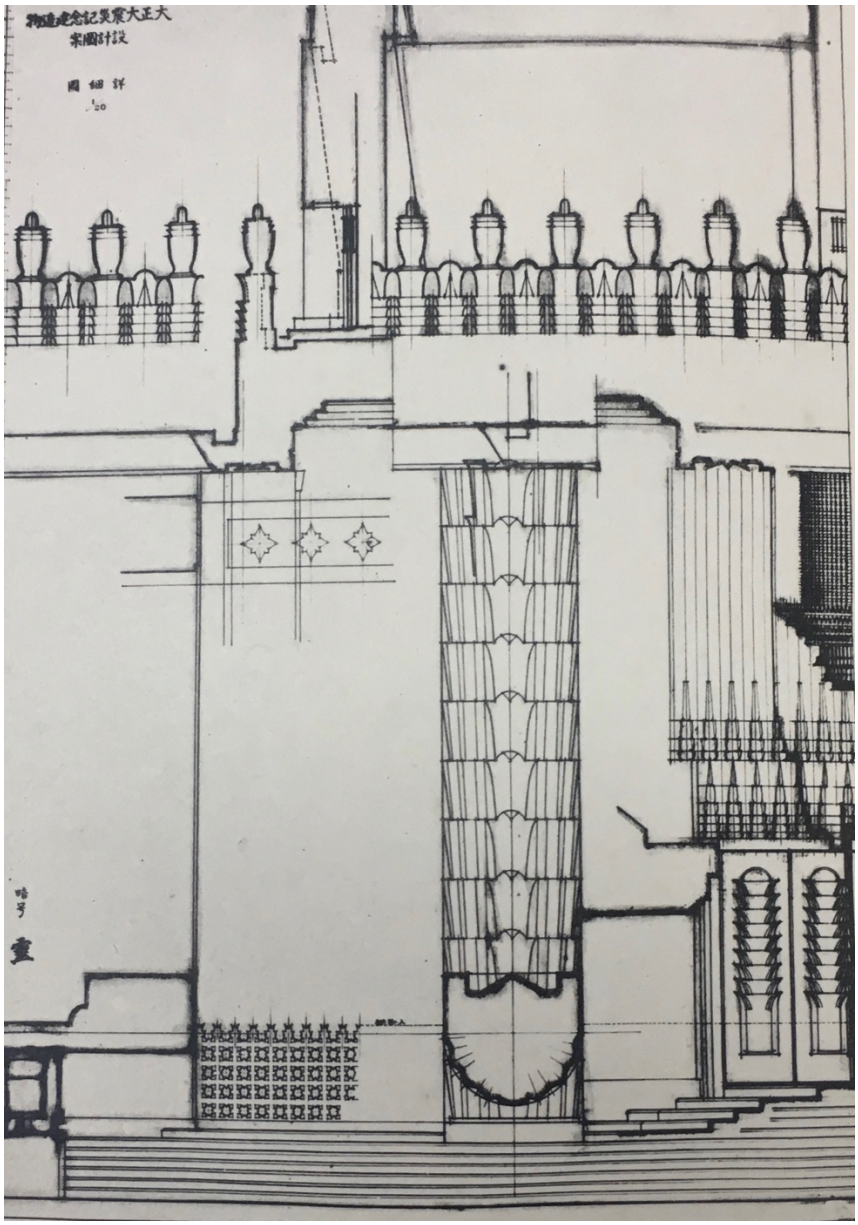

Image 3: Detail of Maeda Kenjirō's Winning Design. art-deco inspired façade for his winning submission. Drawing by Maeda Kenjirō. *Source:* Tōkyō shinsai kinen jigyō kyōkai, *Taishō daishinsai kinen kenzōbutsu kyōgu sekkei zuroku* (Tōkyō: Kōyōsha 1925), 14.

[85] Richard Striner, "Art Deco: Polemics and Synthesis," *Winterthur Portfolio* 25 no.1 (Spring 1990), 21-34.
[86]Tōkyō shinsai kinen jigyō kyōkai, *Taishō daishinsai kinen kenzōbutsu kyōgu sekkei zuroku*, 7-8. "Shinsai kinendō kenshō sekkei kanren shiryō," Case 36, Folder 36-18 1/4, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.

The interior of the hall was designed to fulfil the various functions (remembrance, pedagogy, and mourning) set out by the Memorial Association in their competition guidelines. The main chamber of the hall, flush with natural light from skylights, was meant as a space for ritual and mourning. The space centered on the enshrinement of the spirits (*reitai*) of the victims. This was supplemented by an ossuary containing the ashes of the victims, made accessible to visitors by a descending staircase that wrapped around the main hall. In a nod to the pedagogical ambitions of the Memorial Association curved side rooms flanked the main hall and were to be filled with a collection of mementos (memorial objects) from the earthquake and paintings depicting the disaster. The interior of the much-derided tower was accessible by a corresponding ascending staircase. The top floor of the tower served as another exhibition area for disaster mementos as well as an observation deck.[87] The tower, rising into the sky was directly juxtaposed with the underground ossuary in Maeda's design. Maeda perhaps imagined that the upper level would serve as a space that would counteract the mournful focus on death that dominated the lower levels of the main hall and ossuary. Afterall, visitors to the observation deck would have the chance to look out on a newly rebuilt and reborn Tokyo, ascending away from the tragedy of the past below, and gazing into the city's modern future.

[87] Tōkyō shinsai kinen jigyō kyōkai, *Taishō daishinsai kinen kenzōbutsu kyōgu sekkei zuroku*, 7-8. "Shinsai kinendō kenshō sekkei kanren shiryō," Case 36, Folder 36-18 1/4, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.

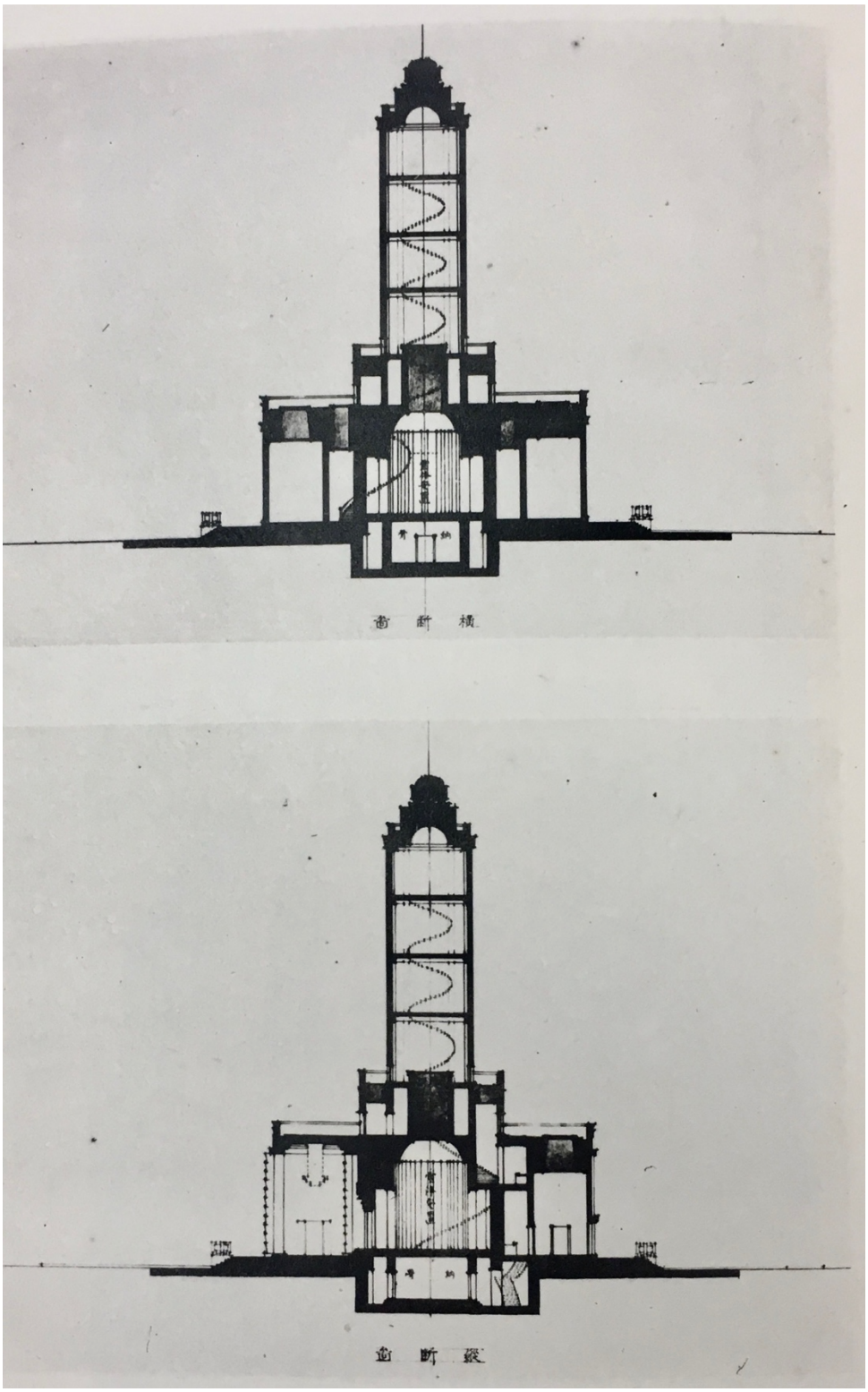

Image 4: Cross section of Maeda Kenjirō's winning design. The tower, main hall, and underground ossuary in his winning design submission. Drawing by Maeda Kenjirō. *Source:* Tōkyō shinsai kinen jigyō kyōkai, *Taishō daishinsai kinen kenzōbutsu kyōgu sekkei zuroku* (Tōkyō: Kōyōsha 1925), 15.

Overall, Maeda wanted his memorial hall to express a "distinctly religious mood" (*ichimi no shūkyō-teki kibun*).[88] What did it mean for something to evoke a "religious mood" in interwar Japan? I would first like to note that the word Maeda used, and that I translate as "religious," *shūkyō-teki*, itself encouraged a fuzzy reading. The word is composed of the compound for religion, *shūkyō*, and the character*, teki*, which is used to form adjectives from nouns and can be rendered in English as equivalent to several suffixes, such as "-like, -ive, ic, -ish." Thus, a more accurate, if also more cumbersome, translation could be "akin to religion" or "religion-like." But what did "religion" mean in early 20th century Japan?

As historian of religion Isomae Jun'ichi has shown, the word *shūkyō*, while extant in early Japanese Buddhist dictionaries, came to be the favored translation of the western concept of religion after the "opening" of the country following the Meiji Restoration.[89] As an imported concept "religion" was always somewhat connoted with Christianity, even as it was used as the space to analyze traditions like Buddhism, Shintoism, and Christianity on a level playing field.[90] In addition religion in Japan was connected to individual belief and belonging to a church rather than actions in the public sphere.[91] This led to a phenomenon, still relevant in contemporary Japan, where Japanese largely identify as "non-religious" despite engaging in beliefs and practices of "non-Western religiosity" in their everyday lives (such as belief in unseen forces or making ritual offerings at Shrines/Temples).[92]

So the "religious mood" for Maeda, beyond being "impressive" (*sōchō*) and "solemn" (*genshuku*), likely meant that his memorial would evoke similar feelings for visitors that they

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[88] Tōkyō shinsai kinen jigyō kyōkai, *Taishō daishinsai kinen kenzōbutsu kyōgu sekkei zuroku*, 7-8. "Shinsai kinendō kenshō sekkei kanren shiryō," Case 36, Folder 36-18 1/4, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.
[89] Isomae Jun'ichi *Religious Discourse in Modern Japan: Religion, State, and Shinto*. Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2014. xiv, xv.
[90] Isomae, *Religious Discourse in Modern Japan,* xiv.
[91] Isomae, *Religious Discourse in Modern Japan*, xvi, xv-xix.
[92] Isomae, *Religious Discourse in Modern Japan*, xiv.

would experience if they went to a site of religious architecture, such as a temple, a shrine, or a church.[93] Which of these spaces resonated was, in keeping with the understanding of the term "religion" (*shūkyō*) at the time, left up to and accessible to each individual. Religious (*shūkyō-teki*) was then yet another way Maeda signaled his desire for his design to be received as a Western-style modern memorial, universalist and ecumenical in ambition, aesthetically and spiritually. That this had to be spelled out explicitly in his proposal to the jury likely meant that the religiosity or religiousness of his design was not immediately apparent visually and so had to be articulated discursively. Still Maeda seemed hopeful that once rendered materially this "religious mood" would register affectively for visitors. However, the fact that many Japanese did not identify with this imported idea of "religion" or "religiosity" foreshadowed the reaction Maeda's winning submission would receive by the public.[94]

Another way that Maeda signaled the religiousness, or at least spirituality, of his design was his choice of cipher for the submission. Per competition guidelines each contestant was to use a cipher in lieu of their name on their submission documents, like the design proposal.[95] They also were required to send a key, linking their cipher to their personal information. [96] This was a measure likely meant to ensure impartiality on the part of the competition jury. However, as I will show, it was also often taken as another chance by contestants to articulate the meaning of their memorial designs for the jury. For his winning submission, Maeda chose the cipher

[93] Tōkyō shinsai kinen jigyō kyōkai, *Taishō daishinsai kinen kenzōbutsu kyōgu sekkei zuroku*, 7-8. "Shinsai kinendō kenshō sekkei kanren shiryō," Case 36, Folder 36-18 1/4, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.
[94] Tōkyō shinsai kinen jigyō kyōkai, *Taishō daishinsai kinen kenzōbutsu kyōgu sekkei zuroku*, 7-8. "Shinsai kinendō kenshō sekkei kanren shiryō," Case 36, Folder 36-18 1/4, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.
[95] Tōkyō shinsai kinen jigyō kyōkai, *Taishō daishinsai kinen kenzōbutsu kyōgu sekkei zuroku*, 4, "Shinsai kinendō kenshō sekkei kanren shiryō," Case 36, Folder 36-18 1/4, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.
[96] Tōkyō shinsai kinen jigyō kyōkai, *Taishō daishinsai kinen kenzōbutsu kyōgu sekkei zuroku*, 4, "Shinsai kinendō kenshō sekkei kanren shiryō," Case 36, Folder 36-18 1/4, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.

"spirit" or "soul" (*rei*).[97] This cipher was the most popular amongst contestants with four others utilizing the *kanji* for "spirit/soul" to label their submissions. [98] By choosing this cipher Maeda was perhaps indicating that his design was focused on the spirits/souls of the victims and indeed as I have shown above the dead anchored the memorial on one pole of its central axis (the underground ossuary). Taken together with his explicit indication that his design would evoke a religious feeling we can see that Maeda took pains to frame his winning submission in a way that connected it firmly to the spiritual aspects of mourning and remembrance.

Given the currents in international memorial architecture and interwar Japanese architects desires for peer status with Western architects, it is easy to see why the competition jury chose Maeda's design. The choice of Maeda's submission allowed the jury, itself composed partly of renowned Japanese architects like Satō Kōichi, Sano Toshitaka, Ito Chūta, and Tsukamoto Yasushi, to not only reward Maeda, but exhibit that they too knew the cutting edge of memorial architecture.[99] Additionally Maeda seemed to take pains to address how his memorial would attend to the spiritual weight of the disaster in a way that also appealed to the modern secular and ecumenical ambitions of the Memorial Association. Although Maeda made no claims to pursuing a "national style" in his winning submission, his eclectic modernism, ecumenicity, and inclusion of the latest architectural trends gave the judges a design that they likely believed would be recognized and well-respected internationally.[100]

Maeda triumphed with his tower-centric submission, but his contest strategy, as revealed in his other, unrecognized, submission may be a better reflection of how he earned his nickname

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[97] "Shinsai kinendō kenshō sekkei kanren shiryō," Case 36, Folder 36-18 1/4, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.
[98] "Shinsai kinendō kenshō sekkei kanren shiryō." Case 36, Folder 36-57, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.
[99] Weisenfeld provides more non-architect jury members, see: Weisenfeld, 268-270.
[100] As Weisenfeld explains towers dominated architectural competitions both in the West (like in the 1922 Chicago Tribune building competition) as well as in Japan (many plans submitted to the 1924 Citizens' Art Association Exhibition of reconstruction plans for Tokyo). Weisenfeld, 270-271.

"Competition Maeda." As I will show, the two designs are remarkably similar. Although the unrecognized plan was without a central tower, Maeda's design philosophy is clear and visually consistent between both submissions. What was different is how Maeda *described* this other plan to the jury. What Maeda wrote, I argue, shows that he understood the crosscurrents of modernism and traditionalism in interwar Japan.

Submitted under the cipher "merciful light" (*jikō*), Maeda's second memorial hall, like in his winning design, would face east, and be surrounded on three sides by ponds.[101] These ponds featured two fountains that would flank the memorial hall on the left and right. The front of the building would still feature an open courtyard/yard/garden that would accommodate large crowds of worshipers/visitors. The middle of the memorial hall also centered on an enshrined representation of the spirits of the dead and ossuary, which would be readily visible upon entering the hall. Like his winning design, two wings of the hall were designed for display of mementos from the earthquake. Although it is clear the building layouts shared important overlap, the two designs even shared similarities in small ornamental details, like the use of glass prism skylights in the main hall.[102]

We also see consistency in Maeda's design philosophy. Once again Maeda emphasized that trivial ornamentation will be avoided and that the building would not overly rely on engravings of the disaster event. Instead, the relatively unornamented design would emphasize the "self-apparent" beauty of the building, which Maeda writes would optimally harmonize with the surrounding layout.[103] This beauty, Maeda writes, would be reflected in the surrounding ponds. For both designs Maeda wanted the beauty of the memorial park to speak for itself and

[101] "Shinsai kinendō kenshō sekkei kanren shiryō," Case 36, Folder 36-57, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.
[102] "Shinsai kinendō kenshō sekkei kanren shiryō," Case 36, Folder 36-57, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.
[103] "Shinsai kinendō kenshō sekkei kanren shiryō," Case 36, Folder 36-57, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.

imaged the area surrounding the central memorial hall as highlighting the building's unique beauty. Like his winning proposal that would "reject conventional methods" this design too would not adhere to any "existing foreign or domestic styles."[104] In both designs Maeda's goal was to create a relatively austere building that was unique in its design and singularly beautiful, with the park's layout providing emphasis for the structure. According to Kang Myungchae, this approach was not necessarily unique. Kang argues that while architects, like Maeda, that submitted a memorial design tended to utilize simple exteriors embellished by details unique to individual architect, even if the styles (ranging from classical, expressionist, art-deco, modern, and Japanese or oriental temple style) they utilized were different.[105] Again this shows that Maeda was in tune with the trends of the time and, in the eyes of the jury at least, executed them well.

Where Maeda's second submission departs from his winning entry was revealing. The most important detail was that he described the building's exterior as being done in "an oriental style not adhering to any existing domestic or foreign styles that does away with trivial ornamentation."[106] In practice this meant that instead of a tower, the hall was topped with a dome ornamented in a style reminiscent of an Indian stupa with details inspired by mosques.[107] Despite this ornamentation and description of the hall's look as "oriental," the building still sports neoclassical elements, like two covered walkways lined with columns to the left and right of the building.[108] As explored above, Maeda framed both of his design submissions as departing from "conventional" or "existing…styles."[109] However, given the controversy over the apparent

[104] "Shinsai kinendō kenshō sekkei kanren shiryō," Case 36, Folder 36-57, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.
[105] Kang Myungchae, "Shinsai kinendō no sekkei kyōgi ōbo zuan ni miru Taishō-ki kenchiku dezain no keikō," 275-276.
[106] "Shinsai kinendō kenshō sekkei kanren shiryō," Case 36, Folder 36-57, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.
[107] Kang, 287.
[108] Kang, 287.
[109] "Shinsai kinendō kenshō sekkei kanren shiryō," Case 36, Folder 36-57, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.

western influence in his winning design and the eventual commission of a Pan-Asian style memorial hall by Itō Chūta, Maeda's branding of his second design suggests that he was savvy to the conflicting cultural headwinds at play and their expression in architecture in interwar Japan.

By submitting a design in a western-style as well as an "oriental-style," Maeda seemed to be hedging his bets. His western-style design with its mix of classical and art-deco elements would certainly have appealed to those on the judge panel who wanted the memorial to be a symbol of Tokyo's rebirth as a modernized city coming back from a disaster that caught international attention in a fashion that was equally as grand. Maeda's oriental design on the other hand spoke to the cultural currents that emphasized Japanese national characteristics and the search for a new national style. Like Itō Chūta, he sought to accomplish this through the visual language of Pan-Asian Orientalism, even as it still drew on Western architectural techniques. Maeda's presentation of his orientalist structure as not adhering to "existing foreign or domestic styles," does raise the question of how a design can evoke an "orientalist" aesthetic without relying on existing styles.[110] Certainly, some of this is Maeda's way of selling his design as unique, but as we see in the memorial design proposals of other contestants there was a desire to balance the novel with the familiar in architecture that gestured towards eastern and/or Japanese traditions of design.

Another important way Maeda's "oriental" design proposal differed from his winning proposal was in his exclusion of religiosity. Although Maeda explained in his winning proposal that his design would evoke a "distinctly religious mood" he made no mention of the mood his second submission would evoke.[111] Instead Maeda focused on the beauty of the memorial hall itself. Maeda's exclusion of "religious mood" in his second submission could be interpreted a

[110] "Shinsai kinendō kenshō sekkei kanren shiryō," Case 36, Folder 36-57, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.
[111] "Shinsai kinendō kenshō sekkei kanren shiryō," Case 36, Folder 36-57, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.

couple of ways. It is possible that because this design was "oriental" that the spirituality of the space was unquestionable in Maeda's mind. This is perhaps because designs that tried to evoke a Pan-Asian Orientalism were based on Buddhist temples of continental Asia. In his article Kang refers to this architecture as "oriental temple style."[112] The connection to religion, and perhaps ability to evoke a religious mood, would have been implicated visually by architectural elements of the design. As explained above, Maeda may have felt his more western design proposal would not be as visually recognizable as religious and thus required an explicit explanation of the affect that it would evoke. An alternative possibility was that Maeda simply wished to deemphasize religiosity in his oriental-style design submission. It is worth noting that another way his oriental-style submission departs from his winning design was the inclusion of a playground for children. It is possible this design would serve as a more accessible design that was supposed to function more as a public park in contrast to the winning design that was designed to be solemn and imposing, with even the open space in front of the hall restricted outside of memorial ceremonies.[113]

Maeda's twin submissions showed his conceptions about the range of possibilities for memorial architecture in interwar Japan. What is interesting is that this was not completely apparent from the appearance of his memorial designs. In a way, Maeda stayed true to his architectural style and philosophy. The differences were instead revealed in how Maeda wrote about his designs, essentially telling the jury how each should be interpreted. On the one hand, the winning submission was to be interpreted as a modernist style appealing to the latest trends in architecture broadly and memorial architecture specifically. On the other, Maeda's unrecognized

[112] "Shinsai kinendō kenshō sekkei kanren shiryō," Case 36, Folder 36-57, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.
[113] "Shinsai kinendō kenshō sekkei kanren shiryō," Case 36, Folder 36-57, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.

submission tapped into the desire for architecture that drew on Pan-Asian influences, rather than Western ones.

As I will show in the following section, Maeda's fellow contestants shared this understanding of the possibilities of memorial architecture after the Great Kantō Earthquake. Unlike Maeda they did not hedge by submitting multiple designs that could play to both architectural currents. Instead, they fell somewhere on the spectrum in their own negotiation of trends in global memory culture and monumental architecture, articulating visions that read as traditionally Japanese, to creatively Pan-Asian, to eclectically modern, or somewhere in between. Like in the case of Maeda's two designs, religiosity or religiousness, either explicitly explained in submission proposals or implied through architect's aesthetic choices proved to be a central space for the negotiation of these currents in contestants' efforts to design an appropriate memorial for the moment.

Religiousness and the Cultural Politics of Memorialization

That religion, or at least religiosity, was central in various designs for an appropriate memorial to the Great Kantō Earthquake is not surprising. As shown above the earthquake was alsoarticulated by elites as a national disaster and a chance for spiritual, moral, and physical renewal and the proposed site of the memorial was itself suffused with spiritual meaning. Religion has also been recognized as a key site for the negotiation of national and cultural identity.[114] In addition, amidst the burgeoning post-WWI global memory culture memorials were a critical site to exhibit national grandeur using international forms and practices. So, much like Maeda, his fellow design competition entrants navigated how to make a space that would

[114] Isomae, *Religious Discourse in Modern Japan*, 10-15.

adequately commemorate the earthquake, allow the bereaved to mourn, as well as disaster's status as a national tragedy on a larger international stage. The variety of results of this complex negotiation, like Maeda's twin submissions, revealed the underlying cultural politics of memorializing the disaster, where the pull of more international design styles met a popular desire to hew to more traditional Japanese forms of funerary space.

In the guidelines for contest entrants there was no stipulation laid out by the memorial association that the designs should follow the style of any specific religion. Instead, the memorial association vaguely state that designers should "bear in mind that memorial should eternally commemorate the disaster as well as mourn the spirits of the victims and moreover that it should be a place where ceremonies could be held."[115] In reference to the type of ceremony the association envisioned they wrote that the designers should "take into account that the ceremony should be a religious (*shūkyō-teki*) ritual." [116] As we can see the fuzziness of "religious" or "religiousness" was baked into the contest instructions, and was, of course, in keeping with the trend towards more secularized, universalist, and ecumenical memorial spaces favored internationally as well as by Japanese elites. The stipulation that the ritual should still be "religious" shows that mourning the souls of the earthquake victims, and those who were incinerated at the Clothing Depot in particular, still demanded at least a nod towards funerary practices grounded in (unspecified) religious traditions.

Some designers, like Maeda, took this vagueness to heart, and sought to evoke generalized feelings of religiosity, while still engaging in international design trends. An excellent example of this is Ōzawa Isamu's design proposal, which won him second place in the competition. Ōzawa's design proposal was strikingly like Maeda's in both visual style and

[115] Tōkyō shinsai kinen jigyō kyōkai, *Taishō daishinsai kinen kenzōbutsu kyōgu sekkei zuroku*, 3.
[116] Tōkyō shinsai kinen jigyō kyōkai, *Taishō daishinsai kinen kenzōbutsu kyōgu sekkei zuroku*, 3.

discursive explanation. The Memorial centered on a tower that combined art-deco and expressionist elements. The choice by the judges of two designs centered on towers to be the first and second place designs reflected the popularity of towers in the world of architectural design at this time in general and the tendency of designers towards verticality to the memorial competition specifically.[117] Ōzawa wrote that the "the exterior of the memorial building will first and foremost demand a solemn/sublime religious mood."[118] The religiosity of Ōzawa's design, vague and connected to a relatively unarticulated general feeling, should now be familiar to the reader.

Again, art deco seemed to offer designers like Ōzawa and Maeda a style that threaded the needle between the radical and traditional in a way that helped evoke a religious atmosphere while also remaining ecumenical and modern. It was also, apparently, an attractive choice for the competition jury. This tendency is also clear in the design of Ōka Kensuke, who was awarded third place, third chair in the competition. Ōka, like Maeda and Ōzawa, centered his memorial on a large art-deco tower, and the "main goal" behind his design was to "not be partial to any religious denomination."[119]

[117] Weisenfeld, 270-271.
[118] "Shinsai kinendō kenshō sekkei kanren shiryō," Case 36, Folder 36-18 1/4, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.
[119] "Shinsai kinendō kenshō sekkei kanren shiryō," Case 36, Folder 36-18 1/4, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.

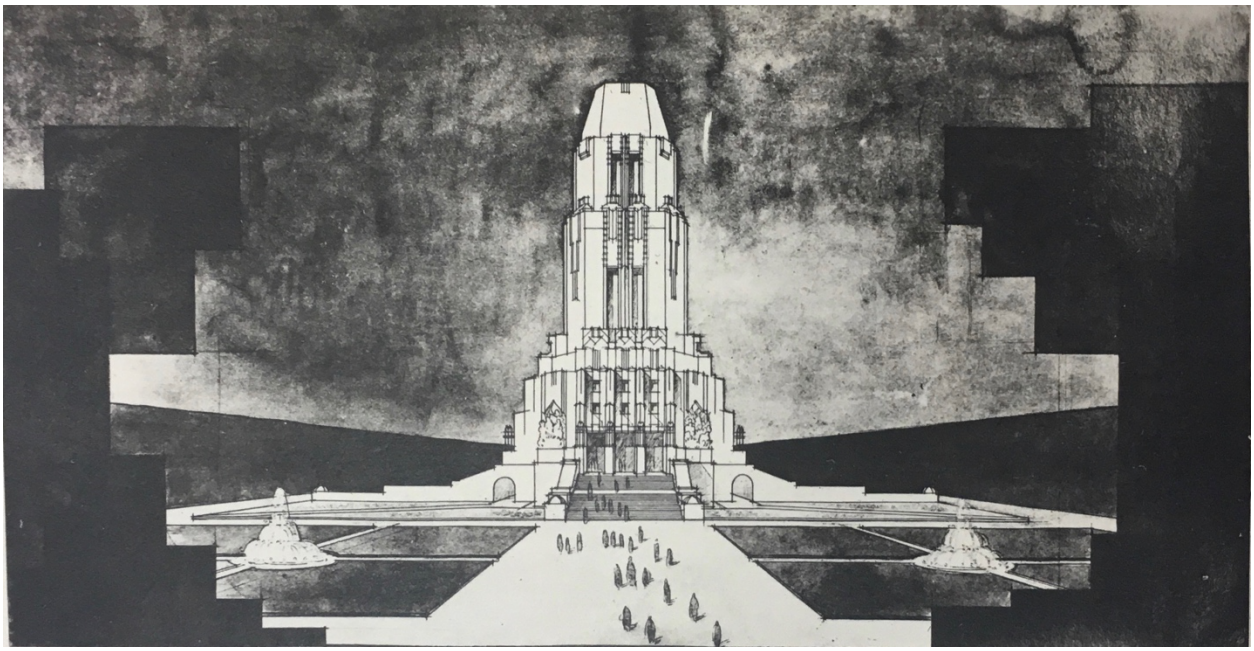

Image 5: Sketch of Ōzawa Isamu's Design, proposal featuring an art deco memorial hall centered on a tower. Sketch by Ōzawa Isamu. *Source:* Tōkyō shinsai kinen jigyō kyōkai, *Taishō daishinsai kinen kenzōbutsu kyōgu sekkei zuroku* (Tōkyō: Kōyōsha 1925), 16.

Even if designers didn't imagine their buildings as evoking religious sentiment, they still found ways through modernism, expressionism, and art deco-design elements to express religiosity. One example comes from a design submission that only identifiable by its cipher, the character for "person" (*mono*).[120] This designer called for a circular memorial hall, 3/4s of which would be used as a space for ceremonies, with the remaining part of the hall reserved for an ossuary. The central feature of the circular hall was a pillar, decorated with artificial white stone, that would "symbolize religious meaning."[121] Although this designer's memorial hall does not feature an exterior tower like Maeda or Ōzawa's designs, we again see the theme of verticality, this time in the shape of the central pillar. It is obvious that the designer wanted to give the memorial hall a religious feel, without being overly suggestive of any specific religion. While a

[120] The identity of the architect is unknown, listed as not including a corresponding envelope linking identification to the cipher on the register of submission names. "Shinsai kinendō kenshō sekkei kanren shiryō," Case 36, Folder 36-57, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.
[121] "Shinsai kinendō kenshō sekkei kanren shiryō," Case 36, Folder 36-57, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.

pure white stone pillar can be interpreted as a gesture towards neo-classicism, it is also meant merely to be a symbolic representation. This plain and unadorned pillar, in keeping with the primary understanding of "religion" as the realm of personal belief, would be open to interpretation by visitors to the hall.

The religious affectation of modernism was not interpreted uniformly by all architects. As was shown earlier Maeda's unrecognized submission, modernist design was not seen as antithetical to "eastern" aesthetics. A building could conjure both "modern" and "eastern" connotations. Another example of this utilization of modernist design to gesture towards "eastern" or "oriental" aesthetics is in Ōkura Saburō's contest submission. Ōkura, who was awarded third place, second chair, was similarly vague in his description of his design's religiosity. He, like Maeda and Ōzawa, linked a religious affect with grandiosity and the sublime, writing that both the exterior and interior of his design would have the "basic tone of religious majesty and solemnity."[122] Ōkura, in contrast to Maeda, emphasized that despite "using modern methods" his building would still "evoke a somewhat oriental religious atmosphere."[123] Indeed, with its long reflecting pool leading up to the front of the hall dominated by arches and topped with a dome, Ōkura's design was reminiscent of a modernist Taj Mahal.

[122] "Shinsai kinendō kenshō sekkei kanren shiryō," Case 36, Folder 36-18 1/4, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.
[123] "Shinsai kinendō kenshō sekkei kanren shiryō," Case 36, Folder 36-18 1/4, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.

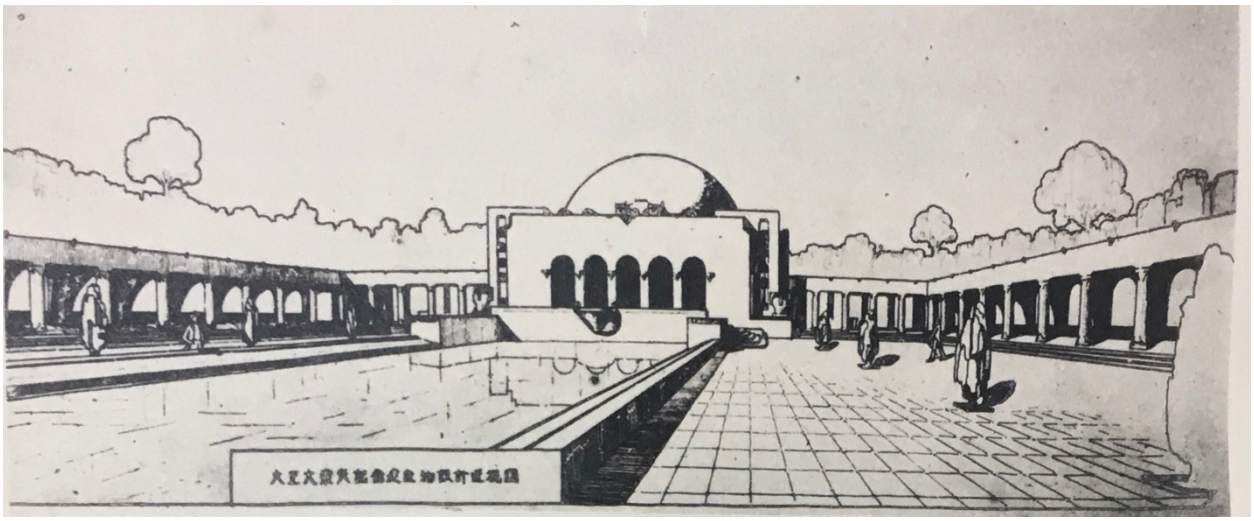

Image 6: Sketch of Ōkura Saburō's Design, hiscontest submission, featured a domed modernist memorial hall. Sketch by Ōkura Saburō. *Source:* Tōkyō shinsai kinen jigyō kyōkai, *Taishō daishinsai kinen kenzōbutsu kyōgu sekkei zuroku* (Tōkyō: Kōyōsha 1925), 24.

While modernist designers sought ways to summon religious moods that broke, to varying degrees, from Japanese funerary and mourning traditions heavily centered on Buddhist practice and imagery, other designers both explicitly and implicitly drew on elements of traditional Buddhist spaces. These designs and others like them show the cultural strength of Buddhist funerary practices in interwar Japan and foreshadow the later debates over Maeda's winning modern design. These contestants did not seek to recreate temples wholesale but utilized key features that demarcate their memorials as Buddhist spaces. In his design proposal, that won third place, first chair, Katō Kan'ichi explained that the main hall of his memorial structure would be "based on the techniques of Buddhist towers."[124] The building would be "shaped like a pyramid and be topped with a nine-tiered pagoda finial," known as a *kurin* finial.[125] *Kurin* finials, based on Buddhist architecture from India, were small scale representations of Buddhist cosmology, with each level corresponding to a different part of Buddhist reality. These finials usual topped pagodas and stood on top above where relics were housed within the structure. In

[124] "Shinsai kinendō kenshō sekkei kanren shiryō," Case 36, Folder 36-18 1/4, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.
[125] "Shinsai kinendō kenshō sekkei kanren shiryō," Case 36, Folder 36-18 1/4, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.

the case of Kato's memorial hall, it marked the location of the ossuary housing remains of the victims. The ossuary would feature the enshrinement of a buddha statue that would serve as the principal object of worship in the memorial space. [126] Nihonmatsu Kōzō was another contestant who was similarly explicit in his use of Buddhist architecture. Nihonmatsu's design also called for a roof adorned by a *kurin* finial topped with a bronze orb. Nihonmatsu's design also included a statue of the Buddha in the centrally located ossuary.[127]

Other utilizations of Buddhist spatial concepts were more subtle. For example, in a design submitted under the cipher "buddha" (*butsu*) a specific room, left of the entrance to the hall, is mentioned as a place where handheld items can be placed by visitors and where their shoes would be held as well. Although, various public spaces in Japan that could be read as secular (schools, certain places of work, etc.) require the removal or changing of shoes, it is nearly always required in religious spaces like the interiors of shrines or temples. This design choice was notable in this instance because other designers did not make provision for the removal of shoes in their memorial spaces. While they may have envisioned their memorials as sacred spaces, they seemed to be operating under a more western assumption of civic memorial sites. In contrast, this designer envisioned their memorial hall as following the same protocols as traditional Japanese religious spaces.[128]

As we saw above in Maeda's choice of ciphers, other designers also signaled their religious vision for their memorials in their choice of ciphers. Some, like Maeda, chose code names like "spirit" (*rei*) for their submissions, which has vague religious connotations, but is not

[126] "Shinsai kinendō kenshō sekkei kanren shiryō," Case 36, Folder 36-18 1/4, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.
[127] "Shinsai kinendō kenshō sekkei kanren shiryō," Case 36, Folder 36-18 1/4, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.
[128] "Shinsai kinendō kenshō sekkei kanren shiryō," Case 36, Folder 36-57, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.

tied to a particular religious tradition.[129] Others were more explicit in aligning themselves with certain religious traditions. Even though Ōzawa's second place winning design drew from modern art deco influences, his choice of code name "*nyōrai*" (the Japanese translation for *tathagata*, or the term the historical Buddha most used to refer to himself), shows the influence of Buddhism over the realm of dying and funerary rights in early 20th century Japan. As mentioned above at least one design was submitted under the cipher "*butsu*" a term that can refer to the Buddha or the spirit of those who are deceased.[130]

The variety of architectural visions submitted to the design competition showed what constituted an appropriate memorial to the national disaster of the Great Kantō Earthquake was an open question in interwar Japan. Religion and religiosity played a central role in this negotiation between tradition and modernity, reflecting debates in Japanese society as well as larger trends in post-WWI global memory culture. While this and the previous section showed the disagreement in the design competition over the role and type of religiosity appropriate for a memorial, as expressed through architectural styles, in the next section I will highlight an area of remarkable agreement among the designers. While they disagreed over how religiosity should look and feel, they seemed to that the ultimate affective function of a memorial should be to enable mourners and visitors alike to forget.

[129] Out of the 221 submissions received "spirit" (*rei*) was the most popular code name chosen in common by contestants, with 5 received by the memorial association in total. "Shinsai kinendō kenshō sekkei kanren shiryō," Case 36, Folder 36-57, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.
[130] *Butsu* is the second most common alias, with two contestants having sent submissions using that alias. "Shinsai kinendō kenshō sekkei kanren shiryō," Case 36, Folder 36-57, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.

Sites of Remembering, Sites of Forgetting

It may seem counterintuitive that a memorial aimed at "eternally commemorate the great earthquake and fire disaster," could be conceived of a site by architects that would simultaneously facilitate forgetting. Nevertheless, historians have understood that collective memory can be selective. In his collection of essays aptly titled *Ways of Remembering, Ways of Forgetting: Japan in the Modern World,* John Dower writes that in issues of memory and history "the focused gaze is simultaneously an averted gaze." In other words, certain narratives and thus remembrances of the past necessitate related historical "sanitation or…amnesia."[131] While Dower focuses mainly the "uses and abuses" of WWII history in postwar Japan, the same can be said of public historical spaces like disaster memorials. Jay Winter, cited at length above, writes that memorials, as part of the mediation of grief and mourning, help enact a process of separation from the dead, and thus concern "forgetting as much as remembering."[132] The proposed memorials to the Great Kantō Earthquake proposed did "abuse" history in the sense Dower articulates. The competition, and thus contestants, excluded victims of the Korean Massacre from memorialization and Korean victims of vigilante violence would go unrecognized in Yokoamichō Park until a memorial stone was erected in 1973.[133] However, I wish to focus on an aspect of forgetting more akin to what Winter describes in WWI memorialization; forgetting as part of the emotional process of grieving and healing from loss.

The forgetting that many of the architects imagined would be facilitated by their Great Kantō Earthquake memorial hall designs was what I term "emotional forgetting." In various designs, contestants used the affective qualities of their architecture to reject or negate the

[131] Dower, *Ways of Forgetting, Ways of Remembering*, viii.
[132] Winter, *Sites of Memory Sites of Mourning*, 224.
[133] Tōkyō-to irei kyōkai, "Kōen riyō no hō: shisetu annai," accessed May 10, 2022, https://tokyoireikyoukai.or.jp/park/shisetsu.html#shisetu4.

emotions of the disaster. They did so by envisioning their memorials as spaces able to evoke new feelings and emotions that would counter the emotional pain of the past. As I will show this was an affective function articulated by designers working both in modernist and traditionalist modes of memorial architecture. In other words, emotional forgetting was a remarkable point of agreement amongst an otherwise diverse field of design submissions.

By arguing that these memorial designers enabled emotional forgetting I do not mean to suggest that contestants sought to totally erase the tragedy of the earthquake and ensuing inferno. As shown above in the discussion on religiousness in the design competition, "solemn" (*sōgen*/*genshuku*) was a word used commonly by contestants.[134] It was obvious that they understood the emotional gravity of the memorial and crafted their designs to convey an appropriate level of seriousness. Maeda, Ōzawa, and Ōkura each explained that their structures will evoke solemnity, as is befitting a monument to a tragedy.[135] Nihonmatsu in his design submission imagined that the sense of solemnity and loss would be a multisensory experience, writing "I chose a form that would be unmistakable as an ossuary. The hall will center on this grand ossuary. Fragrance, flowers, water, and lights will be arranged, and it will express a sense of tribute for the departed."[136] Solemnity, although colored with sadness, spoke more to a space that was adequately dignified and formal. Those emotions were not the same as those experienced in the immediate wake of the disaster, which was filled with panic, terror, paranoia, pain, and grief for many survivors. Even at their most somber, these memorial designs were not meant to evoke or preserve those raw emotions, but rather transmute them into feelings that were appropriately majestic for a memorial to Japan's great national disaster.

[134] "Shinsai kinendō kenshō sekkei kanren shiryō," Case 36, Folder 36-18 1/4, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.
[135] "Shinsai kinendō kenshō sekkei kanren shiryō," Case 36, Folder 36-18 1/4, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.
[136] "Shinsai kinendō kenshō sekkei kanren shiryō," Case 36, Folder 36-18 1/4, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.

Beyond solemnity, other designers sought to create positive feelings for visitors with their designs. Ōkura was one such architect, imagining mourners' positive emotional reaction to his memorial. In addition to an "oriental religious atmosphere," he thought his hall would evoke "a feeling of comfort."[137] He hoped to accomplish this by making his memorial hall's floor plan and façade "as simple as possible."[138] If we look at the sketches Ōkura provided to the panel of judges, his design, especially the façade, is rather simple. The main memorial hall is essentially rectangular, topped by a simple pearl shaped dome. In addition, the façade would be made up of relatively unadorned white terracotta. Where reliefs would be featured for ornamental purposes, they would also be composed of the same white terracotta, making for a relatively uniform and unbusy visual aesthetic.[139] The lines were clean and more horizontal in nature than the radically vertical art deco styles submitted by other architects. Ōkura also intended to use trees to block noise pollution from the surrounding city, creating a physical as well as auditory barrier to mark it as a silent, solemn, and relaxing space. It shows that in interwar Japan, memorials were not meant to reignite emotions of the past or challenge the visitor, but rather evoke comforting emotions through their design.

The contestant who was most thoughtful about the affective impact of his design on visitors was Katō Kan'ichi. In his more traditionalist memorial based on Buddhist temple architecture, he envisioned how features of his design would remedy the trauma of the disaster. It is obvious from the cipher Katō chose for his submission, tranquil (*hima*), that he aimed for the overall memorial park to do the emotional work of soothing visitors.[140] He wrote that the main building would be topped with a pyramid shaped roof was intended to "emphasize the

[137] "Shinsai kinendō kenshō sekkei kanren shiryō," Case 36, Folder 36-18 1/4, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.
[138] "Shinsai kinendō kenshō sekkei kanren shiryō," Case 36, Folder 36-18 1/4, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.
[139] "Shinsai kinendō kenshō sekkei kanren shiryō," Case 36, Folder 36-18 1/4, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.
[140] "Shinsai kinendō kenshō sekkei kanren shiryō," Case 36, Folder 36-18 1/4, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.

impression of earthquake resistance."[141] As discussed above, the memorial association required the use of seismic and fire-resistant materials that would help prevent any memorial structure from meeting the same fate as many other buildings in Tokyo had during the disaster. This meant, structurally these buildings were designed as a response to the disaster itself. However, Katō also envisioned that the aesthetic aspects of his design would respond to the past as well and give the everyday visitor the sense of security that the building was earthquake proof.

Katō not only sought to signal a response to the earthquake through the aesthetics of his design, but to the conflagration as well. For example, although a providing a pond on the park site was a requirement for the of the competition, Katō explained that in his design the pond would have symbolic meaning as well as emotional function.[142] Katō's proposed a pond would be placed in front of the main memorial building and would be traversed by a bridge leading to the building's entrance. He wrote "because the immediate disaster was caused by an inferno, a pond will be constructed to set up a spring of water."[143] The pond was not just a symbolic negation of the past event, but he also saw it doing emotional work on those who visited his memorial writing "the singular comforting feeling of this park will be deepened due to the (positive) associations of water."[144] Furthermore he wrote that the pond's "elegance" would be strengthened by the planting of lotus flowers within it.[145] In his design, aesthetics served the purpose of creating a desired mood for imagined visitors to the memorial. Katō's design vision was not only then to honor the victims of the disaster, but was, in part, a corrective for or a

[141] "Shinsai kinendō kenshō sekkei kanren shiryō," Case 36, Folder 36-18 1/4, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.
[142] "Shinsai kinendō kenshō sekkei kanren shiryō," Case 36, Folder 36-18 1/4, FKK, Tokyo, Japan, Tōkyō shinsai kinen jigyō kyōkai, *Taishō daishinsai kinen kenzōbutsu kyōg*i *sekkei zuroku,* 3.
[143] "Shinsai kinendō kenshō sekkei kanren shiryō," Case 36, Folder 36-18 1/4, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.
[144] "Shinsai kinendō kenshō sekkei kanren shiryō," Case 36, Folder 36-18 1/4, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.
[145] "Shinsai kinendō kenshō sekkei kanren shiryō," Case 36, Folder 36-18 1/4, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.

negation of the disaster events themselves, a comforting and relaxing space whose design symbolically and emotionally countered the past event.

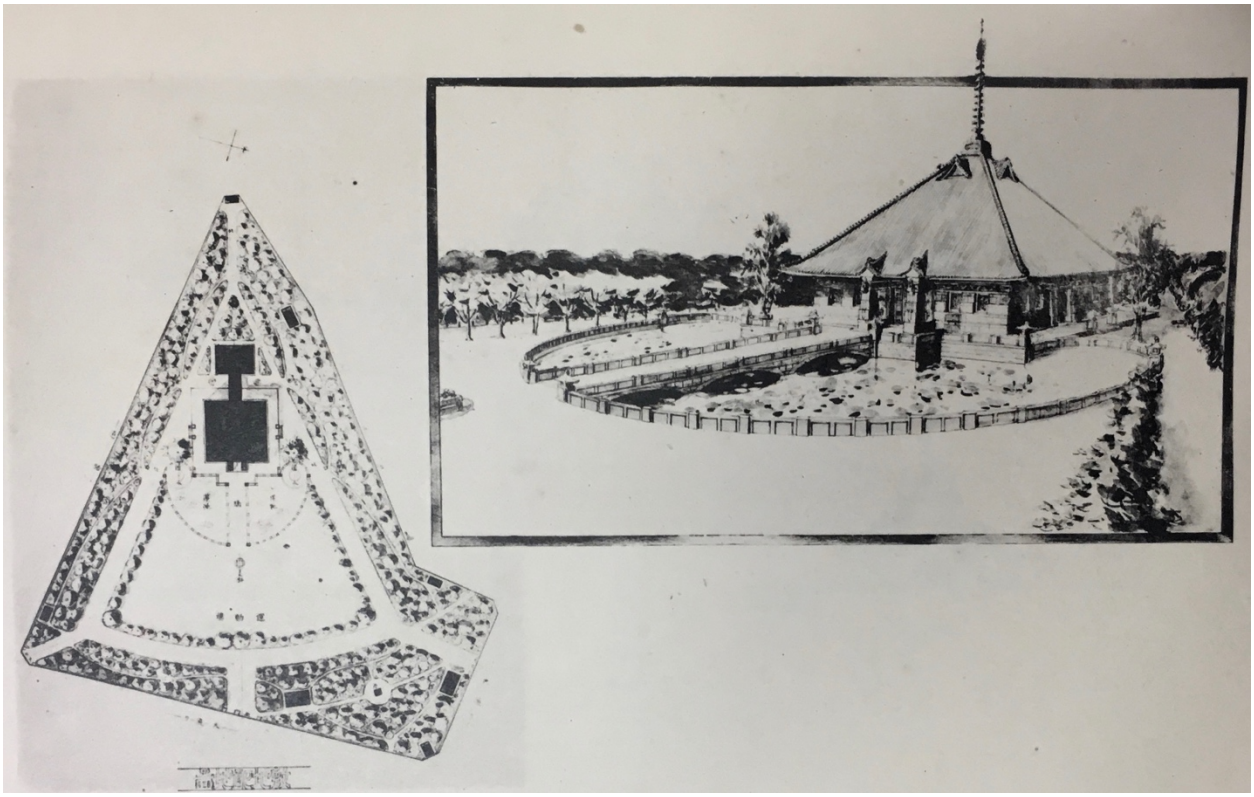

Image 7: Sketch of Katō Kan'ichi's Design, in his submission the pond filled with lotus flowers is clearly visible. Sketch by Katō Kan'ichi. *Source*: Tōkyō shinsai kinen jigyō kyōkai, *Taishō daishinsai kinen kenzōbutsu kyōgu sekkei zuroku* (Tōkyō: Kōyōsha 1925), 21.

While Katō was thoughtful about how his memorial would enable emotional forgetting, others were more radical in their pursuit of this affective amnesia. The most radical vision to emotionally negate the feelings of the disaster was articulated by Yukino Motoyoshi in his design submission. Architecturally Yukino's park resembled other modernist design proposals centering on a tower and outdoor pavilion placed in the middle of a pond. In his proposal Yukino asked rhetorically, "how should one commemorate the Great Taishō Earthquake?"[146] The answer, Yukino wrote, was to "do away with the confining tragedy of the great inferno."[147]

[146] "Shinsai kinendō kenshō sekkei kanren shiryō," Case 36, Folder 36-18 1/4, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.
[147] "Shinsai kinendō kenshō sekkei kanren shiryō," Case 36, Folder 36-18 1/4, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.

Ironically for a memorial, meant to commemorate and mourn the dead "eternally," Yukino advocated that the space should "extinguish all memory" and should be "without even the slightest bit of dark emotion."[148] Instead, the exterior appearance of the memorial would "employ the power of the great Japanese state to immerse one in pleasant feelings."[149] Yukino imagining that the grandness of the Japanese empire, expressed in memorial architecture, would bring pleasure to visitors shows again that the Earthquake Memorial Hall was meant to be of national importance. Yukino's articulation of his memorial design also most clearly represents the vision to uncouple memory and emotion. Despite this portrayal, his design still called for features that are standard in the other designs, and for a space dedicated to memory and mourning, like an ossuary, an exhibition hall for commemorative objects, an altar, and incense burners. However, Yukino was opposed to preserving the tragedy or emotion that was associated with the event, replacing it with a space that would inspire awe and enjoyment.

Memorials were not only emotional tools for comfort of the living, but also the dead. Ōzawa Isamu's memorial, in addition to the eternal commemoration of the event, was designed to "eliminate lament by consoling the souls of victims."[150] Katō Kan'ichi, in addition to the calming pond wrote that the *kurin* finial would "eternally pray for the happiness of the victims."[151] Katō wrote that these elements taken together would "eternally pray for the happiness of the victims." Pacifying the emotions of the dead in Japanese tradition was seen as an essential function of mourning and funerary rituals. This was especially true for those who died violent deaths, like the fate that was suffered by the victims of the Clothing Depot. It was believed that because victims of disaster, among other tragedies, had died abruptly their spirits

[148] "Shinsai kinendō kenshō sekkei kanren shiryō," Case 36, Folder 36-18 1/4, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.
[149] "Shinsai kinendō kenshō sekkei kanren shiryō," Case 36, Folder 36-18 1/4, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.
[150] "Shinsai kinendō kenshō sekkei kanren shiryō," Case 36, Folder 36-18 1/4, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.
[151] "Shinsai kinendō kenshō sekkei kanren shiryō," Case 36, Folder 36-18 1/4, FKK, Tokyo, Japan.

could become angry and reap revenge on the living.[152] This danger was compounded if these dead were not survived by anyone who could properly mourn them. These were call victims "without bonds" (*muen*), In the case of the Great Kantō Earthquake, where whole families perished together, many victims were left without surviving relatives to properly mourn them.

Given the nationalization of the 1923 disaster, the proper pacification of the victims was not just a matter of securing the safety of any individual who did not properly mourn. The inadequate mourning of the victims of the disaster could theoretically spell further disaster on a nationwide scale. Thus, the emotional forgetting was not confined to the realm of the living, but, in the minds of many interwar Japanese, also the realm of the dead. Memorials were expected to also help the dead forget their negative emotions in the wake of the disaster and replace them with positive ones.

While the architects whose design submissions survive had divergent ideas about what an appropriate memorial to the Great Kantō Earthquake would be, they seemed to agree that architecture had the power to negate the negative feelings associated with the disaster event and supplant them with positive one's for the living and dead alike. This suggests a more general agreement amongst those who entered the design competition over what memorials were for in the interwar period. What I term "emotional forgetting" could also be understood as healing, a powerful current in the post-WWI memory culture.[153] To reformulate Dower's words, a focused gaze on the tragedy of the Great Kantō Earthquake was simultaneously an averted gaze from the emotional reality of the disaster in these memorial designs.

The idea that to heal, the emotional and affective experience of disaster must be negated, in other words, that memorials should facilitate emotional forgetting, was not a constant over the

[152] Fukuda, 74-75.
[153] Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning,* 93-94.

course of the 20th and 21st century history of Japanese disaster memorials. This dissertation shows that disaster memorials were formulated and reformulated to fit the political, ideological, religious, economic, and emotional realities of various post-disaster moments.[154] While "emotional forgetting" would find its place in later reformulations, configured alongside a new set of socio-economic concerns as I will show in Chapter 3, in other cases memorials sought to preserve the emotional reality of disasters for preventative, pedagogical, and personal ends, as shown in Chapter 4. What the case of the Great Kantō Earthquake Hall has shown, and what other chapters will continue to explore, is that despite the rhetoric of "eternal" remembrance, unbounded by time, disaster memorials in Japan were always products of their global and local historical moments, their memory cultures, and their concerns.

Conclusion

On March 24, 1930, with the design controversy long settled and Itō Chūta's design under construction, the site of the (about to be completed) Taishō Earthquake Memorial Hall served as an appropriate stop on the Shōwa Emperor's "well-choreographed" tour of a reconstructed Tokyo.[155] The hall seemed to serve the purpose of acknowledging the past on the emperor's tour, an important way-point before the procession highlighted other construction projects that symbolized the future.[156] Before moving on the emperor offered condolences to the dead in private, visiting the ossuary and inspecting the building, which would be formally finished in time for the seventh anniversary of the disaster on September 1, 1930.

While imperial reconstruction tour is a fitting coda for the memorial design controversy explored above, it is only the beginning of the Earthquake Memorial Hall's longer history. The

[154] Frihammer and Silverman, 8.
[155] Schencking, 301-302.
[156] Schencking, 301-302.

tensions between modernism and tradition, pedagogy and mourning, ecumenicalism and sectarianism, and future and past continued to play out in memorial landscape of Yokoamichō Park. Although traditionalism and Buddhist memorial practice won out in the design controversy, the modernism and pedagogical elements (like the display of earthquake objects) that Maeda emphasized in his design found expression in the Reconstruction Memorial Museum (*Fukkō kinenkan*). Announced in mid-1930, the hall is thought to have been designed by Hagiwara Kōichi and Itō Chūta, using a style evocative of Frank Lloyd Wright and constructed alongside the Earthquake Memorial Hall in Yokoamichō Park. The museum would, and continues to, display exhibitions of objects and historical documents as well house archives related to the earthquake.[157] Weisenfeld sees this as the separation of "sacred and historical remembrance." She argues the desire to separate these two modes of remembrance, in part, precipitated the controversy over Maeda's initial design.[158]

The secular and ecumenical spirit of the memorial, despite being tempered by Buddhist and citizen's organizations in the 1920's, still shaped the hall's future in post-WWII Japan. As Cary Karacas shows, the Earthquake Memorial Hall, as an ossuary under the supervision of the Tokyo Metropolitan Government and having no ties to State Shinto, was chosen by the American occupation government as the resting place for ashes of those killed in the Tokyo fire bombings. With the inclusion of these victims from a war disaster (*senzai*), the Earthquake Memorial Hall became the Tokyo Metropolitan Memorial Hall, and Yokoamichō continued to be developed as a memorial complex to both mass death events.[159] This longer life cycle of the Earthquake Memorial Hall and Yokoamichō Park shows that the tensions underlying the design

[157] Weisenfeld, 283-290.
[158] Weisenfeld, 283-290.
[159] See: Cary Karacas, "Place, Public Memory, and the Tokyo Air Raids," *Geographical Review* 100, No. 4 (October 2010): 521-537.

controversy continued to reverberate across the 20th century. I will examine the idea of memorial life cycles and the changing nature/funciton of memorial spaces over time in the following chapter (Chapter 2).

Focusing back on post-quake Tokyo and interwar Japan, Schencking writes in his own telling of the Earthquake Memorial Hall, the controversy over Maeda's winning modernist design and eventual construction of Itō Chūta's Pan-Asian style hall was a "fitting microcosm" of the ambitions and realities of Tokyo's reconstruction.[160] I have shown in this chapter that the story of the Earthquake Memorial Hall—its conception, design, and redesign—was also a microcosm of the modernist and traditionalist tensions in global and Japanese memory culture in the post-WWI moment. This reframing of the story of the Earthquake Memorial Hall, places it firmly in the larger history of the international development of modern forms of memorialization, and thus connects disaster memorialization in Japan to seemingly unrelated modes of memory like Western war monument and memorials. By focusing on the architecture of memorial space, I have also shown that designers, in addition to navigating global and local trends, sought to use the materiality of the memorial to engender desirable affective response from visitors. A key site of this negotiation in interwar Japan was religion, and designers had divergent ideas about what might evoke a "religious" affect with some using modern forms and others hewing to more traditional motifs based in Buddhist architecture. Despite these divergences I have also shown that designers largely agreed that a central function of a disaster memorial should be to facilitate an "emotional forgetting" of the event, by replacing negative affects with positive ones cultivated by the design of the memorial.

[160] Schencking, 300.

Ultimately what we can see in the case of the design controversy is that the trends in global memory culture at any given moment are still subject to local desires. As we will see what constituted an appropriate and effective memorial would continue to be a challenge for those commemorating disaster in Modern Japan. At some points certain techniques, styles, and forms of global memory culture would be enthusiastically embraced, while others would be met with indifference. What this shows those interested in memorializing disasters in the present is the difficulty of balancing the desires of various stakeholders in the memorial process to produce an appropriate site of memory.

Chapter 2

Between the Emergency and Everyday:
The Life Cycles of the 1933 Showa-Sanriku Tsunami Memorial Halls in Miyagi Prefecture

Introduction: If These Walls Could Talk

"I am a Tsunami Memorial Hall
Even though many people probably do not know
Now, you all call me the old schoolhouse
I'm that building
I was born (created) in the 10th year of Showa
When your grandpas and grandmas were small"[1]

Matsuura Seiji, a licensed teacher at the Iinokawa High School-Jūsanhama Branch School in the Tsukihama area of Ishinomaki, read these words on a temporary stage built on the school grounds for the annual Branch School Festival in 1981. The stage would have been positioned in front of an unremarkable rectangular building a little over 215 square meters in size (or about the size of a standard American football field). The students in the assembled audience of the festival would have recognized the building as the branch school's "old schoolhouse," a familiar building on the grounds. The building served as the regular backdrop for annual branch school festivals and send-off events for soon to be graduates (*yosenkai*).[2] The building in 1981, composed of simple wood materials and roofed with slate tiles, was old and dilapidated from 30 years of use as a schoolhouse beginning in May of 1951.[3] During that time the building experienced everyday wear and tear that came with housing classrooms, hosting high school students, and weathering the occasional impact of an erratic ball from the school yard.[4] The building would have also been subject to the more violent, although no less ordinary, hazards

[1] Matsuura Seiji, "Jūsanhama no rekishi" pg 86-95 in *Kashiwa* vol 20, Teiji-sei katei chūshin heikō kinen tokushū, Miyagi-ken Iinokawa kōtō gakkō seitō-kai. Matsuhiro-dō, Ishinomaki-shi, 1982.
[2] Matsuura, 87-88.
[3] Matsuura, 87-88.
[4] Matsuura, 87-88.

that accompany life on the Sanriku coast like typhoon rains and winds, which also contributed to its shabby appearance in the early 1980's. By the mid-1970's this dilapidation seemed to have reached a point that demanded action from the local school system. On October 27, 1977, a new schoolhouse for the Jūsanhama Branch School was completed, which explains the former building's moniker as the "old" schoolhouse in 1981.[5] However, as Matsuura's poem emphasized to the festival audience, the building's stint as a schoolhouse for the branch school campus was a second life for the structure. It was originally built in February 1935 as the Tsukihama Tsunami Memorial Hall (*Tsukihama kaishōkinenkan*).[6]

The 1981 branch school festival that provided the occasion for Matsuura to share his poem was not the usual annual celebration. In addition to marking the 30th anniversary of the branch school and the Tsukihama Tsunami Memorial Hall's 30th year of service as a schoolhouse, the festival also served as the opportunity to celebrate the branch school system amid the discontinuation of its "part-time" (*teijisei*) service.[7] This discontinuation of school services for part-time students can be seen as part of a larger consolidation of municipalities and municipal services on the Sanriku Coast, a process which spans the 20th and early 21st century.[8]

This process would continue for the Jūsanhama Branch school, which would once again get rehoused, this time into a prefab building, in 1991. It would then be renamed the Jūsanhama School in 1995. Fifteen years later the school would be closed as part of a larger reorganization

[5] Shirabata Katsumi, "Shōwa Sanriku Tsunami ato kensatsu sareta Miyagi-ken no shinshō kinenkan nitsuite," *Tsunami kōgaku kenkyū hōkoku* 29 (2012), 110-111.
[6] Matsuura, "Jūsanhama no rekishi," 87-88.
[7] Matsuura explains the part-time school system was a response to the need for students from more rural areas to spend time working in agriculture. He explains that branch schools were also created to cut down on student travel times. Central schools would often require day long round trips on ferries. Matsuura, "Jūsanhama no rekishi," 89-95. Headmaster Kosaka Yasuichi explains the closing of the part time schools and commemorates their history in his preface to *Kashiwa*. Kosaka Yasuichi "Kashiwa nijūgō no hakkan ni yosete – jitsuryoku no yōsei wo" in *Kashiwa*, 1-2.
[8] As is illustrated in Matsuura's own history of Jūsanhama. Matsuura, 86-95.

of Miyagi Prefecture's schools on March 31, 2010. The 90's era pre-fab school building was eventually demolished in January 2011, only a couple short months before the Great East Japan Earthquake struck and the subsequent tsunami wave inundated the area.[9] Although it is unclear exactly when, the original building that served as the Tsukihama Tsunami Memorial Hall and the "old" Jusanhama Branch schoolhouse was demolished sometime following the 1981 Branch School Festival.[10] According to records in 2012, the area of the original building served as the parking lot for the Kitakami Branch Office of Ishinomaki City Hall, which has since been moved farther inland.[11] The area is now the site of the Kawano Visitor Center and a memorial park completed in 2017, which features a memorial marker to 3.11 and a commemorative plaque marking the former grounds of Yoshihama Elementary School.

The history of the Tsukihama Tsunami Memorial Hall and the area where it was built, which spans from its creation as a memorial hall, to its repurposing as school building, then to parking lot, and eventually back to memorial site in post-3.11 Tōhoku, is a representative trajectory of Miyagi Prefecture's early 20th century tsunami memorial halls (*kaishō kinenkan)*. Built following the 1933 Showa-Sanriku Earthquake and Tsunami that struck the Pacific coast of Miyagi, Iwate, Aomori, and Hokkaido on March 3, 1933, the Tsukihama Tsunami Memorial Hall was part of a larger program in Miyagi Prefecture that led to the construction of 33 tsunami

[9] Shirabata Katsumi, 110-111.

[10] Shirabata Katsumi interprets the building of a new schoolhouse in 1977 as the time the "old" Jusanhama Branch Schoolhouse and former Tsukihama Tsunami Memorial Hall was demolished. This assumption is reproduced in Tadokoro Yuji's helpful table summarizing the features and histories of each memorial hall. However, Matsuura's poem seems to indicate the building was still standing, if not necessarily in use, in 1981. The building was likely demolished sometime afterwards, although the exact time is unclear. Shirabata, 110-111, Tadokoro Yuji, "Kōmin-kan zenshi toshite no senzen no 'saigai kinen' shisetsu – Miyagi-ken ni okeru shinshō kinenkan no secchi," *Nihon kominkan gakkai nenpō* Vol. 15 (2018), 54-55, Matsuura, 87-88.

[11] For the current location of this office see: Ishinomaki-shi, "Shisetsu mappu," accessed November 2, 2021, https://www.city.ishinomaki.lg.jp/map/020/index.html.

memorial halls in rural hamlets that had been affected by the disaster up and down Miyagi's coastline.

This chapter tells the history of Miyagi Prefecture's 1933 Tsunami Memorial Halls and uses it as a case study to grapple with the seeming incommensurability of the human timescales of collective memory and the geologic timescales of seismic activity that periodically sets off disaster on Tōhoku's pacific coast. Following the example of other disaster scholars, I use the tension between these irreconcilable timescales as a productive space of inquiry to interrogate the "middle temporality" of disaster on the Sanriku Coast.[12] To accomplish this I center the buildings of the Tsunami Memorial Halls themselves as the protagonists of a story that stretches across conventional human periods based on imperial reigns (Showa, Heisei) or that center political developments (interwar, wartime, post-war), and is bookended by punctuations in the area's seismic recurrence interval (in 1933, and again in 2011).

By making the memorial halls my protagonists I am partially mirroring the premise of Matsuura's poem, which was inspired by his own writing of the history of Jūsanhama for the 1981 Branch School Festival. Matsuura described his research process in a post-script to his Jūsanhama history that he shared along with his poem on stage in 1981 and that would later be published as part of the Iinokawa school system's yearly digest *Kashiwa* in 1982. Matsuura wrote, "I began my search [of the local archives] by wondering, if the [Tsukihama] Tsunami Memorial Hall, that we now use as the old Jūsanhama Branch School building, could talk, what kind of things would it say?"[13] By letting the proverbial walls talk, Matsuura was able to write a history of the school that went beyond its founding in 1951, allowing him to explore the deeper

[12] Claire Antone Payton, "Chapter 4: Concrete Kleptocracy and Haiti's Culture of Building: Toward a New Temporality of Disaster," pg 71-84 in Jacob A.C. Remes and Andy Horowitz eds., *Critical Disaster Studies* Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2021, 72.
[13] Matsuura, 95.

history of the surrounding community and social conditions that made Jūsanhama Branch School what it was in 1981.

Similarly, I center the tsunami memorial halls' perspective to understand their rise and fall as memorial sites amid the larger socio-economic, political, and ecological contexts of 20th and 21st century Tōhoku. I argue that, paradoxically, the tsunami memorial halls failed as memorials to the 1933 disaster because they proved to be incredibly useful buildings for the rural hamlets on Miyagi's coast. Initially designed by Miyagi Prefectural officials as types of settlement houses, the halls were meant to be used for general social welfare and served as public halls, educational spaces, libraries, communal workspaces, nurseries in addition to post-disaster memorial sites and evacuation centers for future tsunami events. The multivalent functions of the memorial halls set the stage for their repurposing during the wartime and post-war years in an impoverished Tōhoku. During this time, everyday municipal needs for facilities chipped away at the commemorative meaning of these spaces and most would be converted to schools, community centers, and general meeting halls. Eventually, many of these repurposed original buildings were torn down, moved, or reconstructed. Many of the original memorial hall buildings that did remain, in form if not in name, were washed away by the tsunami waves of 3.11, when they would have proven to be inadequate evacuation sites for the surrounding communities.

Read as histories that span from 1933 to 2011 and beyond, the life cycles of these tsunami memorial halls are an illustration of the precarity of post-disaster memorialization and the limitations of the memorial form as a means of disaster preparedness and mitigation. The fact that many of the remaining structures, as well as the areas where many of these halls were located, were inundated by the tsunami waves of 3.11 speaks to an inadequacy of human foresight and imagination of the scale of the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami. Even if

the tsunami memorial halls had retained their commemorative function and had served as evacuation sites for individuals in the wake of 3.11's earthquake, those who escaped there would have faced deadly circumstances. As social welfare facilities the tsunami memorial halls are perhaps a success story because they provided these communities with infrastructure that was useful enough to be repurposed and was utilized well into the postwar era. As commemorative infrastructure and disaster mitigation measures the tsunami memorial halls could be read as failures. Their complicated history provides useful and important context that we can use to reevaluate the new wave of memorialization efforts on the Sanriku coast post-3.11 and the potential of post-disaster memorialization more generally.

The Problem of Scales: Between the Emergency and Everyday

Central to the critical study of disaster are "questions of scale."[14] New developments in disaster research show that conceptual boundaries that treat disasters as either temporally bounded events or the expression of long-term processes should be dissolved in favor of "enhanced reflexivity." This enhanced reflexivity allows disaster historians to be attentive to how different scales allow one to produce different analysis of any given disaster.[15] Scott Gabriel Knowles and Zachary Loeb write, drawing on the work of Gabrielle Hecht, that scales are "emergent rather than eternal" but still have "reality" and "do work in the world."[16]
Seismic events, especially those that interact with humans and their built environment, provide productive case studies of scale. Joanna Leslie Dyl writes that seismic events, like earthquakes

[14] Scott Gabriel Knowles and Zachary Loeb "Chapter 1: The Voyage of the Paragon: Disaster as Method" pg 11-31 in Jacob A.C. Remes and Andy Horowitz eds., *Critical Disaster Studies* Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2021, 13
[15] Knowles and Loeb, 13-14.
[16] Knowles and Loeb, 13.

and tsunami, "represent an intersection of two distinct timescales—those of the human and natural or geological history… [t]hese events appear irregular and unpredictable to us, but on a planetary and geological scale they are also inevitable and thoroughly natural."[17]

These two timescales and their intersection echo the work of Dipesh Chakrabarty, who argues that the Anthropocene requires historians to decenter the temporal and spatial of the human lifespan. To decenter humanity in historical narrative, Chakrabarty advocates for using "the planetary" as a category that would allow historians to mix human timescales with "the inhumanly vast timescales of deep history."[18] For Chakrabarty if the idea of the Anthropocene suggests that humans are now a geological force, then the history of humanity and of the planet should be considered together. This necessitates collapsing the traditional distinction between Natural History and Human History. Chakrabarty notes, like Dyl, however, that even before the advent of the Anthropocene (however we may date it), seismic events are examples where "earth-scale phenomena [have] erupted into our humanist narratives."[19] Thus, earthquakes and tsunami prove that we truly "never [have been] distant from deep time and deep history."[20] Indeed an earthquake can bring the inconceivable scales of geologic time, the long history of societal development, and the immediacy of human life, smashing together within the span of a minute.[21] To bring these scales together Hecht, Knowles, and Loeb advocate for the use of "interscalar vehicles," objects or sources that allow the historian to perform analysis across spatiotemporal scales.[22]

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[17] Joanna Leslie Dyl *Seismic City: An Environmental History of San Francisco's 1906 Earthquake* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2017), 7.
[18] Dipesh Chakrabarty, *The Climate of History in a Planetary Age* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2021), 4.
[19] Chakrabarty, 7.
[20] Chakrabarty, 7.
[21] For example, see Anthony Oliver-Smith, "Chapter 4: Peru's Five-Hundred-Year Earthquake: Vulnerability in Historical Context," pg 74-88 in Anthony Oliver Smith and Susanna Hoffman eds, *The Angry Earth: Disaster in Anthropological Perspective* (New York: Routledge), 1999.
[22] Knowles and Loeb, 13-14.

The 1933 Showa-Sanriku Tsunami Memorial Halls serve as the interscalar vehicles that allow me to explore the tensions between geologic and human timescales on the 20th and 21st century Sanriku coast. I use the memorial halls similarly to how Claire Antone Payton has used the history of concrete and "the culture of building" in Haiti to perform a "hybrid analysis" of the 2010 Port-au-Prince Earthquake.[23] In doing so Payton explores a "middle temporality" that exists in the gap between the disaster event itself and the *longue durée* of inequality experienced by Haiti since the eighteenth century that contributed to its vulnerability.[24]

By performing my own hybrid analysis of the 1933 Shōwa-Sanriku Earthquake through the history of the Tsunami Memorial Halls, I examine how memorials reveal the ways communities on the Sanriku coast interact with the region's seismic hazards. The inhuman nature of geological timescales and the irregular intervals of earthquake events has often led to "diminishing attention" to the seismic hazards of archipelago.[25] For example the Rokkō-Awaji Fault zone, which ruptured in 1995 and trigged the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake that struck Kobe and the surrounding area has an estimated recurrence interval of 900-2,800 years along one section of the fault and 1,800-2,500 years for another.[26] On the human scale a recurrence interval that, even estimated with relative accuracy, has a variability of 1,900, or even 700 years stretches the ability for us to imagine, much less grapple with what that might mean for our lifetime.

Earthquakes on the Sanriku Coast are more frequent, so the recurrence interval for seismic events in Tōhoku are, perhaps, easier to understand at the human scale. Gregory Smits lists six "major earthquake-tsunami combinations" that have occurred on the Sanriku coast in the last 400 years in 1611, 1793, 1856, 1896, 1933, and 2011. Missing from this list are events like

[23] Payton, 71-73
[24] Payton, 72.
[25] Smits, *When the Earth Roars*, 4.
[26] Smits, *When the Earth Roars*, 4

the 1960 Chile Tsunami, which affected the Sanriku area and claimed 142 lives, but originated with an earthquake event across the Pacific Ocean off the coast of South America. It is easy to see from the list of dates that the reoccurrence interval for many of these events fell within the timescale of a human life.[27] Even then the same immediate and pressing concerns of everyday life and chronic problems on the Sanriku Coast in the 20th and 21st century that would lead to the repurposing and eventual abandonment of the Tsunami Memorial Halls, also contribute to residents of the coast exacerbating their own vulnerabilities to these seemingly erratic events.

Referencing this dynamic, an interlocutor of mine who I met in Tōhoku said that even when people who live and work on the Tōhoku coast suffer an earthquake or a tsunami they cannot bring themselves to "hate the ocean." For the communities and individuals that rely on the ocean off the Sanriku coast for their livelihood, the work is tough and the threat of death on the water itself is frightening. However, perhaps because of the difficulty of the work, my interlocutor said that for those rough individuals that can weather life on the water are able to derive great happiness from their jobs. Despite the hardship, the rewarding nature of the work allows them to love and even forge friendship with the ocean.[28] Combined with the fulfilment of economic needs, this fondness for hazard-prone life and work on the Sanriku Coast, leads many to focus on the human-scale and stay in areas at high risk of destruction by seismic events operating at hard-to-grasp deep timescales.

Memorials are often employed because they are thought of as being able to transcend the timescale of a human life and communicate important messages to future generations. Indeed, this perception of memorial is why (not without critique) monumental architecture has been

[27] Smits, *When the Earth Roars*, 4
[28] Yamaki Hirobumi, Director of the Sendai Memo-kan, in conversation with the author, Sendai, Miyagi Prefecture, Japan, March 5, 2019.

proposed as one way to signal the dangers of nuclear waste, that will remain hazardous far beyond human timescales, to possible future civilizations.[29] Seismic hazards do not present the same sustained risk to humans as transuranic waste. However, as illustrated by the recurrence intervals above, to function as effective disaster preparedness and mitigation, post-disaster memorials in Japan must persist over similarly mind-bending geologic timescales.

Is the memorial form up to the task? Despite being built as recognizable and permanent markers of the past, memorials and monuments often fade into the background of public life. As Robert Musil pointed out "what strikes one most about monuments is that one does not notice them. There is nothing in the world so invisible as a monument."[30] For Musil the more permanent and durable the memorial the less effective it will be because "everything permanent loses its ability to impress."[31] This contradictory quality of memorials proved to be too much to overcome for the 1933 Showa-Sanriku Tsunami Memorial Halls. Eventually their meaning as post-disaster memorials would become so unnoticeable that they would cease to function as commemorative as well as disaster mitigation spaces.

To critique the conception of memorials as "eternal" markers, and to provide structure to the middle temporality that the Tsunami Memorial Halls occupy, I employ the idea of memorial life cycles. In doing so, I take inspiration from Sébastian Penmellen Boret and Akihiro

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[29] For a look at and critique of the proposed monuments to signal the dangers of the deep geologic storage for transuranic waste at New Mexico Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) see Julia Bryn Wilson's "Building a Marker of Nuclear Warning" pg 183-204 in Robert S. Nelson and Margaret Olin eds., *Monuments and Memory, Made and Unmade* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003).

[30] Musil calls this "most important" quality of monuments "contradictory.," Musil writes about commemorative plaques specifically, but also "larger than life statues." He notes there are exceptions to this, but that we shouldn't be fooled by it. "Such energetic monuments do exist, and there are also those which are the expression of a living though and living feeling, but the profession of most monuments is to call forth a remembrance, or rivet the attention and give the feelings a pious direction, because one assumes they somehow need it and in this their major profession, monuments always fail." "Monuments" in Robert Musil, Burton Pike tr., *Selected Writings*. New York: Continuum, 1986), 320-323.

[31] Musil, 320-323.

Shibayama who examine post-3.11 monuments and their utility as methods of "soft" disaster risk reduction.[32] Boret and Shibayama use the framing of the memorial life cycle to point out that memorials are "not eternal and their life cycle depends on a society's ability to integrate them in their long-term experience of disaster."[33] In order to understand how to build durable and sustainable memorials that would play a role in disaster risk reduction Boret and Shibayama call for more studies of memorial life cycles.[34] This study hopes to answer that call by laying out the conception and creation, lives and second lives, as well as deaths and (possible) reincarnations of the Tsunami Memorial Halls.

I illustrate the need for deep time reckoning in post-disaster memorial design by examining the life cycles of the 1933 Showa-Sanriku Tsunami Memorial Halls and putting them into conversation with the planetary timescales of seismic forces on the Sanriku coast. Vincent Ialenti coined the term "deep time reckoning" in response the crisis of ecological collapse in the Anthropocene and the related crises he labels as the "deflation of expertise," which describes the drowning out of experts in favor of more kneejerk reactionary voices.[35] Ialenti argues, much like Chakrabarty, that the Anthropocene and the threat of Climate Change requires us to cultivate a new type of long-term thinking that will help us grapple with the timescales inherent in the climate crisis.[36] As I have shown above, deep time reckoning and the problems created by the mismatch between human and planetary scales is also of grave concern for those who study seismic events. The surprisingly short life cycles of the 1933 Showa-Sanriku Tsunami Memorial

[32] This contrasts with disaster risk reduction enabled by the "hard sciences" in infrastructure and technology. Boret and Shibayama "The roles of monuments for the dead during the aftermath of the Great East Japan Earthquake" *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction* (2017), 1.
[33] Boret and Shibayama, 8.
[34] Boret and Shibayama, 8.
[35] Vincent Ialenti *Deep Time Reckoning: How Future Thinking Can Help Earth Now* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2020), xiii.
[36] Ialenti, xiii-xiv.

Halls and the circumstances that led to their demise show that post-disaster memorials in Japan and elsewhere need to be informed by deep time reckoning. To ignore seismic and ecological problems of scale is to continue to create post-disaster memorials vulnerable to decay and ineffective as tools of soft disaster risk reduction.

Conception and Creation

"Now look, next to Nagashioya's fire alarm
There is a stone with 'If there is an earthquake be prepared for a tsunami,'
written on it, right?
In Aikawa and here in Tsukihama too
Tsunami Memorial Halls were built
That is why I was created"[37]

On March 3rd, 1933, at 2:31 am JST an 8.4 magnitude earthquake occurred off the Sanriku coast in the northeastern region of Japan's main island of Honshu. This disaster event would later be named the Shōwa Sanriku earthquake. The initial quake itself was severe, shaking residents of the Sanriku coast awake. The timing of the earthquake which shook people awake likely saved some of them from the subsequent tsunami waves, which reportedly reached a height of 28.7 meters in Ryōri (present-day Ōfunato). There is evidence that the experience of the Meiji-Sanriku Earthquake and Tsunami of 1896 that occurred almost 40 years earlier and the memory of its consequences may have led to fewer deaths and more awareness of a possible tsunami following the earthquake.[38] The quake and subsequent waves and fires caused a great deal of material destruction destroying over 6,000 homes. The human toll of the disaster was also

[37] Matsuura, 87-88.
[38] Smits, *Seismic Japan*, 9.

catastrophic; over 3,000 people lost their lives, and more than 1,000 were injured. In the wake of the destruction many also had to brave the cold without food or shelter.[39]

This acute disaster struck a rural Tōhoku that was already snarled in the slow disaster of economic hardship. Both rice and silk that provided many rural households with income experienced prices that had been driven down by an international surplus of agricultural goods in the 1920s. Rural farming communities were essentially in "a continuous recession from 1925 onward," which was exacerbated by the shocks of the Great Kantō Earthquake in 1923, the banking crisis in 1927, and the Great Depression in 1929.[40] Farming households in Japan saw their income drop by half between 1929 and 1931. Tōhoku, which was heavily reliant on rice monoculture farming suffered both economically and agriculturally. Even good farming years could lead to "bumper crop famines," like in 1930 when prices of rice fell precipitously, and farmers struggled to cover the cost of production. Although 1933 was a good harvest year, the Showa-Sanriku Earthquake and Tsunami was preceded by a famine in 1931 and followed by a famine in 1934 that saw a *yamase* (a cold wet northeaster) in the early summer and then Typhoon Muroto in September.[41] Disaster, both fast and slow, acute and chronic, seemed to define life in the rural areas of Tōhoku in the early 20th century. These many overlapping calamites defined the image of Tōhoku in the Japanese media, especially for those on the outside looking in from places like Tokyo, as a backward and impoverished place.[42]

It was in this context that the Miyagi Prefectural authorities devised the Tsunami Memorial Halls as part of the reconstruction efforts following 1933. The halls can be seen as a response to both the acute and chronic disasters of the rural Tōhoku coast. The vision for the

[39] Smits, *Seismic Japan*, 9, 19.
[40] Hopson, 83.
[41] Hopson, 83-84.
[42] Hopson, 85.

Tsunami Memorial Halls is recorded in the *Miyagi-ken Shōwa Shinshō-shi* or the *Record of the Showa Earthquake and Tsunami in Miyagi Prefecture*, a multivolume official history of the 1933 disaster and the prefecture's response.[43] Volume Four deals with "Restoration and Reconstruction," and in Chapter Five on Activities to Promote the Spirit, the purpose, guidelines, and rules and regulations for the Tsunami Memorial Halls are laid out in a section entitled "Reconstruction Memorial Halls." [44] The statement of purpose for these memorial halls recognized the regular nature of tsunami events on the Sanriku coast. The introductory paragraph reads "Since the coastal region is an area that has the bitter experience of being regularly plagued by earthquakes and tsunami disasters, this disaster is an opportunity to set up reconstruction memorial halls in each hamlet (*buraku*)."[45] The idea was to address what was seen as an issue that had a long history on the coast and would likely need to be mitigated/managed in the event of future tsunami waves.

As we saw with the design and construction of the Great Kantō Earthquake Memorial Hall, post-disaster memorial sites in Japan were opportunity for the dual performance of solemn remembrance and display of new modes of disaster preparedness and mitigation. Post-disaster memorials were metonymic for the wider governmental and societal efforts to remember, but also progress to a safer and more modern future. We see a similar impulse, albeit in a less grandiose way, in the vision for the Tsunami Memorial Halls. From the beginning the twin concerns of remembrance and mitigation/preparedness were inscribed in the purpose of the halls. The *Record* reads that although the memorial halls will "eternally memorialize the disaster" the "main objective (*ganmoku*)" of these sites was "future disaster prevention and evacuation."[46]

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[43] Miyagi-ken, *Miyagi-ken Shōwa Shinshō-shi* (Miyagi-ken: Miyagi-ken insatsu-sho, 1935).
[44] Miyagi-ken, *Miyagi-ken Shōwa Shinshō-shi*, 511.
[45] Miyagi-ken, *Miyagi-ken Shōwa Shinshō-shi*, 511.
[46] Miyagi-ken, *Miyagi-ken Shōwa Shinshō-shi*, 511.

Key to this vision of preparedness, prevention, and mitigation was education. The text continued "In addition, [these halls] will promote the acquisition of knowledge related to this type of natural disaster."[47] The guidelines state that "during the time of a disaster like an earthquake or tsunami [the hall] should serve as an evacuation site for the hamlet residents." With this use in mind the guidelines also stipulate those locations deemed safe from future earthquake and tsunami events should be chosen as building sites for the memorial halls.[48] This function is reiterated in the Memorial Hall Rules and Regulations, as part of Article 1 "in the event of a disaster emergency the memorial hall will serve as an evacuation site."[49]

These memorial halls, however, were envisioned not just as spaces related to the earthquake and tsunami disaster, but also as multipurposed community spaces meant to address the chronic impoverishment of these rural communities. Describing the vision of how the halls would function beyond the memorial and disaster preparedness roles, the *Record* says, "moreover, it is desired that [the halls] will serve as all-purpose public meeting spaces for resident assemblies, informal discussion, and ceremonial occasions."[50] Although the halls were to be "centered around a sanctuary (*shinden*)" the prefecture also stated that the halls should include a reading room and kitchen, in addition to a general meeting room. [51]

Since earthquakes and tsunami, while occurring at regular intervals at geological times, were relatively rare events at the scale of the human life span, the guidelines also stipulate how the halls should be used in "normal times" (*jōji*). This is also included in the Rules and Regulations as part of Article 1, which states "in normal times, building on the foundation of the

[47] Miyagi-ken, *Miyagi-ken Shōwa Shinshō-shi*, 511
[48] Miyagi-ken, *Miyagi-ken Shōwa Shinshō-shi*, 511
[49] Miyagi-ken, *Miyagi-ken Shōwa Shinshō-shi*, 10.
[50] Miyagi-ken, *Miyagi-ken Shōwa Shinshō-shi*, 511
[51] Miyagi-ken, *Miyagi-ken Shōwa Shinshō-shi*, 511

cooperative spirit, it will be used to work towards improving circumstances, advancing the livelihood of local residents, and establishing good neighborly relations."[52] In making this distinction between the emergency and the everyday Miyagi Prefectural official reified what geographer Kenneth Hewitt describes as "the dominate modern view of calamities treats everyday life and disaster as opposites."[53] This dominant view sees the human-nature relationship as shifting between two modes "one normal, secure, productive and the other abnormal, insecure, and the occasion of losses."[54]

The guidelines, likewise, read that the halls will also "be used for communal work and social welfare (settlement) and aid work."[55] The guidelines provided a substantial list of what falls under the categories of communal work and social welfare. Listed as communal work was work involving things like shaving dried fish, salting fish, dried fish production, tackle and net repair, straw construction materials, bamboo ware, and house woodworking/carpentry.[56] The activities considered social welfare that the halls were to be used for are listed as childcare, classes, lectures, libraries, vocational training/professional training, night school, mothers' club, kids' club, picture shows, personal consultations, as well as various other gatherings.[57]

These guidelines for the tsunami memorial halls laid out by the Miyagi Prefectural Government lead to a seemingly illogical question, when is a memorial not a memorial? Although these buildings were described as "Reconstruction Memorial Halls" (*Fukkō kinenkan*) in *Miyagi-ken Shōwa Shinshō-shi* and would later be realized as "Tsunami Memorial Halls" (*Kaishō kinenkan* or *Shinshō kinenkan*), there is a compelling argument to be made that they

[52] Miyagi-ken, *Miyagi-ken Shōwa Shinshō-shi*, 16.
[53] Dyl, 7. Kenneth Hewitt "The Idea of Calamity in a Technocratic Age," pg 3-32, in Kenneth Hewitt, ed. *Interpretations of Calamity from the Viewpoint of Human Ecology* (New York: Routledge, 1983).
[54] Dyl, 7.
[55] Miyagi-ken, *Miyagi-ken Shōwa Shinshō-shi*, 10-11.
[56] Miyagi-ken, *Miyagi-ken Shōwa Shinshō-shi*, 10-11.
[57] Miyagi-ken, *Miyagi-ken Shōwa Shinshō-shi*, 10-11.

were memorials in name only. Instead, the Memorial Halls were an example of local officials taking advantage of the disaster as an opportunity and using donated post-disaster relief funds as resources to realize their pre-existing policy goals. This is Tadokoro Yuji's view, who writes "for all practical purposes, these tsunami memorial halls served as municipal social settlement facilities…most of the halls had educational and nursery functions, and staff were assigned to the halls."[58] For Tadokoro, the government officials of Miyagi Prefecture were being savvy recipients of post-disaster goodwill and relief. By affixing the name "memorial hall" to these buildings, donations leftover after the immediate material needs of disaster survivors were met, and which were earmarked for disaster commemoration and prevention, became funding for furthering the prefectures institutional policy goals.[59]

In this interpretation, the government officials of Miyagi Prefecture are part of a long and continuing lineage of disaster opportunists. They did not let a good crisis go to waste. This revelation should not be surprising. As we saw in Chapter 2, the 1923 Great Kantō Earthquake was an event that Japanese political and social elites seized as an opportunity to remake the physical infrastructure and moral fabric of the imperial capital. I argued that the effort to memorialize The Great Kantō Earthquake was envisioned by designers to announce Imperial Japan's greatness on the world stage through the language of international trends in architecture and the site would enable an emotional forgetting of the disaster event itself.[60] That vision fit with the larger currents in cultural politics of interwar Imperial Japan.

Similarly, the Tsunami Memorial Halls of Miyagi Prefecture's Sanriku Coast represent an expression of larger international and local trends. The first Settlement House, Toynbee Hall

[58] Tadokoro, 50.
[59] Tadokoro, 52-53.
[60] See Chapter 1 of this dissertation.

was established in London in 1884, almost 50 years before the villages of the Sanriku Coast were struck by the Showa-Sanriku disaster.[61] While the first settlement houses had their roots geographically in the Transatlantic world and ideologically in the parallel Christian and secular concerns about social problems brought about by industrialization, the model of settlement homes as social welfare differed according to and even within national contexts.[62] While Japan's as well as East Asia's place in the transnational history of the settlement movement are undertreated and undertheorized, it's no surprise that bureaucrats in the highly reformist and technocratic culture of 1930's Japan, would latch onto settlement houses as an international social technology.[63] Like in Chapter 1, we once again see that practitioners of Japanese disaster memorialization, in this case prefectural bureaucrats in the northeastern region of the country, utilized ideas and forms in global circulation in their conception of effective disaster memorials.

In Japan, both the Great Kantō Earthquake Memorial Hall and the Showa-Sanriku Tsunami Memorial Halls were also part of a larger trend of post-disaster memorialization during the interwar years. This trend saw the construction of memorial halls (*kinenkan*) after other major disaster events like the 1927 Northern Tangō Earthquake and the 1934 Muroto Typhoon which both struck the Kyoto area.[64] The Tsunami Memorial Halls' combination of commemoration and settlement work was not even unique. Following the Muroto Typhoon the city of Kyoto used a portion of post-disaster donations to build six Typhoon Memorial Settlement Houses (*Fūgai kinen rinpō-kan*). These memorial settlement houses would serve rural

[61] John Gal, Stefan Köngeter, and Sarah Vicary, *The Settlement House Movement Revisited: A Transnational History,* (Bristol: Bristol University Press, 2021), 1.
[62] Gal, Köngeter, and Vicary, 15-24.
[63] East Asia is conspicuously absent in the transnational history told by Gal, Köngeter, Vicary and others in *The Settlement House Movement Revisited: A Transnational History*, which focuses mainly on the transatlantic connections of the movement, as well as briefly treating the Middle East as well. For information on the technocratic impulses of Japan's bureaucrats in the 1930s, see: Janis Mimura, *Planning for Empire: Reform Bureaucrats and the Japanese Wartime State* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011).
[64] Tadokoro, 52.

farming communities where social service facilities had not previously existed, but where there need for services like daycare facilities during the busy farming season had been keenly felt by farming families.[65]

There is evidence that the Tsunami Memorial Halls for all intents and purposes, were conceived of as de-facto settlement houses by Miyagi Prefectural officials. In the first article of the "Rules and Regulations for Memorial Hall Operations," which listed the "Facility Services," of the thirteen categories, only two dealt directly with the Memorial Halls' commemorative functions. Category One stipulated that the halls should be used for "commemoration and related activities during the anniversary month of the earthquake and tsunami."[66] Likewise, Category Two stipulated that the halls should allow for "activities related to the exhibition of earthquake and tsunami mementos and similar relevant objects."[67] In these two operational categories we can see that the Tsunami Memorial Halls, in their commemorative functions, would mirror the format of The Great Kantō Earthquake Memorial Hall (and eventually the related Reconstruction Memorial Hall) in Tokyo. The Halls would be, in part, memorial museums, a place for both memorial services as well as the museum-like display of mementos and objects related to the disaster.

These two categories are greatly outnumbered however by the other eleven categories that would occupy the bulk of the Memorial Halls' services during "normal times." These services encompass a wide range of activities including lectures, a newspaper and picture book reading room, musical and theatrical performance facilities, club activities, public pawnshops, youth education programming, medical and legal consultation spaces, nursery/daycare services,

[65] Tadokoro, 52.
[66] Miyagi-ken, *Miyagi-ken Shōwa Shinshō-shi*, 16-22
[67] Miyagi-ken, *Miyagi-ken Shōwa Shinshō-shi*, 16-22

and even public bathhouses and barber shops.[68] Following the list of standard operations is a clause that reads "when the director (*kanchō*) deems appropriate, as required, activities outside of those listed above can be undertaken," opening the door for even more varied uses based on the needs of local communities.[69]

As social settlement houses, the Tsunami Memorial Halls were a piece of larger efforts by government officials and urban planners to move the fishing villages of the Sanriku coast to higher ground to mitigate the material damage and human loss from future tsunami events. Within these efforts urban planners incorporated spaces where residents could gather and fraternize as a community.[70] It is obvious that with their comprehensive list of possible functions, Tsunami Memorial Halls were meant to serve as one such type of central gathering place for these rural villages.

So, were these memorials in name only? I see this, ultimately, as a question with a false premise. The premise underlying that question assumes that the boundaries of the memorial form, and, perhaps, a hierarchy that places certain types of memorialization (say monuments) above others (like memorial roadways or bridges). Instead of rejecting the Tsunami Memorial Halls out of hand as existing outside the acceptable boundaries of "memorial" or as a lesser form of memorialization, there were specific conditions that allowed post-disaster commemoration and social settlement work to become so tightly intertwined in 1930s Japan. The Tsunami Memorial Halls' conception as memorial settlement houses provides us with a compelling case study in how commemorative and public history spaces can be associated at different times and in different places with other types of social institutions and services. In short, if pressed as to

[68] Miyagi-ken, *Miyagi-ken Shōwa Shinshō-shi*, 16-22
[69] Miyagi-ken, *Miyagi-ken Shōwa Shinshō-shi*, 16-22.
[70] Tadokoro, 53.

whether we can analyze the Tsunami Memorial Halls as post-disaster memorials, I believe we can answer with a definitive "yes, and…" in response.

To answer otherwise would discount the effect that even ceremonially naming buildings and other forms of infrastructure "memorials" could have individuals that interact with these multivalent structures. Dismissing these more tenuous examples of memorialization we overlook how commemoration permeates everyday life, linking to issues of resource allocation and more mundane forms of power. What was the effect on someone, for example, of going to see a picture show at the local Tsunami Memorial Hall? Would the name be ignored, experienced as mere background like the monuments described by Musil to the main (more entertaining) event? Or would the name spark recognition and recollection of the disaster event that had occurred, leading even to the slightest reflection on the past tragedy and perhaps future threat of seismic hazards? This reflection might even be more likely if the space was also used for annual commemorative events like those outlined in the "Rules and Regulations for Memorial Hall Operations," explored above. Experiences were likely varied, differing from individual to individual, and probably interacted with individuals' relationship with the disaster event and those lives lost to it.

The establishment of the 33 Tsunami Memorial Halls throughout the 1930s in coastal Miyagi and their relatively quick repurposing in post-war Tōhoku illustrates, however, that these buildings did not retain their memorial functions for long. This reinforces the argument that in the tension between the emergencies that periodically emerge from the planetary timescales of geology and the everyday needs that so often occupy our human scale attention spans, the everyday eventually won out. This tension, present from the very conception of the Tsunami Memorial Halls and their role providing basic social services, would lead to the steady erosion of

the halls memorial and even disaster mitigating functions. The Tsunami Memorial Halls offer a rich case study in why some post-disaster memorials are not long-lived or resilient and provide important lessons for those seeking to memorialize disaster in our present.

Lives and Second Lives

"Normally I'd be used
as an entertainment hall or gathering space, but
As the war got worse
In times when food got scarce
Wasn't it that I also became a workshop,
Where kudzu root was made into flour?

Then the war ended
And at that time there was no high school in this area
So, because of the strong desire of the local people
Who wanted a place to learn while they worked
I began to be used as the schoolhouse for the Jūsanhama Branch School
In May of the 26th year of Showa (1951)"[71]

The initial response to the prefectures plans was underwhelming. As the first-year anniversary of the tsunami approached only a couple villages had submitted plans for their local memorial halls. For instance, *Kahoku Shinpō* reported in late November of 1933 that Ōgatsu-hama had decided to include a Tsunami Memorial Hall as part of their rebuilding efforts.[72] The paper also reported in early December 1933 that Onagawa hoped to complete their Tsunami Memorial Hall by the spring of 1934.[73] Both articles emphasized the social welfare component of the memorial halls, writing that these localities planned to use them as educational and community facilities.[74] Beyond these two articles, however, no other hamlets in Miyagi

[71] Matsuura, 87-88.
[72] "Ōgatsu-hama no fukkyū, kaishō-kinenkan mo kensetsu," *Kahoku Shinpō* November 24, 1933, Morning Edition.
[73] "Onagawa-chō no kaishō-kinenkan myōshun ni-gatsu made ni kansei," *Kahoku Shinpō* December 15, 1933, Morning Edition.
[74] "Ōgatsu-hama no fukkyū, kaishō-kinenkan mo kensetsu," *Kahoku Shinpō* November 24, 1933, Morning Edition, "Onagawa-chō no kaishō-kinenkan myōshun ni-gatsu made ni kansei," *Kahoku Shinpō* December 15, 1933, Morning Edition.

Prefecture were reported by the paper as having submitted plans to build local memorial halls in 1933.

Prefectural officials were understanding of the delay, which they considered "natural" given the necessity of other reconstruction efforts like those to rebuild housing and resume commercial activities. To help along the process of memorial hall planning and construction, the prefecture offered up a template of 4 possible memorial hall designs that would measure approximately 330 square meters, 265 square meters, 215 square meters, and 165 square meters respectively, and cost between 4,000 and 2,000 yen to construct. The prefecture also suggested 32 locations up and down the coast as potential locations for the halls. To promote these plans the prefecture also held "Earthquake-Tsunami Reconstruction Meetings" in hamlets, and even occasionally sent prefectural officials to mediate between stakeholders.

These efforts were a success. Villages and hamlets that were suggested as locations for the halls began to submit their plans for their own memorial halls. The village of Ōtani, for example, is reported to have submitted their plans to build a tsunami memorial hall next to the local school grounds in early February of 1934.[75] By the summer of 1934 all the hamlets had submitted their plans.[76]

However, just because all the plans were submitted, did not mean that everything had gone completely smoothly. The tensions inherent in constructing buildings that were meant to serves as memorials to disaster victims, social settlement houses, public meeting halls, as well as evacuation sites for future tsunami made themselves clear early in the planning process. An article that ran on January 21, 1934, in the morning edition of the regional newspaper *Kahoku*

[75] "Ōtani Shinshō-kinennkan iyo iyo kenchiku, shōgakkō-rinchi ni shikichi kettei su," *Kahoku Shinpō* February 5, 1933, Morning Edition.
[76] Tadokoro, 56.

Shinpō, illustrates how these tensions were being negotiated at the local level. Entitled "In Response the Plan to Establish Ōhara Village Earthquake-Tsunami Memorial Halls Residents of Kozumi Hamlet Protest Village Council's Decision," the article details how the various functions of the Tsunami Memorial Halls at times led to contention between local governments and residents.

According to the article, the objections of residents of Kozumi Hamlet were sparked by the decision of the Ōhara village council about where exactly the village's Memorial Halls would be located. The Ōhara village council, in defiance of the suggestions made by Miyagi Prefecture to build the memorial halls in the remote hamlets of Tanigawa, Samenoura, and Kozumihama, decided instead that their preference was to construct the halls in Ōhara-hama. Ōhara-hama was the central area of the village that already contained the village office and "suffered absolutely no damage" from the 1933 tsunami.[77] This decision spurred the immediate objection of Kozumi Hamlet residents. The residents of Kozumi sent a petition to the relevant prefectural authorities arguing that the "the disregard for the prefectures plan is evident, because [the prefectural plan states] that to commemorate the earthquake and tsunami disaster [the memorial halls] should be built in areas severely affected by the disaster. So, the construction plan decided on by village council should be totally rejected."[78] For the residents of Kozumi the plans put forth by the village council went completely against the guidelines set forth by the prefecture's general plan for the memorial halls.

In a short bit of editorializing at the end of the article, the author muses that the Kozumi petition would put the prefectural authorities in a difficult position. They noted that, prefectural

[77] "Ōhara-mura shinsai-kinenkan setsuritsu no shūshi ni kaesu, son-kai no ketsugi ni Kozumi burakumin sawagu," *Kahoku Shinpō* January 21, 1934, Morning Edition.
[78] "Ōhara-mura shinsai-kinenkan setsuritsu no shūshi ni kaesu, son-kai no ketsugi ni Kozumi burakumin sawagu," *Kahoku Shinpō* January 21, 1934, Morning Edition.

officials were likely "indignant" with the petition because "on top of the fact that they had suggested [the original] construction locations, it would be hard to tacitly approve of construction in areas that had no relation to the disaster whatsoever."[79] The author concluded that because of the bind it placed upon the prefectural officials, it was perhaps likely that the village council's decision would be retracted and that it was an issue that warranted further attention.

It is worth delving into the possible motivations for both the Ōhara village council's decision and the Kozumi Residents' petition. While it is unclear what their actual motivations are, based on what we know about the Tsunami Memorial Halls and the multifaceted vision for how they would function in these communities, we can make some educated and illuminating assumptions. Read generously, the decision by the Ōhara village council showed that they took the tsunami memorial halls function as disaster evacuation sites seriously. By choosing a central location in the village that had not been affected by the disaster it is possible that they were attempting to follow the prefecture's instructions that the tsunami memorial halls should be built in locations that would be safe during future earthquake and tsunami events. By designating hard-hit areas within the village as ideal locations for the halls, the prefecture was perhaps sending conflicting signals to village leadership. However, it is also possible to read the Ōhara village council as also engaging in disaster opportunism. In this interpretation, the memorial hall's primary function as social settlement houses and communal welfare facilities would have been clear to the council. Instead of letting this infrastructure be built in the remote reaches of the village, the council attempted to funnel this community support to more central locations that would perhaps benefit more village residents, even if it hindered accessibility for those in more isolated locales.

[79] "Ōhara-mura shinsai-kinenkan setsuritsu no shūshi ni kaesu, son-kai no ketsugi ni Kozumi burakumin sawagu," *Kahoku Shinpō*. January 21, 1934, Morning Edition.

The Kozumi residents' petition generates similarly generous and critical potential readings. It could be that by emphasizing the memorial aspect of the halls and the prefecture's recognition of the village as an area hard struck by the earthquake and tsunami, these Kozumi residents were expressing in the petition their desire to have a space to commemorate the disaster and its victims in their hamlet. In this scenario, the petition would reflect the cultural importance of memorial space to these communities following the disaster. Alternatively, it is possible that the residents of Kozumi also recognized that the Tsunami Memorial Halls would be a significant infrastructure and social welfare investment, which they were highly motivated to see built close to home. If this were the case, their petition reads as a savvy political move to undercut the council's bid to move the Tsunami Memorial Hall to a more central location and instead maintain Kozumi as a direct beneficiary of the prefectural reconstruction program.[80] In this scenario the residents of Kozumi are deftly mobilizing the prefecture's branding of these facilities as "Memorial Halls" to argue that their hard struck hamlet is the rightful construction location. By pointing out that the village council also put forth their own plan in defiance of the prefecture's suggestions, the Kozumi residents were also exhibiting great political tact. If the prefectural officials ignored the petition, it would appear that they allowed the insubordination of the inferior Ōhara village council.

Unfortunately, these motivations are lost to history. However, the case of the Ohara council decision and the Kozumi resident's petition does illustrate that the various functions of the Tsunami Memorial Halls, as laid out in Miyagi Prefecture's guidelines, were not perfectly aligned and, at times, even contradictory. If they were meant as *memorial* halls, then hard hit areas made the most sense as construction sites, even if by their very nature as severe disaster

[80] It would also be in line with Hopson's observation that lower status farmers fed up with the poor conditions in rural areas during the early 1900s became increasingly vocal and political active during the era. Hopson, 82.

zones meant that they were less than ideal locations for future evacuation sites. If they were meant more as *public* halls and the memorial moniker was just branding that allowed a longstanding prefectural policy goal to be wrapped into disaster relief efforts, then it would be logical to assume that the suggested locations were merely suggestions, and the facilities could be built in locations that would accommodate more village residents. Put simply what makes an effective location for a post-disaster memorial or evacuation site or settlement is not always the same. The multitude of functions laid out by the prefecture for the tsunami memorial halls provided the latitude for both Ohara village and Kozumi hamlet to make competing claims for where a memorial hall should have been located.

Even though the author of the *Kahoku Shinpō* article said that the issue of the petition warranted further attention, I was unable to find any subsequent articles on the Ōhara village council's decision or the Kozumi residents' complaint. The tsunami memorial halls that were eventually built in Ōhara Village do, perhaps, hint that the *Kahoku Shinpō* reporter was accurate in his assumption that prefectural officials were indignant at the petition. According to records, four Tsunami Memorial Halls were built in Ōhara village later that year in October 1934. While Tanigawa Tsunami Memorial Hall and Samenoura Tsunami Memorial Hall are listed among the Ōhara Halls, Kozumi hamlet is conspicuously absent. Instead Kyubun (Ōhara) Tsunami Memorial Hall and Kobuchi Tsunami Memorial Hall, which were both located more centrally by Ōhara-hama (reportedly the preferred location of the Ōhara village council) are listed instead.[81]

It is possible that the residents of Kozumi rubbed the village council and prefectural officials the wrong way, and their petition either elicited indignation, or indifference. However, Shirabata Katsumi's painstaking research on the Showa-Sanriku Memorial Halls may also offer

[81] Tadokoro, 55.

at least partial vindication for the Ōhara village council. Shirabata shows that of the Ōhara village halls, the locations of the Tanigawa, Samenoura, and Kobuchi Memorial Halls would all later be inundated by the 3.11 tsunami. The location of the Kyubun (Ōhara) Tsunami Memorial Hall, which would have been the hall closest to the village center, would have also been the only Ōhara village memorial hall outside the inundation zone of the 3.11 tsunami.[82]

The community plans for these memorial halls submitted to the prefecture were made into reality over the course of a five-year period following the disaster event. The first halls were established just a year after the tsunami in March of 1934 in various hamlets of the village of Karakuwa, located between the Karakuwa and Hirota Capes in present-day Kesennuma.[83] The *Kahoku Shinpō* sporadically reported on the construction of the memorial halls throughout the region. It ran a short notice on the ridgepole raising ceremony (*jōtō-shiki*) for the Ōtani Tsunami Memorial Hall on September 22, 1934, and two articles on the ridgepole raising ceremony and construction of the Onagawa Tsunami Memorial Hall in late March and April of 1935.[84]

Fourteen memorial halls in total were built in that first year following the disaster between the months of March and October, making 1934 for the productive year for the construction of the memorial halls. Seven were then built in 1935 and, after a hiatus in 1936, nine in 1937, followed by one last hall in 1938. The construction dates for the Washinokami Tsunami Memorial Hall in present day Onagawa and the Kobuchi Tsunami Memorial Hall in present day Ishinomaki are unclear, but it is safe to assume that they were also built in the 5-year window after the tsunami.

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[82] Shirabata, 100-103.
[83] Five halls in total were built in Karakuwa, the highest concentration of tsunami memorial halls in one village area. Tadokoro, 54-55.
[84] See: *Kahoku Shinpō* September 22, 1934, Morning Edition, *Kahoku Shinpō* April 20, 1935, Morning Edition, and *Kahoku Shinpō* April 23, 1935, Morning Edition.

These halls were either one or two stories tall and were made of wood or wood and slate. Despite the four uniform sizes suggested by the prefecture the actual halls were built in various sizes that measured between 400 square meters at the largest and 105 square meters at the smallest. They were each at least staffed by a hall director. Some like the Suginoshita Tsunami Memorial Hall, (one of the largest memorial halls in terms of building and lot size) had larger staffs. Suginoshita's staff included two clerks and three home-call nurses in addition to a director.[85] The Minato Tsunami Memorial Hall in the village of Utatsu had the largest staff, numbered at nine, including a director, clerk, and seven assistants.[86]

Another piece of evidence that attests to the role the memorial halls played as social settlement facilities is their architectural layout. Of the 33 tsunami memorial halls that were eventually built, only seven of the memorial halls had specially designated "memorial rooms," (*kinenshitsu*). [87] These "memorial rooms" perhaps were supposed to serve as the "sanctuaries" mentioned in the mission statement for the memorial halls set forth earlier by the prefecture. That they were only built in a minority of the memorial halls is telling of the focus of the tsunami memorial halls as community facilities.

Indeed, Matsuura's poem suggests that, just as intended by the Miyagi prefectural authorities, the halls were places for entertainment and social gatherings. A notice in *Kahoku Shinpō* published on February 15, 1935, seems to confirm this. The short notice advertises the meeting of the Ōtani Industrial Organization (*Ōtani-mura Sangyō soshiki*) to be held starting 10 am on February 23rd at the Ōtani Tsunami Memorial Hall. It goes on that after the general meeting of the organization convenes that a lecture and picture show will follow.[88] In line with

[85] "Hōmon-fu," translated as "lady on-call" is the term used. Tadokoro, 54.
[86] Tadokoro, 54.
[87] Tadokoro, 54-55.
[88] *Kahoku Shinpō* February 15, 1935, Morning Edition.

the prefectural authorities' vision, the halls became spaces regularly used by these coastal communities for organizational meetings, social events, entertainment, and other public gatherings that filled the local social calendar.

Also indicated by the stanza of Matsuura's poem is that the halls served as an important resource during periods when the regions chronic poverty was exacerbated. The line referencing the grinding of kudzu root into flour during the war "when food got scarce," reveals that the realities of wartime life on the Sanriku coast. These realities led the halls being used in ways that leaned heavily on their social welfare functions and perhaps deemphasized their commemorative meanings. The context of hardship on the Tōhoku coast that shaped the use of the Tsunami Memorial Halls during the interwar and wartime years did not end with the war. Life in Tōhoku continued to be difficult, especially when compared with urban centers. In this context, the Tsunami Memorial Halls were valuable to these rural areas not as memorials but as facilities that could be converted to service more immediate community needs. The process of repurposing the memorial halls began even before the end of the war in a couple cases, like the Machi Tsunami Memorial Hall in Shizugawa and Natari Tsunami Memorial Hall (both in present day Minamisanriku) which were both converted to schools by 1943.[89]

Repurposing was in full swing after the end of the war, with the period between 1947 and 1951 being especially busy. It is possible that the end of the war functioned as a marker for these communities that separated the time before and after. As (in part) monuments to the past in this new era, perhaps the moniker of Tsunami Memorial Hall felt particularly out of place. Instead of focusing on the past and potentially distant future of tsunami disaster, it likely made sense to formalize these halls as what they were generally being used for even before the postwar,

[89] Tadokoro, 54.

community facilities. This is highlighted by the fact that ten of the 33 tsunami memorial halls would provide the foundation for these communities' postwar community centers (*komin-kan*).[90]

The case of the Tsukihama Tsunami Memorial Hall and the circumstances that led to its conversion into the Jūsanhama Branch School is illuminating of the socio-economic conditions that enabled the relatively swift repurposing of the memorial halls in the post-war years. As Matsuura writes in his history of Jūsanhama, in the Shōwa-era after elementary school, children were expected to help their family and go straight to work in the fields. Agricultural work occupied their time from Spring until Fall. On top of that, to get to the area secondary schools, which were located up-river and further inland, students would have to take a steamboat that was at the mercy of coastal storms. A "smooth" round-trip would mean waking up early in the morning and returning home late at night. These factors meant that many did not progress to secondary level education and if at least one person in the hamlet went to secondary school, that was seen as sufficient. If a child did go to secondary school this was usually a sign that one's family was wealthy and they did not have to contribute to the household income, unlike many others in Jūsanhama.[91]

Early in the postwar localities decided that to accommodate these rural children, who had to work at home through much of the year, by making education more accessible. In response, branch schools for the local Iinokawa High School would be created in four hamlets including Jūsanhama. In May of 1951 the first entrance ceremony for the Jūsanhama Branch School was held and the Tsukihama Tsunami Memorial Hall was officially renamed and repurposed. This

[90] Tadokoro, 57-58.
[91] Matsuura, 89-94.

system allowed children of Jūsanhama and similar hamlets in the area to continue to help their families on the farm or in the boats while also receiving a secondary education.[92]

The Tsunami Memorial Halls in the first and second lives did prove central and vital to the communities of the rural Miyagi coast. While the Kozumi petition showed that—while they perhaps were important to communities as memorials—the halls proved to be more useful as community facilities that provided space for public services. Built to address the acute disaster of a tsunami event as well as the chronic crisis that was everyday life in Tōhoku, the everyday quickly and eventually decisively overshadowed a past emergency that steadily receded into history as well as potential future disaster that for some may not have seemed on the immediate horizon.

We could judge the communities of the Sanriku coast harshly from our post-3.11 perspective, but they were taking advantage of the resources they had at hand to concretely better their lives in the short term. While the repurposing and eventual demise of the tsunami memorial halls can be seen as a failure of the memorial form, we should not begrudge these communities the services the buildings provided and housed in their second lives. After all, they were merely (re)using them as designed.

Deaths and Reincarnations

"I don't know how long
I will be able to watch over you all, but
I want you to have a high school experience without regrets
And to please remember me
While you vigorously live on, with kindness in your hearts"[93]

[92] Matsuura, 89-94.
[93] Matsuura, 87-88.

Matsuura ended his poem on a bittersweet note. Channeling the building's voice, Matsuura added a measure of uncertainty to the old schoolhouse and former memorial hall's well-wishing send off to the students of the Jūsanhama Branch School in 1981. The building sounded unsure that it would remain standing much longer. It is possible that as a teacher at the school Matsuura was privy to discussions about demolishing the building, which certainly happened sometime after 1981.[94] In the early 1980s it would have been an unsurprising conclusion to the life cycle of the Tsukihama Tsunami Memorial Hall. Outside of the remarkable case of the Ayukawa Tsunami Memorial Hall, which was heavily damaged by a WWII Air Raid and was soon after destroyed by a fire in 1949, the Tsunami Memorial Halls were beginning to experience varied and unremarkable "deaths" as early as the 1950's. After being repurposed in the immediate postwar years, buildings that housed the former tsunami memorial halls were routinely moved, reconstructed, and even demolished, possibly as early as 1953 (as in the case of the Shishiori Tsunami Memorial Hall).[95] The 1970s were a particularly active decade when four former memorial halls were demolished in various localities.[96] The counterpart to the former Tsukihama Memorial Hall in Jūsanhama, the former Aikawa Tsunami Memorial Hall (used since 1947 as the main hall of Chifuku Temple), would outlive its Tsukihama companion by as many as 14 years, but would eventually also be demolished in 1995.[97]

Ironically, while the 3.11 tsunami destroyed all but one of the remaining Memorial Halls built in the wake of 1933, the 2011 disaster also led to a new flurry of activity around disaster memorialization.[98] This memorial activity was swift and wide-ranging. Memorial sites were

[94] Shirabata, 110-111, Tadokoro, 54-55.
[95] Tadokoro, 54
[96] Tadokoro, 54.
[97] Tadokoro, 55.
[98] The Shuku Tsunami Memorial Hall, used as a community center, then school, and later as a public meeting hall in the postwar years. Tadokoro, 54.

funded and built by national, prefectural, and local governments. Memorial practices and markers were also created by private organizations or individuals. There have even been commemorative efforts initiated and sustained internationally. Some memory practices, like the *Wind Phone* (*Kaze no denwa*) in Ōtsuchi, Iwate Prefecture, even gained international acclaim and inspired replicas in response to other disasters like the 2016 Ghost Ship Warehouse Fire in Oakland, California, and COVID-19.[99] Research conducted in 2012 by the Japanese Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, and Tourism (MLIT) gives a sense of the extent of official memorialization led by local governments in Tōhoku. MLIT showed that among the 52 localities that had published reconstruction plans in the wake of 3.11, 25 included plans for commemorative institutions.[100]

The number of registered organizations of the 3.11 Memorial Network illustrates the extent of private memorialization efforts in the wake of the triple disaster. An umbrella organization founded in 2017, the 3.11 Memorial Network "supports the coordination, planning, and cultivation of disaster memory, prevention, and mitigation" in Iwate, Miyagi, and Fukushima

[99] The *Wind Phone* is a small phone booth that was built by garden designer Sasaki Itaru to help himself cope with the death of his cousin from cancer in late 2010. Sasaki opened it to the public following the 3.11 disaster during which approximately 10 percent of Otsuchi's population died. The phone, which is disconnected, offers survivors and the bereaved the ability to "call" their lost loved ones. The phone has been featured in numerous western media outlets, perhaps most prominently on Episode 597 of *This American Life* "One Last Thing Before I Go," which aired on September 23, 2016. "One Last Thing Before I Go" *This American Life* National Public Radio, September 23, 2016, https://www.thisamericanlife.org/597/one-last-thing-before-i-go-2016. For installations inspired by the initial windphone see: "The Drop In: Finding the Phone of the Winds on Aspen Mountain" *The Aspen Times* March 8, 2021, https://www.aspentimes.com/news/the-drop-in-finding-the-phone-of-the-winds-on-aspen-mountain/, Leah Garchik, "Wind Telephone Enables Communication with Ghoast Ship Victims," *San Francisco Chronicle* March 19, 2017, https://www.sfchronicle.com/entertainment/garchik/article/Wind-telephone-enables-communication-with-Ghost-11010294.php, Kathi Scrizzi Driscoll, "Provincetown's Phone on the Wind allows Grieving to "Call" Departed Loved ones," *South Coast Today-The Standard Times* January 27, 2020, https://www.southcoasttoday.com/story/news/2020/01/27/provincetown-x2019-s-phone-on/1825727007/.

[100] MLIT, "Higashi-nihon daishinsai fukkō kinen kōen kentō kaigi setsumei shiryō, shiryō 3," 1, accessed November 12, 2020, https://www.mlit.go.jp/common/000188887.pdf.

prefectures.[101] As of October 2021, the Memorial Network listed 70 registered member organizations in addition to 532 individual members.[102]

Like the Showa-Sanriku Tsunami Memorial Halls, many of these institutions and organizations combine disaster memory and disaster mitigation with broader goals to promote social and community goods. While it would be inappropriate to label these spaces as "settlement houses" in the same way scholars have treated the 1933 Memorial Halls, the impulse to make memorial spaces that also accommodate social needs and foster community identity is strikingly similar. An institution like the Sendai 3/11 Memorial Community Center (*Sendai 3.11 Memoriaru-kōryūkan*), colloquially called the "Memo-kan," illustrates these similarities well. Built as one component of Sendai's master 3.11 memorialization plan, the Memo-kan (which we will revisit in Chapter 4) is conveniently located at the eastern terminus of Sendai's East-West *Tozai* subway line within the Arai station.[103] The Memo-kan's official name, which includes both memorial and community center, encapsulates the multivalent nature of the institution, which includes spaces for memorial and art exhibitions, a disaster-related library, a room for community activities and workshops, as well as a garden rooftop for relaxation and events.[104]

We could see these various 3.11 memorial institutions as reincarnations of the 1933 Memorial Halls. 3.11, much like 1933, was an event that led to adaptations by coastal Tōhoku communities to deal with the threat of future seismic and tsunami events. Physical infrastructure and patterns of land use were recognized as key in both historical moments. The efforts to adapt to these threats in the wake of 3.11 have been drastic, including massive seawalls, the

[101] 3.11 Memoriaru Network, "Sōshki gaiyō," accessed October 7, 2021. https://311mn.org/aboutus.
[102] The author has been a member of the 3.11 Memorial Network since spring 2019. 3.11 Memoriaru Network, "Kaiin ichiran," accessed October 7, 2021, https://311mn.org/aboutus/members.
[103] Sendai-shi, "Sendai-shi shinsai fukkō memoriaru-ra kentō iinkai hōkokusho," December 2014, accessed July 24, 2020, http://www.city.sendai.jp/kankyo/shise/daishinsai/fukko/memorial/documents/houkokusyo.pdf.
[104] Sendai 3.11 memoriaru kōryū-kan, "Shisetsu shōkai," accessed October 7, 2021, https://sendai311-memorial.jp/floor/.

abandoning of entire sections of cities to residential use, and even the artificial raising of entire sections of towns.[105] In memorial institutions we see again the idea that beyond adaptations in physical infrastructure, social adaptations like the preservation and transmission of memory within coastal communities will be important to mitigate future disasters.

In addition to a resumption of post-disaster memorial activities in Tōhoku, 3.11 also renewed popular and academic interest in the region's legacy of post-disaster memorials, including the 1933 Showa-Sanriku Memorial Halls.[106] In one reading, the many examples of post-disaster memory spaces and practices in Tōhoku and on the Sanriku coast are evidence of a long lineage of memory culture around seismic events.[107] However, another way to read the history of the 1933 Tsunami Memorial Halls is as a dire warning about the difficulty of memory work in the face of the irreconcilable nature of human and geological timescales.

Read as a warning, the history of these tsunami memorial halls shows that institutionalizing and materializing disaster memory to extend beyond the human lifespan is a fraught affair. In the case of the 1933 Showa Sanriku Earthquake and Tsunami, the social, economic, and political conditions that made the memorial halls possible collapsed within a decade as the war created new difficulties as well as exacerbated existing hardships for these coastal communities. The example of these memorial halls, recaptures one of the central paradoxes of memorial form: between relevance and irrelevance. In one way, the memorial halls,

[105] For he example of the preservation of the ruins of Arahama District in Sendai see: Sendai-shi, "Sendai-shi shinsai fukkō memoriaru-ra kentō iinkai hōkokusho," December 2014, accessed July 24, 2020, http://www.city.sendai.jp/kankyo/shise/daishinsai/fukko/memorial/documents/houkokusyo.pdf. For the raising of the land in Rikuzentakata see: Nakane Keiichi, "Higashi-nihon daishinsai jū-nen hiwa, (1) Fukkō jigyō kasa-age, hadomenaku…Rikuzen-takata," *Yomiuri Shinbun Onrain,* January 10, 2021, https://www.yomiuri.co.jp/shinsai311/feature/20210109-OYT1T50224/.

[106] Kōji Katō, "The Story of Cultural Assets and their Rescue: A First-Hand Report From Tōhoku," *Fabula* Vol. 58, Issue 1-2, July 2017, 51-75.

[107] Elizabeth Maly and Mariko Yamazaki "Disaster Museums in Japan: Telling the Stories of Disasters Before and After 3.11," *Journal of Disaster Research* 16, No. 2 (2021), 146-156.

with their capacious mandate as social welfare center (or settlement houses) that catered to occupational, social, recreational, and educational needs proved to be incredibly relevant for communities on the coast of Miyagi prefecture. By shrewdly folding memorialization into the many functions of the halls, Miyagi prefectural officials were able to allocate donated funds earmarked for disaster commemoration towards spaces that would provide important services for these communities. The utility of these buildings to these communities is evident in their afterlives as schools, shrines, and community centers in the postwar years. However, just like the monuments Musil wrote about, the memorial meaning/function of these halls became quickly irrelevant as the long-term threat of seismic disaster receded into the background and immediate everyday needs became more pressing.

As a historian, the examples of unrealized, failed, repurposed, and defunct disaster memorials gnawed at me, even while I was inspired by the great flurry of activity around disaster commemoration after 3.11. As a participant in various commemoration activities as early as 2012, and again during my fieldwork in 2018-2019, the case of sites like the 1933 Showa Sanriku Tsunami Memorial Halls remained constantly in the back of my mind. I found myself wondering how many of the memorial activities, organizations, and sites that I observed would continue to survive 15 or 25 years later. How many would be ignored or forgotten? It was hard to imagine any of the memorial efforts I witnessed failing or fading away when I met with the memory workers who labored tirelessly to convey their and other survivors' experiences of 3.11. These individuals and the emphasis on the recreation of disaster experience in post-3.11 memorialization will be explored in Chapter 4, but thoughts about the long-term viability of post-3.11 memorialization are a fitting post-script to the history of the 1933 Showa-Sanriku Tsunami Memorial Halls.

Echoing my own anxieties, various individuals engaged in 3.11-related memorial activities also expressed worries about the future of 3.11 disaster memory. While some of their worries were related to financial and material support, others reflected on the core question of this chapter: are human attention spans and timescales even amenable to effective disaster memorialization?[108] Multiple individuals in the Tōhoku region expressed their concern that various temporal benchmarks, like the change from the Heisei to Reiwa era or the celebration of the (later postponed) 2020 Summer Olympics in Tokyo, would overshadow the continued recovery and memorial efforts in Tōhoku. These worries have likely become even more intense as the COVID-19 pandemic has overshadowed 3.11 memory, cancelled memorial events during the 9th and 10th anniversaries of the 2011 disaster, and made the usually intimate in-person memory work of disaster zone guides more difficult.

Within these worries is the central concern that human and planetary timescales are indeed irreconcilable. However, to unlock the potential of memorials as a durable form of raising disaster awareness and enabling disaster mitigation, we must reckon with the gap between the human and the planetary, as well as between shallow and deep time. Thinking with these gaps will be explored further in the epilogue of this dissertation. Deep time reckoning will continue to be important for those communities at seismic risk in Japan, and those communities beyond the archipelago facing future disaster events.

[108] Takeda Shin'ichi, 3.11 Memorial Network Director, and Assistant Asari Mariko, in conversation with the author, Sendai, Miyagi Prefecture, April 2019.

Chapter 3

Luminous Memories:
Post-Disaster Ritual, Post-Disaster Affect, and the Great Hanshin Awaji Earthquake

Introduction: To Mourn, Not in Unhappiness

"I, as for myself, will
not in unhappiness
mourn the thousands
of victims
and resolve to live vigorously"[1]

—Noda Hiroshi, reciting a self-written poem at the Kawanishi Memorial Service for Victims of the Great Hanshin Earthquake, January 16, 1996

A year earlier, in the early morning of January 17, 1995, 70-year-old Noda Hiroshi, along with many others in the Hanshin area (the cities of Osaka, Kobe, and surrounding communities), was likely at home. Many were asleep when a M 7.3 earthquake struck at 5:46 am JST, violently waking people and throwing them from their beds. This was the historian Iokibe Makoto's experience, who recalls being suddenly woken and thinking "an airplane had crashed" into his house in Nishinomiya.[2] Iokibe writes all he could do during the shaking was hold his six-year-old daughter, who had been sleeping in between him and his wife, to shield her from falling furniture and debris. Once the shaking stopped Iokibe could hardly believe they had survived.[3]

Others were not so lucky. Many died in their homes during the shaking. Although the shaking was limited to a relatively limited geographic area (about forty to fifty kilometers of

[1] Note the naming discrepancy of the disaster (The Great Hanshin Earthquake) for the Kawanishi event. Makoto Iokibe explains that the mayor of Hokudan on Awaji Island engaged in a lobbying effort to have Awaji included in the later naming convention. See: Iokibe and Gonzalez, 59-60.
"Hisai-chi de tuitō-shiki (Shinbun kirinuki)," Box 257 Kōbe teijū gaikokujin shien sentā (KFC), File 009512, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[2] Iokibe and Gonzalez, 54-56.
[3] Iokibe and Gonzalez, 54-56.

active fault line) it struck the demographically dense Hanshin region. Part of the larger Keihanshin (Kyoto-Kobe-Osaka) metropolitan area, the Hanshin region is home to several major cities like Ashiya, Nishinomiya, and Kobe.[4] The earthquake killed 6,434 people and destroyed as many as 105,000 buildings. Most of the fatalities occurring due to building collapse or fallen furniture.[5]

Five of the 6,434 victims had been residents of Kawanishi, a small city to the northeast of Nishinomiya. One of the five was Noda Hiroshi's wife, who had died, like many victims, at home amidst the violent trembling of the earth. Noda delivered his poem at Kawanishi's memorial ceremony (likely held one day before the actual anniversary to allow participants to also attend the larger main memorial in Kobe the next day), as the representative of the twenty-one bereaved who participated. In addition to his poem Noda reportedly told the crowd of around 120 in attendees that "from today I will overcome my sadness and, vigorously facing the future, I will live on."[6]

What does it mean to mourn, but "not in unhappiness?" Why, during a speech to memorialize the dead and commemorate the past disaster, had Noda focused so adamantly on living onward into the future? How can we understand the fusing of these supposed opposites: mourning and happiness, the dead and the living, the past and the future? This chapter seeks to answer these questions by examining post-disaster memorial events following the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake. Through this examination I illustrate how post-WWII trends in global memory culture, neoliberal economic logics, as well as the function of post-disaster ritual in modernity worked together in Heisei-era Kobe to produce memorial events that took

[4] Iokibe and Gonzalez, 56.
[5] Iokibe and Gonzalez, 56.
[6] "Hisai-chi de tuitō-shiki (Shinbun kirinuki)," Box 257 Kōbe teijū gaikokujin shien sentā (KFC), File 009512, DRI, Kobe, Japan.

advantage of cosmopolitan forms of memorialization, the affective elements of joy and celebration (in addition to mourning and sadness), and an emphasis on futurity. I argue that disaster memorial events in this paradigm gained staying power by attending not only to the ritual need and desire to mourn the dead, but also by remaining flexible in form and function. Most surprisingly I find that in addition to being considered appropriate to their cultural context and somber gravity of loss, disaster memorial events also gained purchase in society by, to some extent, providing ritualized spaces for hope, awe, and even enjoyment.

Post-Disaster Ritual and Post-Disaster Affect

To answer the questions sparked by Noda's poem and statements and to understand how memorial events functioned in the wake of the 1995 quake, I utilize work on post-disaster ritual and post-disaster affect.[7] "Post-disaster ritual" as term was coined by Anne Eyre writing about rituals role in the psychological recovery from disaster in English society in the 1980s and has been explored by scholars in the fields of ritual studies and disaster studies.[8] For this chapter I engage with Fukuda Yu's articulation of post-disaster ritual and its possibilities as a concept in his 2012 article, "Towards a Theory of Post-Disaster Ritual: The Case Studies of *Ire-sai* and *Tsuito-shiki* in Contemporary Japan" (*Saika no gireiron ni mukaete – gendai nihon ni okeru ireisai ya tsuitoshiki no jirei kara*). In the article Fukuda maps out how modern Japanese memorial services like *irei-sai*, *tsuitō-shiki*, and *tsudoi*, have their roots in both indigenous Japanese folk and imported Buddhist methods for communally dealing with the "restless"

[7] Especially the work of Robert Barrios and Fukuda Yu, see Roberto E. Barrios *Governing Affect: Neoliberalism and Disaster Reconstruction* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2017) and Fukuda Yu, "Saika no gireiron ni mukaete – gendai nihon ni okeru ireisai ya tsuitoshiki no jirei kara" *Sentan shakai kenkyūjo kiyō* 8 (2012), 73-89.
[8] Anne Eyre "Chapter 18: Post-Disaster Rituals" pg 256-266 in Jenny Hockey, Jeanne Katz, and Neil Small, eds., *Grief, Mourning, and Death Ritual* (Philadelphia: Open University Press, 2001).

(*ukabarenai*) dead resulting from sudden, violent, and untimely events like disasters.[9] These respective systems have their differences (with Japanese folk methods emphasizing local communal relationships and the Buddhist system based in universal principles), but Fukuda writes that they share a focus in "settling" the restless, and thus potentially violent, spirits that result from similarly violent deaths during disasters.[10] Although the forms of these memorial rituals are retained in contemporary Japan, Fukuda argues that they took on a new social function with modernization.

Modernity, Fukuda writes, is underpinned by a system that views life as the pursuit of efficiency, capital accumulation, and rationality, and that death, especially untimely death that occurs because of "rational" political and economic activity (like pollution incidents stemming from industrial production or transportation accidents), is seen as antithetical and dangerous to the modern system.[11] Rather than solely attending to the worry that these deaths will result in restless and violent spirits, Fukuda argues that post-disaster memorials are a space for mourners and the bereaved to grapple with how a supposedly rational system could produce unexpected death and suffering. This leads survivors to ask questions like "why did they have to die and why did I survive," often leading to survivors' guilt.[12] Fukuda argues that this is indicative of survivors grappling with the inherent "contingency" or "accidental nature" (*gūyūsei*) of life and death.[13] Post disaster rituals are then a communal means to provide survivors and mourners with answers to these questions that render disaster events as "tolerable" and even sensible events in the overarching system of modern rationality.[14] The answer post-disaster rituals provide is that

[9] Fukuda, 73.
[10] Fukuda, 74-75.
[11] Fukuda, 76.
[12] Fukuda, 77-78.
[13] Fukuda, 77-78.
[14] Fukuda, 76-78.

those who were lost to disaster did not die in vain. Rather their deaths are sacrifices that will be used "to build a better life" in the future.[15] In other words, modern post-disaster rituals "instrumentalize the present" to further "rationalize the future."[16] This can be seen clearly in remarks by other participants in the 1996 Kawanishi Memorial Ceremony like Kawanishi Mayor Shibao Susumu who said "we are strongly resolved to see people not become victims of disaster, as a way to repay those who lost their lives" and then Speaker of the Lower House Doi Takako, born in Kobe and representing Hyōgo's 2nd District, who said "we will work effectively and concretely for disaster reconstruction."[17]

In examining post-disaster rituals to the 1995 Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake, I also answer some of Fukuda's critiques of the existing research on disaster memory and memorialization. One critique of Fukuda's that this chapter seeks to answer is that researchers working on disaster experience and memory have focused on how material objects are used to preserve and transmit memory. According to Fukuda the field prioritizes objects and spaces like memorials, museums, and monuments, while ignoring immaterial practices that usually play a "subordinate" role in society like ritual practice or oral transmission/storytelling.[18] Paul Connerton, in his *How Societies Remember*, makes a similar critique using the language of "inscribed" to describe the privileged material preservation of memory and the "incorporated" to refer to the understudied ritual and embodied memory practice.[19] While I would argue this dichotomy is not clear cut because memorial rituals and practices often occur within/around and thus in relation to material memorial objects/spaces, this chapter prioritizes the physical,

[15] Fukuda, 76-78.
[16] Fukuda, 76-78.
[17] "Hisai-chi de tuitō-shiki (Shinbun kirinuki)," Box 257 Kōbe teijū gaikokujin shien sentā (KFC), File 009512, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[18] Fukuda, 80.
[19] Paul Connerton, *How Societies Remember*. (New York: Cambridge University Press), 1989.

embodied, and practice-oriented aspects of memorial events. The follow chapter, Chapter 4, on memory workers and experiential memory following 3.11, will also answer this critique by highlighting the role of disaster area guides/storytellers (*kataribe*) in the preservation and transmission of disaster memory. Overall, this dissertation seeks to balance the treatment of the material/inscribed and immaterial/incorporated in two chapters (in Chapters 1 and 2) focused on memorial spaces and two chapters (this chapter and Chapter 4) on memorial practices.

Another critique Fukuda makes of the existing research on post-disaster ritual, that I will address in with this chapter and that disaster history is particularly well positioned to accommodate, is that scholars engage in overly static analysis of memorial events.[20] This static analysis fails to capture how memorial events transform over time. Fukuda posits two reasons for the prevalence of synchronic analysis in the field: the favoring of anthropological approaches to memorial events and the belief that long-term records on post-disaster rituals are hard to find. Fukuda points out that in terms of sources, post-disaster rituals are now well documented and are ripe for diachronic analysis.[21] This is certainly the case with memorial events following the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake, which are well represented in the archive.[22] In my analysis I utilize archival materials to show how participation in memorial events like the *1.17 Tsudoi* held across the city on the anniversary of the disaster has changed over its 27-year history. This work builds on similar findings of change by Miki Hizuru who critiqued the gap between static portrayals of the 1.17 Tsudoi in the media and the dynamic realities at the site of the ceremony.[23]

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[20] Fukuda, 82-83.
[21] Fukuda, 82-83.
[22] This chapter is based on archival research conducted at the DRI, for information on its extensive holdings on the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake, see: DRI, "Shozō shiryō no gaiyō," accessed April 1, 2022, https://www.dri.ne.jp/material/about/outline/.
[23] Miki Hizuru, "Henshitsu suru irei gyōji 'hanshin awaji daishinsai 1.17 tsudoi' no genba kara," pg. 249-270, in Murakami Kōkyō and Nishimura Akira, eds., *Irei no keifu: shisha o kiokusuru kyōdōtai* (Moriwa: Tokyo, 2013).

Fukuda's critiques are not merely methodological motivated, but also point to a practical concern about how to effectively preserve and transmit disaster memory. He notes that despite the focus on materials memorials, the experience of 3.11 shows that materially memorializing disaster can fail to serve as an adequate or even durable warning of future disaster, as was illustrated in preceding Chapter 2 on the Showa-Sanriku Tsunami Memorial Halls. Implied in this observation is that ritual and embodied practice could provide a more durable vehicle for disaster memory. We can read this implication into his critique of overly synchronic analysis of post-disaster rituals as well. If we are to understand what makes post-disaster rituals durable *over time,* we must also study them and how they change/adapt over time to remain relevant. This practical concern, underlying Fukuda's methodological critiques of the field, fits well into this dissertations concern with disaster memorials and memorialization as public history. This chapter will interrogate how memorial events operate as public history to preserve and transmit disaster memory over time.

To investigate the durability of post-disaster ritual after the 1995 Earthquake in Kobe and attend to the embodied nature of disaster memorial events, I put Fukuda's theory in conversation with the affective and emotional turn. In particular, I use Robert E. Barrios' "affective approach to disaster recovery" that he articulates in *Governing Affect: Neoliberalism and Disaster Reconstruction*. Although Fukuda, in his reference to survivors' guilt and its connection to post-disaster ritual, gestures towards the affective and emotional aspects of ritual practice his article, he does not articulate a clear explanation of how affect and emotions operate in Japanese post-disaster ritual. Barrios, in contrast, makes a robust argument for the inclusion of affective analysis in the field of disaster studies acknowledging that "emotions…are all over disasters."[24]

[24] Barrios, 3.

Barrios argues that an "emphasis on affect…helps researchers and practitioners to address the cultural dimensions of disaster recovery at the nexus of practice, space, and embodiment."[25] With this nexus in mind, Barrios seeks to understand how both elite policy makers (like governments or NGOs) and non-elite disaster survivors (who Barrios labels the subaltern) both use affect and emotion to inform their approach to and assessment of post-disaster reconstruction and recovery policies.[26] His main concern is how post-disaster urban planning and reconstruction can be interpreted as "statements concerning the nature of social well-being" on the part of governments and NGOs and how disaster survivor communities use affect and emotions to articulate their approval or disapproval of said policies.[27] In drawing attention to affect and emotions Barrios hopes to provide researchers and practitioners the tools to "devise aid policies that affected populations find meaningful and relevant."[28] In doing so he critiques the theory and practice of disaster management that views emotions as something to be "overcome" in the pursuit of rational disaster recovery.[29]

Bringing Barrios' affective insights to the concept of post-disaster ritual supplements Fukuda's focus on the structural logics of memorial events to disaster and allows us to interrogate how these events are used by both elite and non-elite participants to project, articulate, and indulge a range of post-disaster emotions. In addition, Barrios' analytical focus on governance allows us to show how post-disaster memorial events, which are often sanctioned, promoted, and staged by/with government actors, are also used as reconstruction and recovery policy. Post-disaster memorial events, like Barrios' urban planning policies, are also articulations

[25] Barrios, 25-26.
[26] Barrios, 8.
[27] Barrios, 4-8.
[28] Barrios, 26.
[29] Barrios, 25-26.

of how political elites think about social well-being and opportunities for various participants to react to those articulations.

Barrios' work brings the added benefit of analyzing neoliberalism, a response to the crisis of global capitalism in the 1970s. The deregulatory and market logics of neoliberalism which Barrios defines as a global "cultural trend in policy makers, politicians, and the public" that makes human life subject to "capitalist cost-benefit analysis as a mechanism for creation of social well-being" guided Kobe's larger reconstruction efforts.[30] Neoliberal logics, in turn, were overlayed on post-WWII trends in global memory culture to help produce a memorial event like the *Kobe Luminarie*, a fanciful wintertime light installation of Italian origin aimed at generating tourist interest and revenue, that is further explored below.

This chapter combines an attentiveness to how memorial event planners and participants alike construct/construe post-disaster rituals affectively with the consideration of how memorial events play into the larger governance of disaster reconstruction. In doing so, this Chapter ties together and pushes forward both the emotional analysis of memorialization in Chapter 1 and the exploration of memorials as reconstruction policy in Chapter 2. By combining these concerns, I hope to, like Barrios, provide a framework of analysis that would help public historians and memorial planners alike to devise disaster memorials that "affected populations find meaningful and relevant."[31]

This chapter uses this affective analysis of post-disaster ritual to examine memorial events to the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake in the city of Kobe and the surrounding Hanshin area. It focuses on two events in particular the *Kobe Luminarie*, a roughly two-week long light installation held annually in December that was originally donated by Italian artists and the

[30] Barrios, 8.
[31] Barrios, 26.

Italian government in 1995, and the *1.17 Tsudoi*, citywide memorial services held on the anniversary of the quake in Kobe centering on the main memorial event held in Higashi-Yuenchi Park. After providing an overview of postwar Japan and its place in global post-WWII memory culture to contextualize the memorialization of the 1995 earthquake I will examine the *Kobe Luminarie*. In my analysis of the *Kobe Luminarie* I will utilize media sources to show how the memorial event was understood by various actors as an economic and emotional stimulant for the city of Kobe. The success and continuation of the *Kobe Luminarie* shows how in the postwar moment, cosmopolitanism, tourism, futurity, and joy were utilized to create a durable memorial practice. Then I will analyze the *1.17 Tsudoi* sketching the basic structure of the memorial event and then utilizing memorial messages written and offered by event participants to do a diachronic analysis of the event. These memorial messages show that event in the main memorial event to mourn those lost to the earthquake, over time participants incorporated the future and positive affect into their memorial practice. The conclusion of this chapter will explore what these findings mean, with a particular focus on the role the future, hope, and enjoyment can play in building flexible and durable post-disaster memorial events.

Shaken Awake in Postwar Japan

Just as the residents of Kobe and the larger Hanshin area were jolted awake early in the morning of January 17, 1995, postwar Japan was reawakened to the horrors of urban destruction by the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake. The scale of destruction experienced by 1995 Kobe had not been seen since the American air raids or nuclear bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki during the Second World War. While the following five decades in Japan could not be described as entirely peaceful, with the continued specter of nuclear fallout in the 1954 Lucky Dragon 5

Incident, major episodes of civil disobedience during the 1960 Anpō Protests and 1968-1969 University Struggles, and organized responses to illnesses from industrial pollution like Minamata disease all causing disruptions to society, it was also a period where the Japanese standard of living steadily improved and the Japanese economy grew to become the second largest in the world.[32] This was economically rising Japan that spurred Ezra Vogel to write the infamous *Japan As Number One*.[33]

By the early 1990s the luster of postwar Japan as potential "number one" had begun to wear off. This started with the fall of inflated asset prices in the real estate and stock market leading to the bursting of the "bubble economy" in 1991, kicking off what would eventually be known as the "Lost Decade" of Japanese economic stagnation.[34] Even amidst the stagnation, 1995 proved to be a particularly disastrous year in Japan's reversal of fortune. The Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake in mid-January was quickly followed by sarin gas attacks on the Tokyo subway by the millenarian cult Aum Shinrikyo on March 20, 1995, which killed 10 and injured around 1,050. The Great Hanshin Awaji Earthquake merely signaled the beginning of disruptive large scale seismic events that would strike Japan over the next three decades, with the 2004 Chūetsu Earthquake in Niigata Prefecture and the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake in the Tōhoku region (which we will examine in Chapter 4) being prominent examples. This has led the scholar Iokibe Makoto to propose that Japan had entered an "era of great disasters" beginning with the Great Hanshin Awaji Earthquake and characterized by increased seismic activity.[35]

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[32] See John W. Dower, et al. *Postwar Japan as History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).
[33] Ezra Vogel *Japan as Number One: Lessons for America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979).
[34] Some have even added the next two decades to make it the "lost decades" or "lost three decades," see: Ikeda Nobuo, "'Ushinawareta sanjū-nen' ni mukau nihon," *Newsweek* December 23, 2010, https://www.newsweekjapan.jp/column/ikeda/2010/12/20-3.php.
[35] Iokibe and Gonzalez, 1-5.

These disturbances (social, economic, and geophysical) correlated roughly with the change of the imperial reign after the death of Emperor Hirohito in 1989, ending the Shōwa era (1926-1989), and the beginning of the reign of Emperor Akihito in the Heisei Era (1989-2019). This change of political periodization only served to add to the sense that postwar Japan was entering a new and turbulent age. Although we have debunked the notion that postwar Japan was without conflict, Iokibe still captured the feeling of rupture by describing the disaster as "an earthquake [that shattered] postwar peace."[36] Indeed, when asked what *kanji* character in retrospect characterized the Heisei-era in a 2019 survey conducted by Sumitomo Life Insurance, the top answer among 21% of respondents was the character "*sai*," meaning disaster.[37] The second and third most popular choices, "*hen*," meaning change, at 7.1% and "*ran*," meaning confusion or disorder, at 6.9%, further underscored the sense that Japan from the 1990's to the 2010's was characterized by disaster, disruption, and disorder.[38]

The scale of the death in the wake of the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake led those in Japan who witnessed the urban destruction to grasp for similar events in the past to make sense of the quake. As was discussed briefly in Chapter 2 on the incommensurability of human and geophysical time scales, unlike the regular quakes of the Sanriku region, the recurrence interval of the Rokkō-Awaji Fault Zone was estimated to be 900-2,800 years for one section of the fault and 1,800-2,500 years for another, precluding the possibility that anyone had a living memory of a Great Hanshin-Awaji scale earthquake in 1995 Kobe.[39] In fact, the Rokkō-Awaji fault zone had

[36] Iokibe and Gonzalez, 54.
[37] "'Sai,' Meaning Disaster, Picked as Kanji for Heisei Era," *Jiji Press,* March 28, 2019, https://www.nippon.com/en/news/yjj2019032801178/sai--meaning-disaster-picked-as-kanji-for-heisei-era.html.
[38] "'Sai,' Meaning Disaster, Picked as Kanji for Heisei Era," *Jiji Press,* March 28, 2019, https://www.nippon.com/en/news/yjj2019032801178/sai--meaning-disaster-picked-as-kanji-for-heisei-era.html.
[39] Smits, *When the Earth Roars*, 4

actually been unknown before the causing the 1995 earthquake.[40] This led survivors to grasp for non-seismic events to contextualize and grapple with the disaster.

Instead of seismic activity, the most recent events that served as rough analogues for the 1995 quake in the minds of many survivors were experiences of WWII.[41] Some survivors used the bombing of Kobe during the war in 1945, while others went beyond local history to frame their understanding of the disaster. For example, the religious historian of Japan and commentator Yamaori Tetsuo, who was in nearby Kyoto when the quake struck, felt compelled to remember the scenes of Hiroshima and Nagasaki upon hearing early reports that over 5,000 people had died during the disaster.[42] The historical knowledge of Japan's postwar experience was mobilized to render an "unexpected" event more familiar and help with the recovery process.[43] World War II, however, hung over the 1995 Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake as more than just an historical analogue for making sense of destruction. Global memory culture was profoundly shaped by WWII and provides the backdrop for the memorialization of the 1995 earthquake.

Post-WWII Memory Culture and Memorializing the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake

Memory scholars and experts on monuments recognize WWII as a "watershed moment" in the history of memorialization, when the more traditional memorial forms of the early 20th century were abandoned, augmented, and/or changed drastically in response to the horrors of the

[40] Smits, *When the Earth Roars*, 4, and Iokibe and Gonzalez, 83-87.
[41] Terada Masahiro, *Katasutorofu to jikan: kioku/katari to rekishi no enerugeia* (Kyōto: *Kyōto daigaku gakushutsu shuppan-sha,* 2015), 86-91.
[42] Yamaori, 75.
[43] Terada, 883

war, Holocaust, and the atomic bombings.[44] Paul Carrier, offers a succinct distillation of the relevant literature in his *Holocaust Monuments and National Memory Cultures in France and Germany since 1989*. Carrier admits that there is debate over the extent of change in memorials post-WWII, but ultimately argues that 1945 is a rupture in memory culture that brings about new artistic styles, forms, and functions to memorialization.[45]

The post-WWII rupture saw a more definitive break from the traditional model of the ornamental sculptural monument than was seen in interwar experimentations with modernist memorial design.[46] In order to address the terror, and irrationality, of total war, genocide, and nuclear destruction in WWII memorial designers embraced abstraction to try to express what seemed to defy symbolic expression.[47] In embracing abstraction many memorial designers created anti-monuments or counter-memorials that effectively rebuked the former mode of memorialization that favored enduring objects that took up space, by using ephemerality, immateriality, absence, and negative space.[48] The most famous counter-memorial is perhaps the black wall of Maya Lin's Vietnam Veteran's Memorial in Washington D.C., which remains a touchstone for memorial designers, although there are numerous examples. Secularization also influenced memorial practice to further embrace a symbolic system that made use of almost elemental symbols like fire, water, flowers, and trees that were widely understood and thus widely imitated and appropriated.[49]

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[44] Jay Winter also agrees with Carrier, see: Paul Carrier, *Holocaust Monuments and National Memory Cultures in France and Germany since 1989,* New York: Berghahn Books, 2005), 19-22. Winter, *Sites of Memory Sites of Mourning*, 228

[45] Carrier, 19-22.

[46] Carrier, 6, and Winter, 228

[47] Carrier, 19-22.

[48] For a discussion of counter monuments see: Corinna Tomberger, "The Counter-Monument: Memory Shaped by Male Post-War Legacies," pg 224-231 in Bill Niven and Chloe Paver (eds) *Memorialization in Germany since 1945* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), also Carrier, 6-7, and Frihammer and Silverman, 3-4.

[49] For an initial discussion of this symbolic system in the post-WWI moment see Chapter 1: Structuring Memory. Also see: Fukuda, 81-92.

In addition to this stylistic and formal shift, memorials also shifted in function. The traditional mode of memorials as sites to coalesce the memory cultures of nation states around triumphs or defeats (usually military in nature) became challenged by memorials that strove to ensure transnational collective remembering to promote critical reflection and international ethical norms.[50] Examples of this are Holocaust memorial museums like Yad Vashem in Israel or the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington D.C., both of which implore visitors to contemplate the particularities of the Holocaust as well as the universal threat of genocide.[51] Futurity also plays a role in post-1945 memorial function, with memorials serving as warnings against future atrocities. The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum specifically states that it exists in part to cultivate "moral responsibility" in the effort to "prevent genocide."[52]

Post-WWII memorials, in addition to the solemn functions of moral education and warning future generations, have also become major tourist destinations.[53] Part of a commercially inflected "heritagization" of death, memorials can also function as important drivers of economic activity and international recognition of culture. The attraction of death or atrocity as an attraction to be consumed is sometimes labeled "dark tourism," and seemingly breaks down boundaries between the sacred and the profane, mourning and celebration, as well as solemnity and amusement.[54] These trends can be seen in the presence of the museum store and

[50] Carrier, 19-22.
[51] Yad Vashem The World Holocaust Remembrance Center, "Mission Statement," accessed March 20, 2022, https://www.yadvashem.org/about/mission-statement.html, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, "About the Museum: A Living Memorial to the Holocaust," accessed March 20, 2022, https://www.ushmm.org/information/about-the-museum.
[52] United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, "About the Museum: A Living Memorial to the Holocaust," accessed March 20, 2022, https://www.ushmm.org/information/about-the-museum.
[53] Frihammer and Silverman, 5.
[54] Frihammer and Silverman, 10-11.

merchandise at the 9/11 Memorial and Museum or in the recognition of Auschwitz-Birkenau, alongside various non-memorial "attractions," as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.[55]

This dissertation, which traverses the 1945 boundary in memory culture, is in general agreement with the analysis that concludes the end of WWII was a rupture in the history of memorials, with an important caveat: the continued globalization of in memory culture. As was shown in Chapter 1 with the memorial design competition following the Great Kantō Earthquake, and to a lesser extent in Chapter 2 with the Tsunami Memorial Halls envisioned as settlement houses, Japanese memorial culture, and thus disaster memorials, operated in the increasingly global memory culture of the early 20th century interwar period. That WWII, as Carrier argues, became a "shared multipolar site of memory," shows that the conflict further spurred memorial designers and practitioners to utilize the transnational circulation of memorial architectural design, abstract symbolism, and ritual practice.

Japanese memorials were a key node in this the post-WWII global memory culture, with the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park being an illustrative example of both the rupture and continuity in post-1945 memorialization. Designed by the famous architect and University of Tokyo professor Tange Kenzō, the memorial park was intended the centerpiece of the city's reconstruction and economic revitalization as a "symbol for the world's hope for peace" following the atomic bombing by the United States.[56] The memorial complex features both the preserved ruins of the Atom Bomb Down (the former Industry Promotion Hall) and the architectural designs of Tange in structures like the Peace Memorial Museum and the Haniwa roof-inspired concrete covering of the memorial cenotaph, which are all placed on a

[55] 9/11 Memorial Musuem, "Museum Store," accessed March 20, 2022, https://store.911memorial.org/collections/all-products-on-site, and Frihammer and Silverman, 5.
[56] Ran Zwigenberg, *Hiroshima: The Origins of Global Memory Culture* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 46.

commemorative axis. The celebrated modernist designs of Tange and the globalized "future-oriented peace discourse" of the memorial park in many ways illustrate the post-1945 turn towards abstraction, the commitment to the promotion of universal moral values, and the production of memorials as tourist destinations.[57]

However, Lisa Yoneyama, drawing on the work of Inoue Shōichi, explains that this design was likely inspired by an earlier 1942 plan of Tange's for the imperialist "Commemorative Building Project for the Construction of Greater East Asia." Tange's 1942 plan won a wartime design competition and was praised as "the vision best representing the sublime objective of establishing the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere."[58] The design proposed a Shinto-style "memorial zone" to be constructed at Mt. Fuji's base.[59] This plan too relied on a "central axis" or "worshipping line" that would guide visitors from the entrance to the commemorative monument.[60] This line, in turn, was inspired by similar memorial and commemorative designs built in the fascist regimes of Europe.[61] Despite being an embodiment of the form and function of post-1945 memorialization, the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park also illustrates a continuation of international flows of design inspiration, influence, and even motifs of pre-1945 memory culture.

More generally WWII was a pivotal moment in Modern Japan's cultivation "historical consciousness." Sensitive to the idea that modern Japan lacked historical consciousness tied to transcendental experience, such as Christian teleology, like Western nations, Japanese intellectuals long had an "inferiority complex." After the war intellectual Hashikawa Bunzō

[57] Zwigenberg, 53.
[58] Lisa Yoneyama, *Hiroshima Traces: Time, Space, and the Dialectics of Memory* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 1-2, also see: Zwigenberg, 56-58.
[59] Yoneyama, 1-2
[60] Yoneyama, 2.
[61] Yoneyama, 2.

argued that in making sense of its defeat, Japan would be able to gain historical consciousness, making the war itself (and defeat especially) a guiding principle in Japanese history. Terada Masahiro argues that for those seeking to replace war and defeat as the organizational framework for modern Japanese history, catastrophe, and recovery, like events of the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake, served as a similar transcendental experience that granted the possibility of historical consciousness.[62]

It is against this larger backdrop of both global and Japanese post-WWII memory culture that the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake was memorialized. Major monuments built to commemorate the event illustrated how Japanese disaster memorials operated within this global memory culture and utilized its logics. Kusuda Shingo's "Cosmic Elements" monument located in Higashi-Yuenchi, the venue for the main ceremony of the 1.17, showed how disaster memorials were designed as a post-1945 memorials in both form and function. Following the disaster in 1996 Kobe held a "Discussion on the Establishment of Memorial and Reconstruction Monument."[63] During this discussion participants laid out the foundational concept for a memorial to the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake that centered on memorialization (defined as the mourning of victims and encouragement of survivors), reconstruction, and solidarity (specifically the significance of reconstruction from a major disaster supported by global solidarity).[64] In this framing we see the effort to elevate the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake to global significance and appeal to universal values. Responding to this concept, Kusuda submitted his design to a monument competition held in 1998 and was chosen as the winner among three other finalists. The theme of his design was "Symbiosis with Nature," and featured abstract

[62] For Hashikawa's critique see: Hashikawa Bunzō, *Rekishi to taiken: kindaiseishinshi oboegaki* (Tokyo: Shunjusha, 1964). Also see: Terada, 882-883.
[63] "Irei to fukkō no monyūmento (panfuretto)," Box 256 Satō Tadashi, File 000059, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[64] "Irei to fukkō no monyūmento (panfuretto)," Box 256 Satō Tadashi, File 000059, DRI, Kobe, Japan.

structures like white ground, a red hill, a meditation room, a waterfall, plants, a giant floating stone, and glass, which would represent the elements of land, sun, space, water, wind, matter, and the future.[65] Each of these elements also had a symbolic meaning: the rebirth of Kobe, the source of life and power, memorialization and contemplation, new life, the flow of time, the ceremonial altar between nature and humanity, and the projection of the future.[66] Wrapped into Kusuda's design we see the post-WWII trend towards abstract symbolism applied to the mediation of the relationship between humans and nature, along with an emphasis on futurity in the symbolic glass and the focus on reconstruction.

The Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake Memorial Disaster Reduction and Human Renovation Institution or "DRI" (*Hanshin-Awaji Daishin-sai kinen hito to bōsai mirai sentā*, often abbreviated as *Hitobō* in Japanese) similarly shows the influence of global post-WWII trends. Established in April 2002 as part disaster-mitigation think tank, part archive, and part memorial museum, the DRI was funded as part of Hyōgo and Kobe's larger reconstruction plan (as will be explored further below).[67] The DRI's memorial-museum makes extensive use of video, dioramas, and VR to allow visitors to "re-experience" the earthquake as well as have immersive experiences of other natural hazards.[68] This type of experiential memorialization is reinforced by the presence of disaster survivors who share their experience of the quake in the "Storyteller's Corner" (*Katari-be kōnā*). The incorporation of experiential memorialization and storytellers illustrates the post-1945 emphasis on survivor/witness experience and testimony, which will be further explored in Chapter 4. Survivor experience and testimony gained relevance

[65] "Irei to fukkō no monyūmento (panfuretto)," Box 256 Satō Tadashi, File 000059, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[66] "Irei to fukkō no monyūmento (panfuretto)," Box 256 Satō Tadashi, File 000059, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[67] Iokibe and Gonzalez, 112-114, and DRI, "Mission," accessed: April 15, 2022, https://www.dri.ne.jp/en/overview/mission/.
[68] See: DRI, "Floor Maps," accessed: April 15, 2022, https://www.dri.ne.jp/en/exhibition/guide/, and DRI, "Furoa gaido," accessed: April 15, 2022. https://www.dri.ne.jp/exhibition/guide/.

in post-WWII memory culture as a reaction to the unbelievable experience of the Holocaust and nuclear bombings.[69]

Like "Cosmic Elements," the rhetoric and design of the DRI also reflects key post-1945 developments in memory culture. For example, the DRI's name rhetorically centers futurity. Although the official translation of the institution's name includes the phrase "Human Renovation," a more literal English translation of the DRI, would be the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake Memorial Center for Humanity, Disaster Reduction, and the Future.[70] In terms of design, the façade of the DRI is made of clear glass, which historian Terada Masahiro argues is representative of the "flatness, transparency, and floating [nature]" of postmodernism. Built as part of a larger complex of museums designed to lure tourists to reconstructed Kobe, the DRI's façade also operates as an attraction. As a promotional video released in June 2018 shows, the DRI is designed to "light-up" and features various designs like "Hydrangea, Sunflower, Fireworks, Sparkler, and [Christmas] Present" (Image 2).[71] Aside from featuring the rotation of light up displays, the video follows a young couple visiting the DRI, walking through the memorial museum exhibit, and, importantly, taking selfies in front of the illuminated glass cube.[72] The implication is that the DRI is a pleasant destination, worth revisiting to enjoy the seasonal light up variations, and perhaps could even serve as a good date spot.

[69] Zwigenberg, 18.
[70] Terada, 877-878.
[71] DRI, "[Kōshiki] Hanshin-Awaji daishinsai kinen hito to bōsai mirai sentā raitoappu dōga," YouTube Video, June 10, 2018, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g2aeqWGSK0A.
[72] DRI, "[Kōshiki] Hanshin-Awaji daishinsai kinen hito to bōsai mirai sentā raitoappu dōga," YouTube Video, June 10, 2018, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g2aeqWGSK0A.

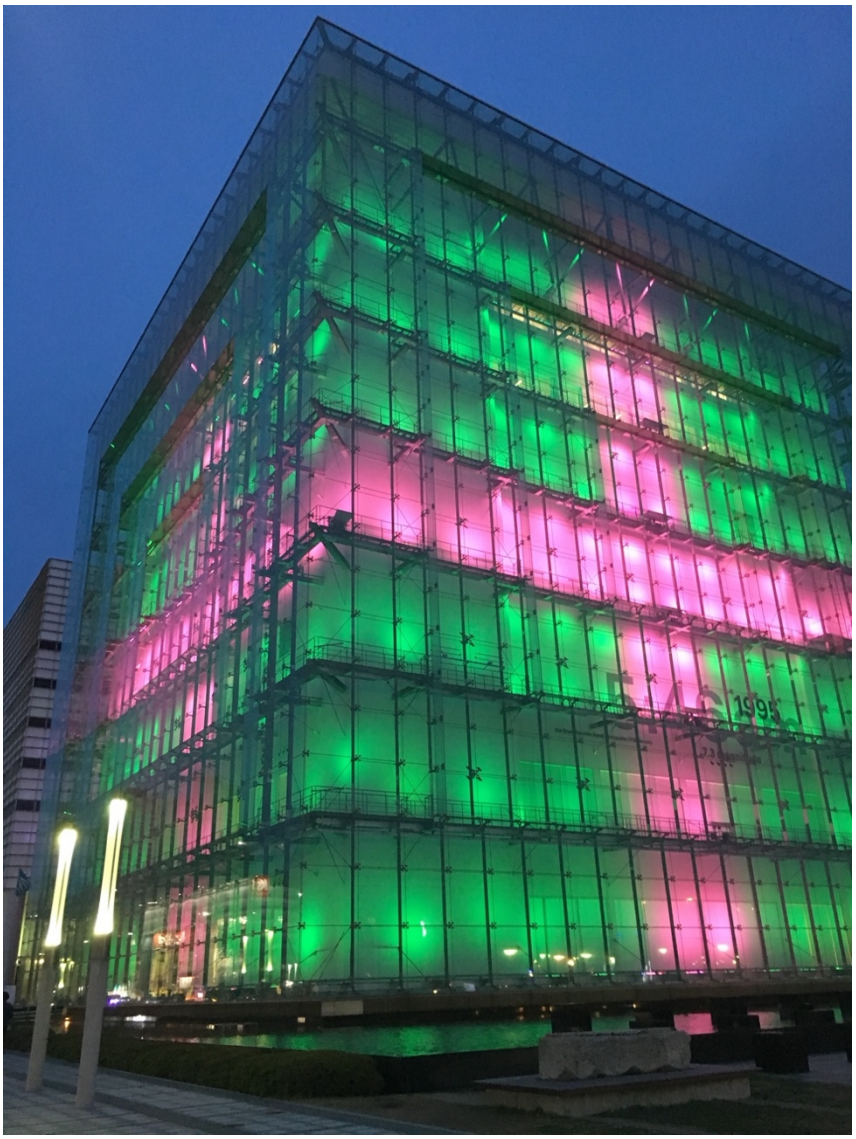

Image 8: Photograph of the DRI at Night. The building is lit up to resemble a Christmas Present in December 2018. Photograph by the author.

It was in this global and local memorial context that the *Kobe Luminarie* and *1.17 Tsudoi* were developed and operated as post-disaster memorial events to the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake. The following sections examine these two events, with particular emphasis on their ritual and affective dimensions to understand what made both durable as post-disaster memorials. I will start with the *Kobe Luminarie*, placing it within the larger neoliberal logics undergirding Kobe's reconstruction and focusing on the media portrayal of its first years to

understand how it was promoted as both an economic and emotional revitalization for the city's residents. Then we will turn our attention to the citywide *1.17 Tsudoi*. After giving an overview of the general structure of *1.17 Tsudoi* events, I use a vast collection of memorial messages (*techō*) offered over the years at memorial events to conduct a diachronic analysis of how participants approached the disaster and the memorials. Ultimately, I show that the *Kobe Luminarie* and *1.17 Tsudoi* are testaments to the dualities of post-disaster memorial events and suggest that their durability lies in their ability to bind the past to the future, mourning to celebration, and sadness to joy. Both examples seem to confirm Fukuda's assertion that post-disaster rituals operate to incorporate disasters and the deaths they cause into a social narrative about building a better future, thus rendering the event acceptable to survivors. My analysis draws attention to how memorial events mobilize affect and emotion to aid the modern logics of post-disaster ritual.

Past and Future, Illuminated

"'Light' is a symbol of joy, in other words, that which replaces the terror of darkness. Contained within the light of the *Luminarie* is time. [That time] is the moment [we] look back and reminisce on the past and, simultaneously, the moment [we] look towards a future briming with hope." [73]

—Art Director Valerio Festi, promoting the 2nd Annual *Kobe Luminarie*

Valerio Festi's description of the *Kobe Luminarie* for materials promoting the 1996 iteration of the installation entitled "Paean—Wishing for a Time to Shine" (*Sanka—kagayakeru toki wo momete*), succinctly captures the paradoxical qualities of the event. Darkness and light, mourning and celebration, sadness and joy, past and future, despair and hope, the *Kobe*

[73] "Kōbe ga kagayaku yoru KOBE Luminarie (chirashi)," Box 132 Shiraishi Kenji, File 004077, DRI, Kobe, Japan.

Luminarie combines these elements in ways that confound stereotypical understandings of memorial events as serious and somber affairs. Similarly, confounding is that despite the *Luminarie's* origins in Baroque-era southern Italy, it was a celebrated, popular, and recognizable memorial event held annually in Kobe following the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake. The *Luminarie* was held uninterrupted from 1995 to 2019 until it was disrupted by another disaster, the COVID-19 pandemic.[74] Seventy years earlier, as was shown in Chapter 1, a light display of Italian origins to commemorate the victims of a devastating earthquake in a major Japanese city would have been unthinkable; culturally and religiously inappropriate. However, as has been shown above, memorial designers, local elites, and survivors of the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake alike operated in a vastly different global memory culture than their interwar counterparts. Instead, postwar memory culture more readily facilitated intercultural memorial exchange. The *Kobe Luminarie* is a striking example of the eclectic possibilities of memorial events enabled by Japan's relationship with post-1945 trends in memorialization.

How exactly was the *Kobe Luminarie* made possible as a memorial event to the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake? What were the underlying logics, who were the major stakeholders, and how was it "sold" to a public still reeling from the disaster event? Using media reporting and promotional materials I show that the *Luminarie* fit into the larger Kobe reconstruction effort in both economic and emotional terms.

Economically, the *Luminarie* was well-suited to the reconstruction plans outlined by Kobe city and Hyōgo prefecture. These reconstruction plans adhered to generally neoliberal principles, engaging in a form of what Naomi Klein has termed "disaster capitalism," to take advantage of the crisis and promote urban recovery that utilized top-down planning, big ticket

[74] Kōbe Luminarie, "Kōbe Luminarie sutōrii," accessed March 5, 2022, https://www.kobe-luminarie.jp/cont-02.htm.

projects, and the attraction of new investment through deregulation and tax breaks, while deprioritizing welfare measures.[75] In this framework the *Luminarie* was understood and supported by local politicians and business community as a way to attract tourist revenue and repair Kobe's image as a tourist destination.

Emotionally, a variety of figures advertised the *Luminarie* as both exotic and familiar, and articulated the celebratory nature of the event as an acceptable and attractive response to the suffering caused by the earthquake. To accomplish this the media drew on both the *Luminarie's* Italian heritage and Japanese analogues while linking the emotions of Southern Italians in the Baroque-era to those felt by disaster survivors in the Hanshin region. Boosters and promoters of the *Luminarie* used these emotional arguments to invite spectators to engage in the escapism of the event in a way that did not feel disrespectful to the dead. While both logics had their critics, they proved attractive to elite and non-elite stakeholders, with politicians, the local business community, and spectators all supporting a continuation of the event beyond its first iteration in 1995. The success and longevity of the *Luminarie* provides a powerful case study in what can make disaster memorial events materially and affective durable in post-1945 memory culture.

Luminarie as Economic Reconstruction

As a bid for economic revitalization the *Kobe Luminarie* was just one piece of larger plans to reconstruct Kobe and reinvigorate the Hanshin-area economy. The backdrop of these efforts was the national economic downturn following the burst of the asset price bubble, mentioned earlier in this chapter, and the need for industrial areas in Japan, like the Hanshin

[75] Barrios, 8, David W. Eddigton, *Reconstructing Kobe: The Geography of Crisis and Opportunity*. Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010), 119, Naomi Klein, *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2007).

region, to restructure.[76] Outlined in the Kobe City Reconstruction Plan and the Hyōgo Phoenix Plan, the city and prefectural governments sought to use reconstruction to seize the opportunity provided by the crisis. These plans aimed to upgrade hard-hit inner districts of the city, broaden the tax base, and redesign urban areas by widening roads and expanding public space.[77] The larger goals of both plans were to create an industrially vigorous, disaster-resistant, and "culturally rich" international city for the 21st century.[78] The intent of the Kobe and Hyōgo governments seemed to be to use the crisis to secure funding and subsidies from the national government to help rebuild Kobe into a city that would be able to compete with other cities in Japan, like Hiroshima and Yokohama, that were also restructuring their economies, as well as other international trade and cultural centers in East Asia like Shanghai and Seoul.[79]

The vanguard of this reconstruction effort was a set of seventeen high-profile megaprojects that were intended to "lead the recovery."[80] Eddington refers to these proposed initiatives as "symbolic projects."[81] These "big ticket" approaches to economic recovery were separated into three categories by the City of Kobe Reconstruction Plan: disaster-prevention measures, industry-promotion measures, and long-term projects.[82] Included among these projects were ideas that predated the quake, such as the creation of an enterprise zone with reduced taxes and regulations and a new Kobe Airport, as well as new projects, like the "New Eastern City Project" that would eventually become Happy Active Town Kobe (HAT Kobe) that redeveloped

[76] Eddington, 180-181
[77] Eddington uses "geography of crisis" and "geography of opportunity" as his main framing for the reconstruction of Kobe in his work based on an East Asian proverb related to the kanji compound for crisis, *kiki*, which incorporates a kanji for danger and a kanji for opportunity. Eddington, xvi-xvii, 105-114.
[78] Eddington, 114-115.
[79] Eddington, 122-123.
[80] Eddington, 115.
[81] Eddington, 115.
[82] Eddington, 115, 118.

the old industrial waterfront.[83] These projects were meant to help Kobe compete with its domestic and international economic rivals by promoting businesses in potential growth sectors like tourism, fashion, high technology, and international trade.[84]

Important for our purposes were the two long-term projects that called for the "provision of a legacy to remember the disaster" and the "construction of a museum of disaster science and a complex of 20th century museums."[85] One goal of these attempts to institutionalize the commemoration of the earthquake seems to have been to harness the memory of the disaster as a driver of both domestic and international tourism for the city. These institutional commemoration goals were to be achieved by building a memorial park and memorial museum to the Great Hanshin Awaji-Earthquake in eastern Kobe. These plans were eventually realized in the preservation of disaster ruins at Meriken Park, the creation of a memorial complex (including "Cosmic Elements") in Higashi Yūenchi Park, and the completion of the DRI as part of the museum complex at the HAT Kobe development.[86]

The Kobe and Hyōgo reconstruction plans were met with discontent and criticism from both local citizens and the national government. With the initial release of the city's redevelopment goals being released on February 28, 1995—after consultation between the city, prefecture, national government, local universities, and local businesses—citizens still living in temporary housing were furious at the lack of public input and the proposed changes for their city.[87] The plan to widen roads would lead to the "donation" of private property for public use, and the inclusion of a variety of old and new megaprojects unrelated to the quake seemed like a

[83] Eddington, 117.
[84] Eddington, 115.
[85] Eddington, 118.
[86] Eddington, 121.
[87] Eddington, 106-107, 179.

waste of the public budget.[88] One resident compared the city to "a thief at a scene of a fire" (*kaiba dorobō*) for how the plan proposed to use reconstruction funding.[89] Some in the national government who received the proposals agreed, with one official reportedly complaining "it's like reaping a profit out of confusion."[90] With the entire country suffering after the burst of the bubble economy it was unclear to some in the national government why Kobe should get preferential treatment, like a special enterprise zone, when other industrial areas of Japan were also suffering.[91]

The result of these criticisms altered the implementation of the reconstruction plans slightly, but ultimately Kobe city and Hyōgo prefecture proceeded with their stated goals. In response to citizen protest of insufficient public input the city instituted community-based planning, known in Japanese as "*machizukuri*," in some urban areas.[92] The final plan, which was released in the summer of 1995 remained largely unchanged, but prompted only limited objections among a populace that was still occupied coping with the fallout of the quake.[93] Despite the national government's misgivings with the opportunism underlying the inclusion of a variety of megaprojects into the plan, the initial review of the plans was generally positive. The national government agreed to funding the first five years of the plans, but projects beyond that were tabled for further discussion and some, like the enterprise zone, were rejected.[94] Ultimately Kobe was able to receive national funding for most of its "symbolic" projects including HAT Kobe and memorials like the DRI.[95]

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[88] Eddington, 106-117.
[89] Eddington, 119-120.
[90] Eddington, 122-123.
[91] Eddington, 122-123.
[92] Eddington, 110-114.
[93] Eddington, 119-120.
[94] Eddington, 122-125, 181-182.
[95] Eddington, 182-183.

In this context local business leaders promoted the *Kobe Luminarie* as an effort to stimulate the economy through generating tourism related to the disaster and disaster reconstruction. In the pages of the *Kobe Shinbun* Maki Fuyuhiko, Head of both the Kobe Chamber of Commerce and the *Kobe Luminarie* Event Committee, argued that the *Luminarie* was part of larger efforts around the city to stage events aimed at repairing Kobe's image as a "tourist city."[96] Maki described the effort to reattract tourists to Kobe as a bid to restore the vitality and activity of the city as well as accelerate reconstruction.[97] Central to this effort, in Maki's telling, was the cooperation of the local government and business community, a partnership that had become the main "vehicle" for promoting the *Kobe Luminarie*.[98] Imamura Kiyoshi, the head of the Former Foreign Settlement Standing Committee, framed the *Luminarie* in similarly economic terms. Representing businesses in the Former Foreign Settlement area of the city, where the *Luminarie* would be held, Imamura called the event a "new tourism resource."[99] As both a memorial to the disaster victims and a local commercial revitalization effort, Imamura hoped that the *Luminarie* would serve as a significant "spark" for the city's reconstruction.[100] As perhaps a nod to the protests of top-down approaches to reconstruction Imamura also framed the *Luminarie* as part of the effort at a "Kobe-esque" *machizukuri*, leaning into the portrayal of the *Luminarie* as primarily an effort at local revitalization.[101]

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[96] "Hikari no dentō geijutsu [Luminarie] Kōbe no kyūiryūchi ittai," Box 90 Nihon sekijūjisha Hyōgo-ken shibu, File 007129, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[97] "Hikari no dentō geijutsu [Luminarie] Kōbe no kyūiryūchi ittai," Box 90 Nihon sekijūjisha Hyōgo-ken shibu, File 007129, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[98] "Hikari no dentō geijutsu [Luminarie] Kōbe no kyūiryūchi ittai," Box 90 Nihon sekijūjisha Hyōgo-ken shibu, File 007129, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[99] "Hikari no dentō geijutsu [Luminarie] Kōbe no kyūiryūchi ittai," Box 90 Nihon sekijūjisha Hyōgo-ken shibu, File 007129, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[100] "Hikari no dentō geijutsu [Luminarie] Kōbe no kyūiryūchi ittai," Box 90 Nihon sekijūjisha Hyōgo-ken shibu, File 007129, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[101] "Hikari no dentō geijutsu [Luminarie] Kōbe no kyūiryūchi ittai," Box 90 Nihon sekijūjisha Hyōgo-ken shibu, File 007129, DRI, Kobe, Japan.

The broad support and buy-in from local government and business community was likely necessary due to the scale of the first *Kobe Luminarie* light installation. Consisting of some 150,000 electric lights and stretching over 720 meters, the *Luminarie* centered on lighted arches over 9 meters wide and 30 meters tall arranged to create a corridor of light. These lights were arranged decoratively to resemble florentina roses, with the focal point being a round pendant of lights designed to look like a rose in bloom, known as a *rozzone*, which was positioned at the end of the hallway-like light display.[102] The inaugural *Luminarie* ran for 11 days, opening on the 15th of December and running through the 25th of December on Christmas Day. To install the inaugural *Luminarie* Studio Festi brought a team of 12 *luminarista* from Italy to help with the set up and tear down of the light display.[103]

[102] "Hikari no dentō geijutsu [Luminarie] Kōbe no kyūiryūchi ittai," Box 90 Nihon sekijūjisha Hyōgo-ken shibu, File 007129, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[103] "Hikari no dentō geijutsu [Luminarie] Kōbe no kyūiryūchi ittai," Box 90 Nihon sekijūjisha Hyōgo-ken shibu, File 007129, DRI, Kobe, Japan.

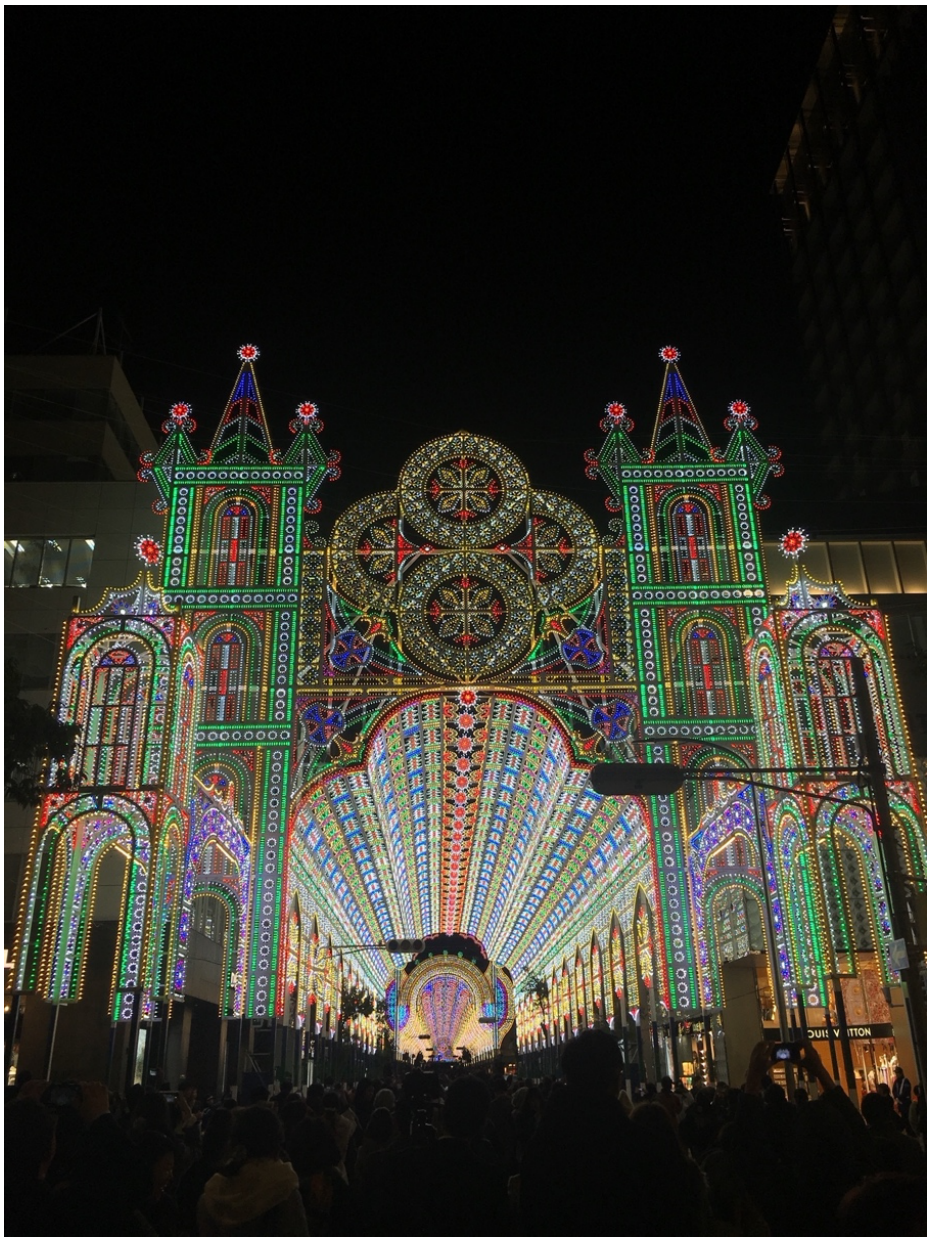

Image 9: Photograph of the 24th *Kobe Luminarie*. The photo shows the entrance to the main hall of lights. The 2nth *Kobe Luminarie* was entitled "Together Let's Build, Towards a Light of New Happiness" (Tomo ni tsukurō, atarashii shiawase no hikari o) held in December 2018. Photograph by the author.

Before the event even ended the 1995 *Luminarie* was portrayed as a commercial success by the media. An article published on December 24, 1995, the penultimate night of the *Luminarie*, noted that, as of December 23rd, 1.35 million people had already visited the

installation.[104] This number meant that attendance had already exceeded the projected 1.1 million attendees and that the *Luminarie* was on pace to attract 1.5 million people by the end of its eleven-day run.[105] The anticipation was so high that even on the night of the 14th, one evening before opening night, couples and families had crowded around to catch a glimpse at the "architecture of light." Maki Fuyuhiko is once again quoted as a spokesperson for the event and reported these attendance numbers with perhaps a hint of pride. Maki added that while Saturday the 23rd (a weekend, and the night before Christmas eve) had been the most popular so far with 235,000 visitors, that weekdays still saw crowds numbering upwards of 100,000 spectators. These crowds, Maki boasted, overflowed into the surrounding area. [106]

This overflow of spectators seems to have been a main goal of holding the *Luminarie* as part of a larger bid to pump consumer money into the local economy. This bid seems to have been particularly successful in the inaugural year of the *Luminarie*. The paper reported that visitors crushed into surrounding convenience stores to buy candy and disposable cameras. The Kobe Daimaru Department Store, which usually saw about 2,000 customers during the hour from 6pm to 7pm, reported seeing 5,000 to 7,000 during the *Luminarie*, and even 15,000 during that same period on the night of the 23rd. This led Daimaru to extend the closing time of their first-floor showroom from 7pm to 8pm for the duration of the installation. A public relations representative for the department store gushed that this was "a golden opportunity to do post-reconstruction PR."[107] The rep also remarked that the crowds were filled with obvious tourists

[104] "Kōbe Luminarie hikari no chōkoku hyaku-san-jū-go-man-nin fukkō buri PR kyō made (Shinbun kirinuki)," Box 90 Nihon sekijūjisha Hyōgo-ken shibu, File 007428, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[105] "Kōbe Luminarie hikari no chōkoku hyaku-san-jū-go-man-nin fukkō buri PR kyō made (Shinbun kirinuki)," Box 90 Nihon sekijūjisha Hyōgo-ken shibu, File 007428, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[106] "Kōbe Luminarie hikari no chōkoku hyaku-san-jū-go-man-nin fukkō buri PR kyō made (Shinbun kirinuki)," Box 90 Nihon sekijūjisha Hyōgo-ken shibu, File 007428, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[107]"Kōbe Luminarie hikari no chōkoku hyaku-san-jū-go-man-nin fukkō buri PR kyō made (Shinbun kirinuki)," Box 90 Nihon sekijūjisha Hyōgo-ken shibu, File 007428, DRI, Kobe, Japan.

(who likely had refrained from venturing to Kobe in the aftermath of the quake) recognizable by their conspicuous clutching of maps as they walked around.[108] Much like the attendance numbers that exceeded expectations, the influx of eager customers to surrounding stores caught some establishments by surprise with one 100-yen store reportedly having to drive out a bustling throng of spectators.[109]

Among the *Luminarie* event committee, the overwhelming popularity of the installation was met with great enthusiasm. The article reported that some committee members even wanted to extend the *Luminarie*, but Studio Festi ruled out the possibility of a longer installation. This, however, did not dampen committee's mood. There were many committee members who were interested in holding the *Luminarie* again the following year and were eager to discuss the opportunity with their Italian counterparts.[110]

Luminarie as Emotional Reconstruction

While the relative economic success of the *Luminarie* in the context of a wider array of reconstruction efforts helps explain the elite buy-in to institutionalize the installation as an annual event, it reveals a more pressing question: what made the *Luminarie* alluring and acceptable as a memorial event in postwar Japan? How did the *Luminarie* provide the opportunity for survivors to integrate the disaster into a larger narrative about building a better future? To understand this, we must attend to the "affective" aspects of the Luminarie. While the *Luminarie* was partially undergirded by the "rational" economic logics explained above, it was

[108] "Kōbe Luminarie hikari no chōkoku hyaku-san-jū-go-man-nin fukkō buri PR kyō made (Shinbun kirinuki)," Box 90 Nihon sekijūjisha Hyōgo-ken shibu, File 007428, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[109] "Kōbe Luminarie hikari no chōkoku hyaku-san-jū-go-man-nin fukkō buri PR kyō made (Shinbun kirinuki)," Box 90 Nihon sekijūjisha Hyōgo-ken shibu, File 007428, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[110] "Kōbe Luminarie hikari no chōkoku hyaku-san-jū-go-man-nin fukkō buri PR kyō made (Shinbun kirinuki)," Box 90 Nihon sekijūjisha Hyōgo-ken shibu, File 007428, DRI, Kobe, Japan.

also an articulation of belief on the part of elites about social well-being as well as an opportunity for survivors to evaluate that articulation. [111] These insights, drawing on the work of Barrios, are important because emotions were the key thread used to tie the exotic to the familiar, the celebratory to the sorrowful, and the past to the future in the push to make the *Luminarie* acceptable and even attractive in post-quake Kobe.

The foreignness of the *Luminarie* was advertised as part of the allure of the event. This is reflected by media coverage that highlighted the Italian origin of the light display. An article in the *Kobe Shinbun* special extra by Imoto Kyoko, a lecturer in cultural anthropology at Osaka University of Foreign Studies, entitled "The Still Sparkling Light of the Baroque Era" ("*Kagayakituzukeru barokku no hikari*") provided a succinct but informative history of the tradition of *Luminarie*. Imoto wrote that the *Luminarie* had its origins in southern Italy amidst various hardships of the 17th century, including economic slumps, heavy taxation, plague and suffering under the foreign rule of Spain.[112] Originally created with fireworks, candles, and lanterns, Imoto imagines that the effect of the 17th century *Luminarie* must have been fantastical, like entering a "dream-like world." She explains that this dream-like world was meant to be an escape for those dealing with the suffering, impermanence, and "darkness" of the real world, and to fulfil a desire to celebrate in an alternate world filled with light.[113] Although it is not made explicit yet, the implication is that even in the Italian setting the celebratory *Luminarie* was a reaction to disastrous times, a parallel readers in Kobe would surely not miss.

[111] Barrios 3-4, 8.
[112] "Hikari no dentō geijutsu [Luminarie] Kōbe no kyūiryūchi ittai," Box 90 Nihon sekijūjisha Hyōgo-ken shibu, File 007129, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[113] "Hikari no dentō geijutsu [Luminarie] Kōbe no kyūiryūchi ittai," Box 90 Nihon sekijūjisha Hyōgo-ken shibu, File 007129, DRI, Kobe, Japan.

Imoto connected these historical origins of *Luminarie* to the present through the "*luminarista*," the term for the artisans who installed the light displays in modern Italy, twelve of whom had come to Japan to set up the *Kobe Luminarie*.[114] She described these *luminarista* as avatars of southern Italian artisanal heritage. She explained that the *luminarista* tradition remained particularly strong in the southern Italian cities of Napoli and Lecce that both suffered under Spanish rule. Both places, she wrote, had strong artisanal traditions with their foundations in the construction of Baroque-era churches and shrines. Modern-day *lumanarista* have this tradition in their "blood," Imoto explained, with techniques inherited from fathers by sons.[115] She elaborated that because *luminaristas* are brought up in this tradition, and moreover because they live among their artisanal heritage in the form of local Italian architecture, that the *Luminarie* was built on embodied as well as inherited knowledge. In turn the *Luminarie* was more an expression of a collective artistic legacy than any individual *lumanrista*'s individual expression or personal style.[116]

The image Imoto created in her article is obviously romanticized, but it is a compelling portrayal of *luminarie* as an artform that is quintessentially (southern) Italian. She essentially argued that by going to the *Kobe Luminarie* one can viscerally experience a piece of southern Italian heritage, expertly recreated by the conduits of that heritage, the *luminaristas*. Her article in effect exoticized the *Luminarie* as an authentic piece of Italy, one that the reader would soon be able to experience, amazingly, in Kobe, Japan.

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[114] "Hikari no dentō geijutsu [Luminarie] Kōbe no kyūiryūchi ittai," Box 90 Nihon sekijūjisha Hyōgo-ken shibu, File 007129, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[115] "Hikari no dentō geijutsu [Luminarie] Kōbe no kyūiryūchi ittai," Box 90 Nihon sekijūjisha Hyōgo-ken shibu, File 007129, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[116] "Hikari no dentō geijutsu [Luminarie] Kōbe no kyūiryūchi ittai," Box 90 Nihon sekijūjisha Hyōgo-ken shibu, File 007129, DRI, Kobe, Japan.

At the same time the media strove to balance the foreignness of the *Luminarie* by connecting the light display with Japanese examples that would be recognizable (and thus comfortable) to the average Japanese reader. For example, the main article of the *Kobe Shinbun* special extra compares use of light in the *Luminarie* to various traditional lighting practices that had long pedigrees in Japan such as fireworks (*hanabi*), torches (*taimatsu*), and basket fires (*kagari-hi*).[117] Most potently, however, the same article framed the Luminarie as an *okuri-bi* or "sending off fire" that would bring an end to a painful year.[118]

Okuri-bi in Japanese tradition is a fire lit at the end of the summertime *obon* festival during which the spirits of deceased ancestors are believed to return to family altars and gravesites. The festival is opened with the lighting of *mukae-bi* or "welcoming fire" when the spirits are said to arrive and ended with the *okuri-bi* which signals their departure back to realm of the dead. According to the article, as *okuri-bi* the *Luminarie* would "serve as a solemn ceremony," that would serve a similar "sending-off" purpose by allowing visitors to reflect on all the events and emotions of the past year: "the encounters and the separations, the tears, the happiness and sadness."[119] By linking the tradition of *luminarie* with a solemn spiritual practice familiar to the general Japanese public, the special extra helped domesticate the *Kobe Luminarie*, rendering it legible as a memorial event in the wake of the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake.[120]

Underlying the media's exoticizing and domesticating of the *luminarie* tradition was common ground in the emotional meaning of the light displays. Writers forged an emotional

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[117] "Hikari no dentō geijutsu [Luminarie] Kōbe no kyūiryūchi ittai," Box 90 Nihon sekijūjisha Hyōgo-ken shibu, File 007129, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[118] "Hikari no dentō geijutsu [Luminarie] Kōbe no kyūiryūchi ittai," Box 90 Nihon sekijūjisha Hyōgo-ken shibu, File 007129, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[119] "Hikari no dentō geijutsu [Luminarie] Kōbe no kyūiryūchi ittai," Box 90 Nihon sekijūjisha Hyōgo-ken shibu, File 007129, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[120] "Hikari no dentō geijutsu [Luminarie] Kōbe no kyūiryūchi ittai," Box 90 Nihon sekijūjisha Hyōgo-ken shibu, File 007129, DRI, Kobe, Japan.

connection between southern Italy and western Japan, as well as between Baroque-Era Europe and Postwar Asia, to make a compelling argument for the appropriateness of the inaugural *Kobe Luminarie* in the post-disaster context. As was noted above, Imoto made it clear that the *luminarie* tradition, despite its bright aesthetic and coincidence with wintertime festivities like Christmas, was a response to suffering.[121] Likewise, the characterization of the *Kobe Luminarie* as an *okuri-bi* for a "painful year," sought to ground the event in its context of mourning and loss.[122]

Writers also made clear that the sparkling aesthetics and festive atmosphere were a suitable, and even desirable, human response to difficult times. The media found a useful metaphor in "light and dark" in striving to illustrate the relationship between mourning and celebration in the *luminarie* tradition generally and the *Kobe Luminarie* specifically. The main article of the special extra distilled this metaphor to its most basic formulation, "light: that which extinguishes the terror of the dark, that which has the special meaning of bringing about relief and tranquility."[123] As the "light" the *Kobe Luminarie* was meant to illuminate the "darkness" that was the past year of disaster and slow recovery in Kobe. Imoto in her own article on the origins of *luminarie* mirrored this language. She explained that the light of *luminarie* was an attempt to create an alternate and fantastic word where the troubles of Italy under Spanish rule would be forgotten. Imoto wrote that the "the light illuminates the dark night, the light's beauty releases people from oppressive reality and calls one into reverie."[124] This escape into a dream-

[121] "Hikari no dentō geijutsu [Luminarie] Kōbe no kyūiryūchi ittai," Box 90 Nihon sekijūjisha Hyōgo-ken shibu, File 007129, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[122] "Hikari no dentō geijutsu [Luminarie] Kōbe no kyūiryūchi ittai," Box 90 Nihon sekijūjisha Hyōgo-ken shibu, File 007129, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[123]"Hikari no dentō geijutsu [Luminarie] Kōbe no kyūiryūchi ittai," Box 90 Nihon sekijūjisha Hyōgo-ken shibu, File 007129, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[124] "Hikari no dentō geijutsu [Luminarie] Kōbe no kyūiryūchi ittai," Box 90 Nihon sekijūjisha Hyōgo-ken shibu, File 007129, DRI, Kobe, Japan.

like alternate reality of the light in turn brought about "warmth and hope." This affective shift from suffering to hope was "the magic power of the light."[125]

In addition to transforming the emotions of those affected by the earthquake the *Kobe Luminarie* was portrayed of having the potential to reorient the temporal focus of visitors away from the "darkness" of the events of the past year and towards the "light" of hope promised by a new year. In this way, the *Luminarie* fulfilled the important post-disaster ritual function of helping survivors incorporate the disaster and the deaths it caused into a positive narrative about the future.[126] The main article of the special extra explained that "the *Luminarie* crossed the ocean to offer even just a little comfort to the hearts hurt by the disaster and to provide a bridge for hearts to discover happiness and hope in the new year."[127] Imoto too emphasized the futurity of the *luminarie*. She wrote that the *luminarie* communicated the power of handing down traditions and that "conveying the light to future generations" was indicative of "humanity's potential."[128]

The *Kobe Luminarie* as a light illuminating the dark emotions of the disaster and pointing towards a better future is exactly how the installation was portrayed by the artistic director of the installation, Valerio Festi. Festi was the Chief Executive Officer and artistic director of the Italian art production company Studio Festi that donated and set up the inaugural *Kobe Luminarie*.[129] He oversaw the installation of the *Kobe Luminarie* and took a hands-on approach. According to his Japanese counterpart, event coordinator Imaoka Hirokazu, Festi spent eight

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[125] "Hikari no dentō geijutsu [Luminarie] Kōbe no kyūiryūchi ittai," Box 90 Nihon sekijūjisha Hyōgo-ken shibu, File 007129, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[126] Fukuda, 76-78.
[127] "Hikari no dentō geijutsu [Luminarie] Kōbe no kyūiryūchi ittai," Box 90 Nihon sekijūjisha Hyōgo-ken shibu, File 007129, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[128]"Hikari no dentō geijutsu [Luminarie] Kōbe no kyūiryūchi ittai," Box 90 Nihon sekijūjisha Hyōgo-ken shibu, File 007129, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[129] "Hikari no dentō geijutsu [Luminarie] Kōbe no kyūiryūchi ittai," Box 90 Nihon sekijūjisha Hyōgo-ken shibu, File 007129, DRI, Kobe, Japan.

days in the summer of 1995 reportedly walking the streets of Kobe to get a "feel" for the character of the city and its reconstruction.[130] A short letter by Festi explaining his vision for the installation was translated and published in the Kobe Shinbun special extra under the title "A Dream of Hope for a Reborn Kobe: Creator of Luminarie Architecture of Light Mr. Festi's Greeting."[131] I have translated and reproduced the letter in full below.

> "The traditional Italian Baroque 'architecture of light' installation in Kobe will be entitled 'Dreams and Light.' Our fervent wish, that we hope to realize through the creation of this dream, is the reconstruction of Kobe. That is the sentiment behind the title. We want days filled with light, sunshine, and life to return to the people and city of Kobe after this dark night of depression. Look around, everyone. This light is for all of you. Dream peacefully. As we designed this *Luminarie*, we strove to envision a dream. Lose yourself in the festivities, allowing these small stars to etch peace and happiness into your hearts."[132]

The cumulative impression of the media PR for the inaugural *Luminarie* is that it offered an exotic but familiar cultural experience and that its emotional escapism was an almost natural, and thus appropriate, reaction to the misery of the earthquake and its immediate aftermath. The *Kobe Luminarie* seems to have been deftly portrayed by boosters and promoters in the media as an enjoyable diversion that was still respectful of the dead. In fact, that enjoyment was evidence that survivors and tourists alike, through their reembrace of joy and hope, were in fact honoring the dead by creating a newer, happier, more worldly Kobe for the future. Emotion served as the key that transformed the *Kobe Luminarie* from a wintertime light display into a post-disaster ritual that helped survivors cope with the disaster and its aftermath, ultimately weaving it into a larger, positive, and future-focused narrative.

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[130] "Hikari no dentō geijutsu [Luminarie] Kōbe no kyūiryūchi ittai," Box 90 Nihon sekijūjisha Hyōgo-ken shibu, File 007129, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[131] "Hikari no dentō geijutsu [Luminarie] Kōbe no kyūiryūchi ittai," Box 90 Nihon sekijūjisha Hyōgo-ken shibu, File 007129, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[132] "Hikari no dentō geijutsu [Luminarie] Kōbe no kyūiryūchi ittai," Box 90 Nihon sekijūjisha Hyōgo-ken shibu, File 007129, DRI, Kobe, Japan.

Debating The Luminarie

This cheery portrayal of the *Kobe Luminarie*, as well as the execution of the event itself, seems to have worked given the above-expectations turnout, mentioned above. However, the light display did have its critics. Just like the other "symbolic projects" some found the *Luminarie* inappropriate because as of December 1995 the reconstruction of the city and the return to normalcy for many survivors was by no means complete. These critiques echo the insights of Chapter 2, namely that disaster memorialization is just as subject to the economic and political concerns of resource allocation as other relief measures in post-disaster society. In the *Kobe Luminarie*, like the Tsunami Memorial Halls built over six decades before, we once again see disaster seized as an opportunity by elites to provide support to their locality informed by the prevailing economic and social logics of their present moment. Despite the almost whimsical promotion of the inaugural *Kobe Luminarie*, the art installation was not immune to the hard debates of post-disaster resource allocation and media attention.

In February 1996, two months after the inaugural event, two friends hashed out the debate surrounding the *Kobe Luminarie* over drinks at their usual Yakitori restaurant in the Sannomiya area.[133] The conversation, which took place between Kansai-area radio personality Koyama Noriko, who served on the Kobe City Council for one term from 1995-1999, and her friend Professor Tanabe an assistant professor at Sonoda Women's College, was published as part of Koyama's column "Watching City Council – Koyama Noriko's View" in the regional edition of the *Mainichi Shinbun* on February 17th.[134] Professor Tanabe took a critical stance towards the *Luminarie*, whereas Koyama, understandably, given her position as a public official,

[133] "Kōbe Luminarie fukkō-sunda to omowareru? (Shinbun kirinuki)," Box 90 Nihon sekijūjisha Hyōgo-ken shibu, File 008295, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[134] "Kōbe Luminarie fukkō-sunda to omowareru? (Shinbun kirinuki)," Box 90 Nihon sekijūjisha Hyōgo-ken shibu, File 008295, DRI, Kobe, Japan.

spoke positively of the event.[135] Their conversation is illuminating of how the *Luminarie* was received and contested in the early years of reconstruction in Kobe.

The article opened with a provocative question Tanabe posed during their outing, "do people think that reconstruction has finished?"[136] When Koyama replied that she did not think that was necessarily the case, Tanabe shot back with a scathing critique of the festival. In his critique he clarified the meaning behind his initial question, "no, we didn't do anything last year! There were still plenty of disaster survivors in evacuation centers and waiting areas, right? For those in temporary housing, people who don't have anything, not even their past hopes and dreams…isn't a so called 'festival of light,' a so called 'work of art,' just distasteful?"[137] For Tanabe, an event as festive and extravagant as the *Luminarie* seemed deeply inappropriate when survivors were still dealing with the material and emotional hardship more than a year later.

Koyama's response in defense of the *Luminarie* mirrored the PR done by the city, Studio Festi, and various boosters in the run up to the event. Koyama also leaned heavily on the emotional impact of the light display. "Yes, that's why I think it was good, because of those hopes and dreams. Get this, on the night of the 15th during the lighting ceremony, a girl, tears streaming down her face, said this 'Ah I'm so glad I survived so that I could see something so beautiful.' Now how many people do you think were able to feel happy that they had lived?"[138] With her anecdote, Koyama countered Tanabe's assertion that the *Luminarie* would be intolerable for those who had lost everything, including their hopes and dreams. Leaning into the

[135] "Kōbe Luminarie fukkō-sunda to omowareru? (Shinbun kirinuki)," Box 90 Nihon sekijūjisha Hyōgo-ken shibu, File 008295, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[136] "Kōbe Luminarie fukkō-sunda to omowareru? (Shinbun kirinuki)," Box 90 Nihon sekijūjisha Hyōgo-ken shibu, File 008295, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[137] "Kōbe Luminarie fukkō-sunda to omowareru? (Shinbun kirinuki)," Box 90 Nihon sekijūjisha Hyōgo-ken shibu, File 008295, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[138] "Kōbe Luminarie fukkō-sunda to omowareru? (Shinbun kirinuki)," Box 90 Nihon sekijūjisha Hyōgo-ken shibu, File 008295, DRI, Kobe, Japan.

official title of the installation "Dreams and Light," Koyama suggests that instead *the Luminarie* provided survivors with new hopes and dreams, even if it was just an appreciation for their own survival. The facilitation of the feeling of thankfulness for life by the dazzling Italian lights was the core of Koyama's counterargument.

Tanabe, for his part, did not begrudge the emotional power of the *Luminarie*, but he brought the conversation back to his main concern, the sorry state of reconstruction:

> "There are people like that, and I do think that's a good story. However, if that spectacle is all that's broadcast throughout the country, I suspect many people will think 'oh Kobe is already completely recovered there's no need to worry, things have improved.' I think that's terrible. There are plenty of places that have yet to be reconstructed or restored. No matter how many thousands or millions of people come [to Kobe], if they aren't seeing those places its meaningless."[139]

This critique illuminates the worry behind Tanabe's initial question and explains his opposition to holding an event like the *Luminarie* amid reconstruction efforts. Much like urban planners, business leaders, and other local elites realized that they needed to seize the opportunity to receive financial support during a limited window of national government funding and attention, Tanabe's argument reflected a worry about a limited attention economy in the Japanese public. Early in the recovery, the disaster in Kobe had generated national concern resulting in a tremendous surge in Japanese volunteerism and aid to the city.[140] However, by focusing national, tourist, and even local attention on a festive celebration of dreams and light, Tanabe worried that the *Luminarie* would shift attention to a hopeful future and away from the ongoing hardships of reconstruction in the present. He felt that the *Luminarie* sent the wrong

[139] "Kōbe Luminarie fukkō-sunda to omowareru? (Shinbun kirinuki)," Box 90 Nihon sekijūjisha Hyōgo-ken shibu, File 008295, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[140] Eddington, 51.

message, that reconstruction was complete, and it was time to look forward to a newer and brighter Kobe.[141]

Others shared Tanabe's view. Koyama recalled someone asking the mayor of Kobe, "If there is the money to use on something so trivial, why not distribute it as aid to disaster survivors?" In response the mayor seemed to pass the buck stating, "Well as for that, it really was mostly paid for by money donated by Osaka businesses, in the spirit of 'do your best Kobe!' The region also offered some money and well that's just how it worked out this time..."[142] The mayor's answer implied that the city did not necessarily have control over how certain funds were allocated. The question revealed that the *Kobe Luminarie* was seen by some as taking advantage of limited funding at the expense of potentially helpful welfare programs.[143] Although the *Luminarie* was imagined as an economic as well as emotional boost to Kobe, some obviously preferred more direct and tangible assistance for the city and those affected by the disaster. The article did not feature any more negative assessments from Tanabe or anonymous critics. Koyama appears to have used her "dispute" with Tanabe as a frame story to promote her positive assessment of the *Luminarie*, which synthesized the economic and emotional aspects of *Luminarie* boosterism.

The rest of Koyama's article laid out the affirmative case for the inaugural *Luminarie* and for renewing the event again in December 1996. Again, Koyama focused on the positive affective reactions she witnessed in the crowd like "this is truly beautiful, isn't it? I forgot about the earthquake, even for just a moment. I wonder if they'll do it again?" and "Grandma I know it

[141] "Kōbe Luminarie fukkō-sunda to omowareru? (Shinbun kirinuki)," Box 90 Nihon sekijūjisha Hyōgo-ken shibu, File 008295, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[142] "Kōbe Luminarie fukkō-sunda to omowareru? (Shinbun kirinuki)," Box 90 Nihon sekijūjisha Hyōgo-ken shibu, File 008295, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[143] Eddington, 119.

was hard but I'm so glad you brought us."[144] Koyama even reported how sometimes the spectator joy defied articulation, like a giggling group of middle school aged girls wowed by the amazement at the lights.[145] The rapturous reception of the *Luminaire* seemed to be confirmed to Koyama by the growing number of people who voiced their support for a second iteration of the event, with some even advocating for an expansion beyond the former foreign settlement to areas like Sannomiya, Kitano, and Harbor Land.[146]

Koyama, perhaps in subtle response to the critiques about misallocation of funds toward the *Luminarie* by officials, made clear that such joy was the result of significant effort local politicians to promote tourism to Kobe.[147] After expressing amazement at the number of people who attended the *Luminarie*, Koyama tells an anecdote of one way in which local politicians "sold the city" of Kobe. She wrote that in the fall of 1995 preceding the *Luminarie* a group of city council members who had organized themselves as the "Kobe City Councilmember League for the Promotion of Tourism and Reconstruction" (*Kankō fukkō sokushin Kōbe-shi kaigi-in renmei*) had made themselves special business cards that included a small fold out poster decorated with scenes of the Kobe, like a nighttime view of Meriken park, and was emblazoned with the message "Thank you for all the love, I hope to see you in Kobe."[148] Those members she went on proceeded to distribute those business cars whenever they went to conferences or meetings in other cities.

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[144] "Kōbe Luminarie fukkō-sunda to omowareru? (Shinbun kirinuki)," Box 90 Nihon sekijūjisha Hyōgo-ken shibu, File 008295, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[145] "Kōbe Luminarie fukkō-sunda to omowareru? (Shinbun kirinuki)," Box 90 Nihon sekijūjisha Hyōgo-ken shibu, File 008295, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[146] "Kōbe Luminarie fukkō-sunda to omowareru? (Shinbun kirinuki)," Box 90 Nihon sekijūjisha Hyōgo-ken shibu, File 008295, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[147] Eddington 42, 116, 181-184, 194.
[148] "Kōbe Luminarie fukkō-sunda to omowareru? (Shinbun kirinuki)," Box 90 Nihon sekijūjisha Hyōgo-ken shibu, File 008295, DRI, Kobe, Japan.

The implication here is that in encouraging tourism to Kobe, through the *Luminarie* and other more mundane means (like intricate business cards) local politicians were not misappropriating funds or relief but trying to generate much needed tourist revenue for the city. The economic benefit of the *Luminarie* is underscored even more by Koyama's final anecdote of a wrap party held after the *Luminarie* had finished in which the head of the prefectural Commerce Reconstruction Office and the vice chair of the Kobe Chamber of Commerce enthusiastically declared in unison "Let's hold it again next year!"[149]

That Feeling of Lightness Returns

Boosters and fans of the *Kobe Luminarie* alike had their wishes answered and the event returned in December of 1996. We can clearly see that organizers incorporated the desires of local political and business elites expressed following the inaugural event. The 1996 edition featured an extended run time of 14 days as well as an expansion of the festival grounds beyond the former foreign settlement to also include Higashi-Yuenchi, Kitano, the entrance of Shin-Kobe Station, and Harbor Land. As was noted above, both the extension and expansion were publicly lobbied for following the 1995 *Luminarie*. The Kobe *Luminarie* would be further institutionalized, securing funding from the national government like other "symbolic" projects in 1997.[150]

Although David W. Eddington argues that the megaprojects did little to help the economy overall, the efforts to attract tourists back to the city were a bright spot in the reconstruction efforts.[151] Interest in viewing the disaster zone and events like the *Luminarie* helped to attract

[149] "Kōbe Luminarie fukkō-sunda to omowareru? (Shinbun kirinuki)," Box 90 Nihon sekijūjisha Hyōgo-ken shibu, File 008295, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[150] "Kōbe ga kagayaku yoru KOBE Luminarie (chirashi)," Box 132 Shiraishi Kenji, File 004077, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[151] Eddington, 186-191.

28.1 million tourists to Kobe in 2003, about a 15 percent increase over pre-quake (1994) numbers.[152] To get a sense of just how impactful the *Luminarie* was in terms of luring tourists, the 2003 celebration of the *Luminarie* attracted 5 million 66 thousand spectators according to the *Luminarie* website.[153] While the numbers do not differentiate between local and out of town spectators, if even ¼ of the attendees where from outside Kobe, they would account for close to 5% of total tourists for the entire year. This influx of tourists did not necessarily translate to a matching consumer boom, despite the rosy portrayals of the throngs of customers during the first *Luminarie*. The recovery favored mostly large department stores (like Daimaru), but local stores and shopping centers struggled to restore their presence and sales to 1994 levels.[154] Despite the mixed economic benefits, the event would go on to become a mainstay of wintertime Kobe running for 25 years straight until it was disrupted in 2020 and again in 2021 by the outbreak of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

An important element behind the *Luminarie*'s success, as Koyama argued through her anecdotes and as was shown by continued spectator enthusiasm for the event, were the feelings the light display evoked in visitors. The *Luminarie* event planners seem to have grasped this early on, with a flyer for the 2nd annual *Luminarie* announcing "once again, that feeling comes to Kobe."[155] Local political, business, and media elites articulated the *Luminarie* as a respectful form of pleasurable escape from the "darkness" of the disaster, a memorial event and a wintertime celebration wrapped into one. As Barrios has shown in his own work, the affective logics underlying elite-led disaster recovery policy are not always met with agreement on the

[152] Eddington, 191.
[153] Kōbe Luminarie, "Kōbe Luminarie sutōrii," accessed March 5, 2022, https://www.kobe-luminarie.jp/cont-02.htm.
[154] Eddington, 191.
[155] "Kōbe ga kagayaku yoru KOBE Luminarie (chirashi)," Box 132 Shiraishi Kenji, File 004077, DRI, Kobe, Japan.

part of disaster survivors. While there were critics of the *Luminarie*, in this case the affective logics of the event put forth by elites seemed to have been enthusiastically endorsed by Kobe residents and tourists alike. The focus on joy and hope evokes, at least partially, the emotional forgetting envisioned by the designers of memorials to the Great Kantō Earthquake in interwar Japan explored in Chapter 1. While the designers and boosters of the *Luminarie* did not go as far as to endorse full on emotional amnesia, the persistence of positivity and futurity in disaster memorial activities in Japan speaks to the role both play in the function of disaster memorials. Contrary to conventional understandings of memorials as one-dimensional somber reflections on the past, disaster memorials in modern Japan are temporally and affectively multidimensional. The next section on the main memorial event to commemorate the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake, the *1.17 Tsudoi*, illustrates how even more "traditional" memorial events can accommodate the incorporation of joy and hope by participants over the years.

The Shifting Emotions of the *1.17 Tsudoi*

"Twenty years have passed since the disaster. I was in the womb then, so I don't know [much about the disaster], but I want to cherish the life I have to live." [156]

—Memorial Message offered at HAT Kobe during the 20th Anniversary *1.17 Tsudoi*

How were hopes for a better future incorporated into the more conventional memorial ceremonies held on the anniversary of the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake? As we saw in Noda Hiroshi's poem that opened this chapter, participants in memorials as early as the first anniversary of the disaster were already articulating their forward-looking resolve for both the

[156] "Shinsai 20 shūnen tsuitō shikiten HAT Kōbe – tsuitō no tsudoi kaijō-bun tanzatsu," Box 324 Hyōgo anzen no hi suishin kenmin kaigi (1.17 Hyōgo memoriaru uōku jikkō iinkai), File 008002, DRI, Kobe, Japan.

city of Kobe and their own lives.[157] As Fukuda argues, and I demonstrated in my analysis of the *Kobe Luminarie*, an important function of modern post-disaster memorials is to help survivors make sense of the death and devastation and recast the disaster as an opportunity to build a better future.[158] While I have also illustrated the important role that affect and emotions played in the construction of the *Luminarie* as an effective post-disaster memorial, in this section I will seek to understand how these dynamics played out over time in the main memorial service for the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake, the *1.17 Tsudoi*.[159] By trying to analyze the shift of affect and emotions over time at the *1.17 Tsudoi* I am both answering Fukuda's call for more diachronic analysis of post-disaster rituals and building on sociology of religion scholar Miki Hizuru's observations about the emotional changes he saw at the *Tsudoi* during his fieldwork.[160] I illustrate how post-disaster memorial events accommodate shifts in emotions and remain relevant as participants relationality to the commemorated disaster event, and its victims, changes.

Analyzing the *1.17 Tsudoi* diachronically shows that the ritual function of disaster memorials as opportunities to reincorporate disaster victims into an optimistic and progressive narrative becomes more pronounced over time. Miki Hizuru, who has written extensively on the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake, has made this observation about the *1.17 Tsudoi* in his own work.[161] Miki notes that, while Japanese media coverage of the event broadcasts images showing the "unchanging" sadness of the survivors and bereaved, during his fieldwork as the disaster

[157] "Hisai-chi de tuitō-shiki (Shinbun kirinuki)," Box 257 Kōbe teijū gaikokujin shien sentā (KFC), File 009512, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[158] Fukuda, 76-78.
[159] According to Miki Hizuru the 1.17 Tsudoi is the representative memorial event for the disaster see: Miki Hizuru *"*Henshitsu suru irei gyōji 'hanshin awaji daishinsai 1.17 tsudoi' no genba kara," 249-270.
[160] Miki Hizuru, *"*Henshitsu suru irei gyōji 'hanshin awaji daishinsai 1.17 tsudoi' no genba kara," 249-270.
[161] See: Miki Hizuru, *Shūkyō to shinsai – Hanshin-Awaji, Higashi-Nihon sore kara* (Moriwa-sha, 2015), Miki Hizuru, *Fukkō to Shūkyō – Shinsai-go no hito to shakai o iyasu mono* (Tōhō shuppan, 2001). Miki Hizuru *Hisai kioku to kokoro no fukkō* no shūkyō shakaigaku – *Nihon to sekai no jirei ni miru* (Akashi shoten, 2020).

event receded further into the past, he encountered less visibly sad people and instead noticed the gradual increase in a lighthearted mood at the memorial ceremony.[162] Miki saw this change not only in people's demeanor, but also in the language used at the event. For example, the main ceremony ground of the *1.17 Tsudoi* centers on a large amount of small bamboo lanterns, arranged into the date "1.17" and words like "*tsunagu*" (connection) or "*ganbarō*" (let's do our best) visible from above. Volunteers can arrange to both light these lanterns and emblazon them with words of their choice. Miki remarks how the words volunteers chose to write on these lanterns changed from words that would indicate mourning like *irei* (memorial/consoling the dead), *tsuitō* (memorial), or *yasurakani* (rest in peace), to words that expressed positive aspirations like *heiwa* (peace), *kizuna* (ties that bind) or *kibō* (hope).[163]

[162] Miki, "Henshitsu suru irei gyōji 'hanshin awaji daishinsai 1.17 tsudoi' no genba kara," 253.
[163] Miki, "Henshitsu suru irei gyōji 'hanshin awaji daishinsai 1.17 tsudoi' no genba kara," 254-255.

Image 10: Photograph of bamboo lanterns at the 1.17 Tsudoi in 2019. The characters for "prayer" (*inoru*, 祈), "feeling" (*kan*, 感), and "happiness" (*shiawase*, 幸) are visible in the foreground, while one lantern, partially obscured, carries a character for "fear" (*osoreru*, 悚). Photograph by the author.

Miki writes that he does not want to discount the real sadness some survivors may continue to feel and express at the memorial service, but he argues that these affective changes shift the emphasis of the event. While the form and function of the *1.17 Tsudoi* may stay the same the focus of the event changes over time, away from mourning or reminiscing and towards

future intentions.[164] Correspondingly, as this shift happens, those who come to the event seeking to connect in their sadness and mourning become less visible and those who are focused on the future become the main driver of the ceremony.[165] This section sheds further light on Miki's insights and show how this affective shift was expressed by participants of the *1.17 Tsudoi*.

Memorializing the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake at the 1.17 Tsudoi

Before we investigate the affective shift of the *1.17 Tsudoi* over time, it is important that we briefly sketch out the basic components of the *Tsudoi* and other commemorative events honoring the victims and commemorating the anniversary of the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake in Kobe and surrounding areas. As was touched on earlier, post-1945 memorial events in Japan share many of the ritualistic and symbolic components with memorial ceremonies around the world, and especially Europe, taking part in a larger process of standardization, homogenization, and globalization of memory culture following the end of WWII.[166] Some of these ceremonial elements should be familiar from their earlier inclusion in the Japanese memorial repertoire like the moment of silence, which was discussed briefly in Chapter 1.[167] Others, like the intense mediation of memorial events thanks to the spread of television and video recording technologies, represented a significant shift in intertwined cultural and technological approaches to memorialization in the postwar era.[168] What an overview of the structure of postwar disaster memorial ceremonies is that they are collective, multilayered, incorporate a variety of interactive practices, and make use of universalistic symbolic system.[169]

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[164] Miki, "Henshitsu suru irei gyōji 'hanshin awaji daishinsai 1.17 tsudoi' no genba kara," 257.
[165] Miki, "Henshitsu suru irei gyōji 'hanshin awaji daishinsai 1.17 tsudoi' no genba kara," 257-261
[166] Fukuda, 81-83.
[167] For a look at the introduction of the moment of silence (*mokutō*) into the Japanese context see: Awazu, 52-63.
[168] Fukuda, 81-83.
[169] Fukuda, 81-82.

This panoply of practices, symbols, and traditions has proven to be durable across cultures and across time, and likely plays a part in enabling iterations of the *1.17 Tsudoi* to shift along with participants' attitudes and relationships to the disaster and its memory over the years.[170]

What I want to note first about memorial ceremonies to the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake, is that although the *1.17 Tsudoi* has become the representative event commemorating the disaster, the anniversary is a city-wide (and indeed region-wide) affair. A series of letters sent out by the prefecture-run Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake Victims' Memorial Ceremony Implementation Committee (*Hanshin-Awaji daishinsai giseisha tsuitō shikiten jikō iinkai*) and related bureaucrats to governmental offices across the Hanshin area in early January 1996 before the first anniversary of the disaster illustrates the level of regional coordination regarding memorial practices.[171] The letters sent to governmental offices, like city halls, mayors, and schools, contained detailed instructions for how government agencies should engage in the expression of grief for the victims of the quake as well as how they should enable citizen participation in and access to memorial practices.

A letter regarding an area-wide moment of silence sent on January 5, 1996, instructed local mayors to encourage their citizens to participate in the moment of silence to "pray for the happiness of the victims" that set to occur at noon on January 17th and last for one minute.[172] It also included instructions to set up screens with live simulcast of the prefectural memorial ceremony that would occur from 11:55am to 1pm at the Hyōgo Prefectural Hall. This simulcast, the letter stipulated, should be set up near stations where mourners could offer written memorial

[170] Fukuda, 81-82.
[171] "Hyōgo-ken nanbu jishin tsuitō-shiki tōjitsu ni okeru chōi hyōmei nitsuite," Box 3601010, File 001148, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[172] "Hyōgo-ken nanbu jishin tsuitō-shiki tōjitsu ni okeru chōi hyōmei nitsuite," Box 3601010, File 001148, DRI, Kobe, Japan.

messages (*kichō/techō*), to enable as many people to see the ceremony as possible. Flags in front of governmental buildings were also to be flown at half-mast throughout the day.[173] Archival holdings at the DRI show that this dispersed but coordinated approach to memorial events and activities persisted in the decades that followed the first anniversary with various locations set up across the city and region to receive memorial offerings by mourners and participants.[174] Articles from the planning of events for the 2nd anniversary published in late 1996 and early 1997 show an astounding 57 events related to commemorating the disaster including memorial lectures, symposia, concerts, exhibitions, and social gatherings in addition to more conventional memorial ceremonies.[175] During my own time conducting research at the DRI in Kobe, I was able to attend two memorial ceremonies, the main *1.17 Tsudoi* in the morning and a memorial service for the HAT Kobe area at the DRI later in the day. The HAT Kobe memorial also served as a gathering place for a "Monument Walk" event, a regularly organized group trek to visit local memorial stones scattered across the area.[176]

Amidst this diverse flurry of memorial activities, conventional memorial ceremonies, or post-disaster rituals (*irei-sai*, *tsuitō-shiki*, or *tsudoi*) followed a relatively set format. The program for a memorial service held at Kobe Port Island Hall in 2000 for the 5th anniversary of

[173] "Hyōgo-ken nanbu jishin tsuitō-shiki tōjitsu ni okeru chōi hyōmei nitsuite," Box 3601010, File 001148, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[174] For example, the DRI's vast holding of memorial messages show that a variety of locations both within the city (like HAT Kobe) and outside Kobe (like Harima, the Awaji Prefectural Office, and Sasayama city) accepted offerings of memorial messages. This is reflected by a January 1997 Yomiuri article on the Prefectural Memorial Service for the 2nd anniversary that stated various locations would accept memorial messages from the general public see: "Ken no shinsai tsuitō-shiki shiki shidai kimaru (Shinbun kirinuki)," Box 3 Shitayama shōgakkō hinanjo, File 002034, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[175] See: "Ichigatsu ～ nigatsu-matsu go-jū-nana ibento," Box 282 Kōbe Shōkōkaigisho, File 008124, DRI, Kobe, Japan, and "Shinsai ni-nen no tsuitō=shiki gyōji yōtei wo happyō," Box 282 Kōbe Shōkōkaigisho, File 008125, DRI, Kobe, Japan. For an overview of the 1st anniversary see: "Asu Hanshin daishinsai kara ichinen hisai kakuchi de tusitō-shiki," Box 257 Kōbe teijū gaikokujin shien sentā (KFC), File 009433, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[176] For more discussion of the "monument walk" see: Miki Hizuru, *Fukkō to shūkyō*, 135-161, or "Shinsai monyūmento kōryū wōku (chirashi)," Box 422 Ise Seiji, File 001047, DRI, Kobe, Japan.

the disaster.[177] The ceremony opened with a moment of silence, much like the prefectural memorial service did in 1996. This was followed by the performance of memorial songs, ceremonial remarks (*shiki-ji*), memorial remarks (*tsuitō no kotoba*), and remarks from a representative of the bereaved.[178] This section, which heavily featured speakers and speeches was then followed by the offering of flowers by various parties (the bereaved, sponsors, organizers, and other guests) for the deceased. Finally, those in attendance were encouraged to offer flowers themselves.[179]

As was shown at the beginning of this chapter both governmental officials (like Speaker Doi and Mayor Shibao) and the bereaved (like Noda) participated as speakers at memorial ceremonies. Oftentimes representatives of the bereaved seemed to have been selected based partly on willingness to speak, but also the intensity of their disaster experience. For example, the representative of the bereaved for the 1st anniversary Nada Ward memorial ceremony was 59-year-old Ueda Toshiko.[180] A year earlier Ueda had lost her 17-year-old daughter, who had been sleeping in the same room as Ueda when the earthquake struck early in the morning. Despite this tragedy Ueda "overcame her sadness" and delivered remarks including, "our duty is to cherish this life we've been allowed to live and to forever talk about that day."[181] Survivors and bereaved like Ueda likely had a significant emotional impact on memorial service attendees. Oftentimes

[177] "Hanshin-awaji daishinsai giseisha Kōbe-shi tsuitō-shiki shiki-shidai," Box 256 Satō Tadashi, File 000058, DRI, Kobe, Japan. Other examples include: "Hanshin-awaji daishinsai Ashiya-shi giseisha tsuitō-shiki shiki-shidai," Box 2200661 Hirose Takashi, File 000004, DRI, Kobe, Japan"Nishinomiya-shi giseisha tsuitō-shiki Hanshin-awaji daishinsai go-shūnen," Box 1200800 Kodama Mineo, File 000014, DRI, Kobe, Japan, "Hanshin daishinsai gisei dōhō isshūki gōdō tsuitō-shiki," Box 2300182 D Hyōgo-chihō honbu, File 000002, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[178] "Hanshin-awaji daishinsai giseisha Kōbe-shi tsuitō-shiki shiki-shidai," Box 256 Satō Tadashi, File 000058, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[179] "Hanshin-awaji daishinsai giseisha Kōbe-shi tsuitō-shiki shiki-shidai," Box 256 Satō Tadashi, File 000058, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[180] "Kanashimi koete isshū-nen gōdō ireisai (Shinbun kirinuki)," Box 257 Kōbe teijū gaikokujin shien sentā (KFC), File 009540, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[181] "Kanashimi koete isshū-nen gōdō ireisai (Shinbun kirinuki)," Box 257 Kōbe teijū gaikokujin shien sentā (KFC), File 009540, DRI, Kobe, Japan.

children, or those who were children at the time of the disaster, were also called on to represent the bereaved. Hirose Megumi, who served as a representative for the bereaved at a memorial ceremony on the 3rd anniversary in 1998 was in middle school when the earthquake struck.[182] Like Ueda, Hirose was sleeping in a bedroom with a relative, her grandmother, when the shaking started. In her remarks at the ceremony Hirose recounts how she cried out to her grandmother, who quickly threw her body over Hirose to protect her before they were both covered in debris, and everything went black. Hirose told the crowd that her grandmother yelled her name countless times, until falling silent. She had passed away covering Hirose with her body and protecting her. Hirose, echoing the sentiment of Ueda as well as that of many other survivors, told the crowd she was resolved to "protect this life and body that my grandmother protected, and to live the life that my grandmother entrusted to me."[183] Hirose's story highlights how the deep sadness of mourning and trauma could mix with feelings of joy, thankfulness, and determination. Moreover, as a young adult, Hirose, like many other youths that served as representatives for the bereaved, embodied hope for the future at these memorial ceremonies.

As has been reflected above, attendees were meant to participate throughout memorial ceremonies. For example, it is evident that at the 5th anniversary Kobe Port Island Hall memorial service mentioned about that the audience was meant to sing along to one of the memorial songs, indicated by the inclusion of the lyrics in the program. The song was "To Carry Along Happiness" (*Shiawase hakoberu yō ni*) written by local schoolteacher Usui Makoto 2 years after he experienced the earthquake. The song was broadly positive wishing an "injured Kobe" a

[182] "Heisei jū-nen Kōbe-shi tusitō-shiki de no [izoku daihyō no kotoba]," Box 3500201 Kajigen kanamono, File 001001, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[183] "Heisei jū-nen Kōbe-shi tusitō-shiki de no [izoku daihyō no kotoba]," Box 3500201 Kajigen kanamono, File 001001, DRI, Kobe, Japan.

bright future filled with happiness.[184] Usui's inspiration for the song, which was also included in the program captured the similar duality of Hirose's speech. Usui explained that even though he had been born in Kobe, he hadn't realized his deep love for the city until he saw it covered in debris, and he probably never would have hadn't he felt that sadness.[185] Both the inclusion of the lyrics and the story behind Usui's song were meant to encourage memorial goers to join in the singing. Other participatory rituals common to memorial ceremonies involved memorial goers offering flowers at an altar or handwritten memorial messages (which we will examine in detail in the next subsection) to pay respect for the dead and to leave a mark that they had attended.

All these major elements are present at the *1.17 Tsudoi* which now serves as the central nexus of memorial activity in the city of Kobe on the anniversary of the disaster. Held in Higashi-Yuenchi Park the main memorial site is set up by event committee and volunteers as many as two days before the 17th. Fittingly, like the *Kobe Luminarie*, the *1.17 Tsudoi* also centers on light. The day before volunteers help to set up the bamboo lanterns and glass candles which make up the main memorial activity. These lanterns and candles are arranged into a word like "*ganbarō*" (let's do our best) and the date "1.17," and are lit by memorial goers around 5am on the 17th. A moment of silence is observed first at 5:46 am, and then again later in the day at 5:46pm amidst the flickering flames.[186] When I went to the 2019 *Tsudoi* I was struck by how the simple act of waking up early to walk down to the memorial ground made me think about what it must have been like to be shook awake by the earthquake at that hour of the early morning. Despite the early hour, mourners were crowded around the lanterns and candles, lighting those

[184] "Hanshin-awaji daishinsai giseisha Kōbe-shi tsuitō-shiki shiki-shidai," Box 256 Satō Tadashi, File 000058, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[185] "Hanshin-awaji daishinsai giseisha Kōbe-shi tsuitō-shiki shiki-shidai," Box 256 Satō Tadashi, File 000058, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[186] Hanshin-Awaji Daishinsai 1.17 no tsudoi, "Hanshin-Awaji daishinsai 1.17 no tsudoi to wa," accessed: April 2, 2022, http://117notsudoi.jp/.

that were blown out and at times offering silent prayers. Even at the 5am ceremony there was a line that extended beyond the length of the park to offer flowers and memorial messages at the "Cosmic Elements" memorial. When I returned to the memorial ground for the 5pm moment of silence I encountered a variety of events, like a children's choir singing at the "Cosmic Elements" memorial, a tent offering complimentary tea, and many participants continuing to dutifully relight lanterns and candles.

Like Miki, I observed a wide range of emotions at the *1.17 Tsudoi*, which at times felt festive (although not in quite the same way as the *Luminarie*). I saw participants, especially at the morning service, crying, bowing their heads, and clasping their hands in prayer. However, I also saw children happily lighting candles as well as teenagers writing heartfelt messages on large sheets of paper set up in a tent on the side of the memorial grounds. My experience was likely colored by it having been the 24th anniversary of the disaster, a distant memory for some participants and even an event that occurred before the birth of others. The next section looks at this temporal aspect of the *1.17 Tsudoi* and related memorial events in detail by examining memorial messages offered by participants over the years.

Memorial Messages: Mourning for the Past, Looking to the Future

As mentioned above, an important participatory component of the *1.17 Tsudoi* and related memorial events following the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake, is the offering of memorial messages (*techō* or *kichō*) by mourners and event goers. Thousands of these memorial messages are offered each year at the main memorial ceremony in Higashi-Yuenchi Park, as well as at various satellite memorial ceremonies and altars around the city. These memorial messages, at least since the 6th anniversary of the disaster in 2001, have been submitted on slips of white

cardstock, measuring about 6 by 3 inches called *tanzatsu* in Japanese. These cards were further standardized over time. In earlier years the slips of cardstock were blank, leading memorial-goers to sometimes sign names with their names alongside their messages.[187] For later commemorations, like the 15th or 20th anniversaries (2010 and 2015 respectively), the cards became slightly more structured. On one side of these later cards there were spaces indicated for the participant to write their name and address. On the opposite side of the card was typed a simple request, reading "please write a message" (*messēji o okakikudsai*). The rest of the card was left blank allowing everyone to write what they desire.[188]

This practice highlights some of the complexities of disaster memorialization that have been explored in this dissertation. These messages are hard to read as either fully public or private memorial practices. Written at public memorial events, it is unclear whether the writers were aware that others (including researchers) would read them. However, it would be a mistake to consider these messages as unmediated private expressions of the participants thoughts and feelings. I approach the messages as part of the collective practice of the memorial event, and thus, represent not only what participants desired to write, but also what they felt was appropriate to express at the *1.17 Tsudoi*. In a way it mirrors the practice of taking mementos or photographs to document one's visit/pilgrimage to a memorial site or event. Instead, with these memorial messages, event goers leave a trace of their participation at the site itself.[189]

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[187] "Shinsai 6 shūnen tsuitō no tsudoi HAT Kōbe – tsuitō no tsudoi kaijō-bun tanzatsu," Box 324 Hyōgo anzen no hi suishin kenmin kaigi (1.17 Hyōgo memoriaru uōku jikkō iinkai), File 002001, DRI, Kobe, Japan. "Shinsai 8 shūnen tsuitō no tsudoi HAT Kōbe – tsuitō no tsudoi kaijō-bun tanzatsu," Box 324 Hyōgo anzen no hi suishin kenmin kaigi (1.17 Hyōgo memoriaru uōku jikkō iinkai), File 003001, DRI, Kobe, Japan.

[188] "Shinsai 15 shūnen tsuitō shikiten HAT Kōbe – tsuitō no tsudoi kaijō-bun tanzatsu," Box 324 Hyōgo anzen no hi suishin kenmin kaigi (1.17 Hyōgo memoriaru uōku jikkō iinkai), File 007004, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
"Shinsai 20 shūnen tsuitō shikiten HAT Kōbe – tsuitō no tsudoi kaijō-bun tanzatsu," Box 324 Hyōgo anzen no hi suishin kenmin kaigi (1.17 Hyōgo memoriaru uōku jikkō iinkai), File 008002, DRI, Kobe, Japan.

[189] Nelson and Olin, 11.

The relatively open structure of cards means participants use the memorial messages in various ways. A great deal of memorial messages at many iterations of the *1.17 Tsudoi* include only the name and address of the person submitting the memorial message card. These blank message cards are a marker that the offering person participated, but they are devoid of a message regarding the ceremony or disaster. Others contain messages consisting of short and pithy buzzwords, often single *kanji* characters or *kanji* compounds, like "ties that bind" (*kizuna*), "hope" (*kibō*), or "reconstruction" (*fukkō*). Others still consist of long paragraphs narrating an individual's disaster or post disaster experience. Some are steeped in ritualistic or set phrases that appear commonly over the years and throughout many of the messages offered by memorial participants. The contents of other messages are deeply personal and reference events or activities that are sometimes hard to decipher, showing that the writer perhaps had an audience in mind that would understand them, namely, the dead. The number of variations and idiosyncrasies are a testament to the openness of the form and the myriad perspectives and experiences individuals bring to memorial events.

What is evident, looking beyond the idiosyncrasies of individual memorial messages, is that when read in the aggregate, the memorial messages offered by attendees to the *1.17 Tsudoi* confirm Maki's observations. Over time participants in the memorial ceremony shifted from a mournful focus on the past towards a more positive emphasis on the future. They also show, more intricately how this shift was articulated by average memorial ceremony participants.

One way to see this shift from mourning to hope, and from focusing on the past to the future, is the prevalence of ritualized language referencing the soul of the deceased in messages offered at earlier memorial ceremonies. This ritualized language included phrases like "rest in peace" (*yasurakani o-nemurikudasai*) or "praying for happiness in the next world" (*go-meifuku o*

o-inorimōshiagemasu) or *kanji* compounds like "repose for the souls of the departed" (*chinkon*).[190] Each of these messages suggests that what participants thought was most appropriate, especially early in the life cycle of the *1.17 Tsudoi*, was continuing to attend to the souls of the deceased. This illustrates the continued relevance of at least the formal aspects of the "settling of spirits" function of post-disaster rituals that Fukuda discusses.[191]

In some messages writers used these ritualized phrases on their own , while others included them as part of a longer and sometimes more personal message, with the ritualized phrase coming at the end of the message. Some writers simultaneous grappled with mourning the dead and hoping for the future in their offerings. The writers combined both ofthese functions of modern post-disaster ritual in messages like "praying for the happiness of the disaster victims, from here on out [I] will work hard to pass on the lessons of the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake to the next generation," and "praying that the souls of the dead rest in peace and vowing [to achieve] peace amongst all humanity."[192] Both of these messages, submitted during the 6th anniversary of the show that, even amidst mourning, the future oriented, and even universalizing, tendency of modern memorial events was on participants' minds.

The decrease in the use of this ritualized language as the disaster event receded into the past was dramatic. A sample of cards offered at the HAT Kobe *1.17 Tsudoi* shows that a little under half of participants who wrote messages used these ritualized phrases referencing the dead. In contrast, during the 8th (2003) and 15th (2010) anniversary memorial services only around one in ten memorial participants who wrote messages used these phrases.[193] By 2015, at the 20th

[190] "Shinsai 6 shūnen tsuitō no tsudoi HAT Kōbe – tsuitō no tsudoi kaijō-bun tanzatsu," Box 324 Hyōgo anzen no hi suishin kenmin kaigi (1.17 Hyōgo memoriaru uōku jikkō iinkai), File 002001, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[191] Fukuda, 74-75.
[192] "Shinsai 6 shūnen tsuitō no tsudoi HAT Kōbe – tsuitō no tsudoi kaijō-bun tanzatsu," Box 324 Hyōgo anzen no hi suishin kenmin kaigi (1.17 Hyōgo memoriaru uōku jikkō iinkai), File 002001, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[193] "Shinsai 8 shūnen tsuitō no tsudoi HAT Kōbe – tsuitō no tsudoi kaijō-bun tanzatsu," Box 324 Hyōgo anzen no hi suishin kenmin kaigi (1.17 Hyōgo memoriaru uōku jikkō iinkai), File 003001, DRI, Kobe, Japan, "Shinsai 15

anniversary in HAT Kobe, that number dropped even further, to about one in twenty message writers using ritual phrases to honor, and soothe, the deceased.[194] Like Miki, I do not want to discount the emotions of those who continued to use the memorial messages to express grief like two participants during the 15th anniversary HAT Kobe ceremony who wrote, respectively, "rest in peace mother-in-law" and "be happy in heaven, Susumu-chan."[195] However, during the same time memorial messages became more positive and future oriented. Even those messages that focused past seemed to reflect a more upbeat attitude like the 20th anniversary memorial-goer who wrote "we did our best these past 20 years!"[196]

Positive forward-looking messages came in a variety of forms, ranging from statements of personal goals, exhortations for the city of Kobe, and even more universal calls for ideals like world peace, as we saw earlier. Messages offered at the 15th anniversary in 2010 illustrate these tendencies well. Some who attended the ceremony were moved to express their thankfulness for life like in messages that read "I will cherish the life I have remaining" and "I'll continue to live thankfully."[197] Others expressed hope that good times would persist like "I pray that the everyday peace and security continue" or "to building a happy home, to living healthily in peace."[198] Those who expressed their hopes for the city wrote both explicit visions like "I want to work to develop Kobe into an amazing town" or used short and snappy phrases like "Kobe

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shūnen tsuitō shikiten HAT Kōbe – tsuitō no tsudoi kaijō-bun tanzatsu," Box 324 Hyōgo anzen no hi suishin kenmin kaigi (1.17 Hyōgo memoriaru uōku jikkō iinkai), File 007004, DRI, Kobe, Japan.

[194] "Shinsai 20 shūnen tsuitō shikiten HAT Kōbe – tsuitō no tsudoi kaijō-bun tanzatsu," Box 324 Hyōgo anzen no hi suishin kenmin kaigi (1.17 Hyōgo memoriaru uōku jikkō iinkai), File 008002, DRI, Kobe, Japan.

[195] "Shinsai 15 shūnen tsuitō shikiten HAT Kōbe – tsuitō no tsudoi kaijō-bun tanzatsu," Box 324 Hyōgo anzen no hi suishin kenmin kaigi (1.17 Hyōgo memoriaru uōku jikkō iinkai), File 007004, DRI, Kobe, Japan.

[196] "Shinsai 20 shūnen tsuitō shikiten HAT Kōbe – tsuitō no tsudoi kaijō-bun tanzatsu," Box 324 Hyōgo anzen no hi suishin kenmin kaigi (1.17 Hyōgo memoriaru uōku jikkō iinkai), File 008002, DRI, Kobe, Japan.

[197] "Shinsai 15 shūnen tsuitō shikiten HAT Kōbe – tsuitō no tsudoi kaijō-bun tanzatsu," Box 324 Hyōgo anzen no hi suishin kenmin kaigi (1.17 Hyōgo memoriaru uōku jikkō iinkai), File 007004, DRI, Kobe, Japan.

[198] "Shinsai 15 shūnen tsuitō shikiten HAT Kōbe – tsuitō no tsudoi kaijō-bun tanzatsu," Box 324 Hyōgo anzen no hi suishin kenmin kaigi (1.17 Hyōgo memoriaru uōku jikkō iinkai), File 007004, DRI, Kobe, Japan.

fight!"[199] Sometimes their hopes for the future reflected a desire specifically to better disaster preparedness like "I pray today will be an opportunity to increase awareness of disaster prevention and mitigation," or "we do not know when a disaster will occur, let's become strong and not be defeated by the [next one]."[200] Some participants even linked these more disaster related hopes to universalistic calls for peace. For example, one message read "praying for a peaceful future and disaster mitigation."[201] The frequency of these messages in later years of the memorial ceremony also confirms Miki's observations. It also illustrates how post-disaster memorial ceremonies can be capacious, enabling participants to express a variety of future oriented hopes and dreams.

One explanation for this affective shift presents itself within the memorial messages themselves: generational change. As we saw with the 20th Anniversary memorial message that opened this chapter, as time went on, the positionality of memorial participants to the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake changed. Some, like the writer who was in utero during the quake, may not even have first-hand experience or memories of the disaster event. For example, one participant at the 15th anniversary ceremony wrote "because it's something that happened before I was born, I really do not know much about the earthquake, but I've seen the events on TV etc., the fires looked terrible."[202] Even those who were young at the time admit to having imperfect memory of the event, like a participant of the 15th anniversary who wrote "I was an elementary student at that time, so I do not know a lot of details [about the quake], but now I want to learn

[199] "Shinsai 15 shūnen tsuitō shikiten HAT Kōbe – tsuitō no tsudoi kaijō-bun tanzatsu," Box 324 Hyōgo anzen no hi suishin kenmin kaigi (1.17 Hyōgo memoriaru uōku jikkō iinkai), File 007004, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[200] "Shinsai 15 shūnen tsuitō shikiten HAT Kōbe – tsuitō no tsudoi kaijō-bun tanzatsu," Box 324 Hyōgo anzen no hi suishin kenmin kaigi (1.17 Hyōgo memoriaru uōku jikkō iinkai), File 007004, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[201] "Shinsai 15 shūnen tsuitō shikiten HAT Kōbe – tsuitō no tsudoi kaijō-bun tanzatsu," Box 324 Hyōgo anzen no hi suishin kenmin kaigi (1.17 Hyōgo memoriaru uōku jikkō iinkai), File 007004, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[202] "Shinsai 15 shūnen tsuitō shikiten HAT Kōbe – tsuitō no tsudoi kaijō-bun tanzatsu," Box 324 Hyōgo anzen no hi suishin kenmin kaigi (1.17 Hyōgo memoriaru uōku jikkō iinkai), File 007004, DRI, Kobe, Japan.

more."[203] These participants represented the slow shift of generational change and, with this change, different attitudes toward the disaster. For those who were yet to be born or too young to understand the full impact of the event, the memorial ceremony presents an opportunity to learn about the event as history and incorporate it into one's worldview. It is one way that memory of the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake is passed onto future generations.

This process of generational shift and the transference of collective memory can be seen with great intimacy with a set of five memorial messages offered by the Murakami family at the 15th anniversary ceremony at HAT Kobe.[204] The Murakami's were a family of four (a husband, wife and their two sons) living in Kobe's Hyōgo Ward that attended the HAT Kobe along with another relative, perhaps an aunt or grandmother who also lived nearby. The messages of the three adults showed a desire to connect the past to the future. Specifically, two of the Murakamis mention conveying stories of the disaster to children. For the father of the four-person household this meant teaching his own children about the disaster, he wrote, "From now on, I want to continue to tell my own children about the dreadfulness of earthquakes."[205] The relative who joined the Murakami family expressed a desire to tell children about the disaster, framing her resolve in more generalized terms. She wrote "I want to, with great care, share stories with children who know nothing of earthquakes."[206] Although the mother did not write about conveying knowledge of the earthquake to her children explicitly, she did connect her experience

[203] "Shinsai 15 shūnen tsuitō shikiten HAT Kōbe – tsuitō no tsudoi kaijō-bun tanzatsu," Box 324 Hyōgo anzen no hi suishin kenmin kaigi (1.17 Hyōgo memoriaru uōku jikkō iinkai), File 007004, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[204] I have given this family a pseudonym for two reasons. First, it is not clear they were aware that their messages would be saved for future researchers. For that reason, I have left other memorial message writers anonymous. The second reason is for the ease of the reader. This section became cumbersome when trying to write it completely anonymously. "Shinsai 15 shūnen tsuitō shikiten HAT Kōbe – tsuitō no tsudoi kaijō-bun tanzatsu," Box 324 Hyōgo anzen no hi suishin kenmin kaigi (1.17 Hyōgo memoriaru uōku jikkō iinkai), File 007004, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[205] "Shinsai 15 shūnen tsuitō shikiten HAT Kōbe – tsuitō no tsudoi kaijō-bun tanzatsu," Box 324 Hyōgo anzen no hi suishin kenmin kaigi (1.17 Hyōgo memoriaru uōku jikkō iinkai), File 007004, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[206] "Shinsai 15 shūnen tsuitō shikiten HAT Kōbe – tsuitō no tsudoi kaijō-bun tanzatsu," Box 324 Hyōgo anzen no hi suishin kenmin kaigi (1.17 Hyōgo memoriaru uōku jikkō iinkai), File 007004, DRI, Kobe, Japan.

of the earthquake to her experience as a mother. She wrote "At that time I was a child, but now I have become a mother. As a parent, to protect my children, I want to be prepared."[207] By reflecting on her positionality as a child at the time of the disaster, her positionality as a mother in the present, and her desire to protect her children by being prepared for/in the future, the mother's message shows the interconnectedness of the past, present, and future made at disaster memorial events.

What makes the Murakami's messages special is that we can see the couple's children participate in this memorial practice, offering their own thoughts and words. This shows the beginning of a process of generational change and a mechanism for the transmission of disaster memory. The Murakami children were being included in the ritual practice of the *1.17 Tsudoi* facilitating an interaction with the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake as disaster history both through the memorial event and their parents' recollections. In essence we can begin to see in minute detail one of the ways in which collective memory is created. The childrens' messages were much more straightforward, both expressing a wish for the future. What seems to be the older brother, at least based on the legibility of the handwriting, wrote "I don't want an earthquake to happen a second time."[208] Echoing that sentiment his younger brother also wrote, "[I hope] an earthquake won't happen."[209] The simplicity of their messages, written entirely in *hiragana*, can be read as indicative of their age, but also as a reflection of their generational relation to the disaster. While their parents and older relatives reflect on their experiences during the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake and the responsibility of sharing that memory with the next

[207] "Shinsai 15 shūnen tsuitō shikiten HAT Kōbe – tsuitō no tsudoi kaijō-bun tanzatsu," Box 324 Hyōgo anzen no hi suishin kenmin kaigi (1.17 Hyōgo memoriaru uōku jikkō iinkai), File 007004, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[208] "Shinsai 15 shūnen tsuitō shikiten HAT Kōbe – tsuitō no tsudoi kaijō-bun tanzatsu," Box 324 Hyōgo anzen no hi suishin kenmin kaigi (1.17 Hyōgo memoriaru uōku jikkō iinkai), File 007004, DRI, Kobe, Japan.
[209] "Shinsai 15 shūnen tsuitō shikiten HAT Kōbe – tsuitō no tsudoi kaijō-bun tanzatsu," Box 324 Hyōgo anzen no hi suishin kenmin kaigi (1.17 Hyōgo memoriaru uōku jikkō iinkai), File 007004, DRI, Kobe, Japan.

generation, the Murakami children offer up the earnest and pure wish that earthquakes will not happen again in the future.

Generational shifts as illustrated by the Murakami's and other's memorial messages likely interacted with the overall feeling (created by the tenor of the speeches, the comportment of fellow memorial goers, and the memorial site itself) at any given memorial event. These intertwined dynamics provided the background for what felt appropriate for memorial goers to express in the message offerings. Everyone, of course, approached this differently, bringing their own disaster experience (or inexperience) and feelings to the event. What is notable about the practice of offering memorial messages is that it accommodated a variety of emotional reactions and emphases over the years during the *1.17 Tsudoi* and other memorial events.

Conclusion

This chapter has shown that the memorialization of 1995 Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake was an opportunity for Japanese disaster memorials to respond to larger changes in global memory culture that occurred following WWII. This culture combined with the local Japanese socio-economic situation created the conditions that allowed for memorial events like the *Kobe Luminarie* and *1.17 Tsudoi* to become durable and lasting commemorations of the earthquake. Combining the insights of Fukuda Yu and Robert Barrios, I have shown that a key driver of these events' success was their linking of the past to the future as well as mourning to hope and even enjoyment. The *Kobe Luminarie* showed the eclectic possibilities of post-1945 memorialization where a multicultural and commodified light display can become a celebrated commemorative event by expertly linking dichotomies like exotic and familiar, past and future, sadness and joy. My analysis of the *1.17 Tsudoi* showed that even more conventional memorial

events to the 1995 earthquake made us of post-1945 memorial trends to cultivate practices that straddled these dichotomies as well.

What both cases show is that disaster memorial events remain durable over time by accommodating a variety of emotions and positionalities on part of memorial goers. In contrast to stereotypical depictions of memorial ceremonies as somber and staid affairs, both the *Luminarie* and *Tsudoi* in Kobe speak to the importance of incorporating hope, futurity, and even enjoyment in memorial events to disasters. While memorial planners must be attentive to what is appropriate in each cultural and historical context, they should remain attentive to the affective connections, both positive and negative, that participants desire from memorial events.

We can see these dynamics in the wake of COVID-19. While the nature of the virus proved to be disastrous for the continuation of the *Luminarie* as a crowded public event, the virus evoked feelings for quake survivors that gave the *1.17 Tsudoi* new relevance. One participant in the 27th annual *Tsudoi* in 2022, a man in his 50s who had worked in Kobe during the quake, described how the pandemic spurred him to attend the memorial for the first time. He explained, "the unprecedented nature of the spread of the novel coronavirus overlapped with the feeling [I had] during the period of the earthquake. I started reflecting on that time a lot and decided to participate in the memorial. I strongly desired to come (to the memorial) and write on a bamboo lantern "I won't forget" (*wasurenai*)"[210] That the *1.17 Tsudoi* could accommodate this first-time memorial goer's intertwined feelings about these two seemingly disparate disasters speaks to the event's flexibility as a disaster memorial and effectiveness as a vehicle for sustained remembrance.

[210] "Kōbe de 'Hanshin-awaji daishinsai 1.17 no tsudoi' shinsai kara maru nijūnana nen," *Kōbe keizai Shinbun* January 17, 2022, https://kobe.keizai.biz/headline/3750/.

Chapter 4

The Fairy Godparent of this Place:
Memory Work(ers), Experience, and Emotion in Post-3.11 Tōhoku

Image 11: Photograph of Disaster Zone Guide Yonezawa Yuichi. Yonezawa is on the top of the remains of his family's store in Rikuzen-takata. The sign on the side of the building shows where the tsunami wave reached. Photograph by Shishido Kiyotaka for the Kizuna Project, used with permission from the creator and The Osaka Committee of Chicago Sister Cities International (CSCI).

Introduction

"Watch out, if you fall, you'll die," Yonezawa Yuichi warned as he urged me to climb the 3rd floor chimney on top of what remained of his family's former packaging store. "I want you to feel the height," Yonezawa explained ushering me up to the roughly 9 square feet of space at the top of the building. It was up there, in a space that could only accommodate one person, that Yonezawa fortuitously survived the tsunami wave that swept away most of the downtown

area of Rikuzen-takata in Iwate Prefecture on March 11, 2011. The dark and surging waves came up to just below Yonezawa's feet as he crouched, clutching to the edges of the building. For 30 minutes Yonezawa could only cling to the building, stare forward, and watch the dark waves destroy his hometown. By insisting that I climb up to where he survived the events of the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami (commonly known as 3.11), Yonezawa was trying, as much as possible, to recreate his experience of the tsunami for me. As I crouched and held on to the edges of the building, scared of the height, I gazed out over the patchwork of empty dirt lots and green rice paddies that made up the town, still being reconstructed, and looked towards the ocean. I tried to imagine what it would be like to stare down the tsunami wave.[1]

Standing atop the remains of the building was the climax of the already lively and engaging tour that Yonezawa gave of his family's former store. He credited the building with saving his life and decided to maintain it out of his personal finances.[2] Over the course of the tour, Yonezawa recounted his experience of 3.11 that began with the celebration of his, then newborn, daughter's first shrine visit.[3] The day ended with the deaths of Yonezawa's parents and brother and with Yonezawa himself drenched from the spray of the waves. Cold and shivering, he spent the night stuck on the roof of the store building. Throughout the hour-long tour, Yonezawa gestured animatedly, acting out his reactions to the earthquake and subsequent tsunami. He showed how his body shook, mimicked the sounds he heard, and recreated his

[1] Yonezawa Yuichi, in conversation with the author, Rikuzen-takata, Iwate Prefecture, Japan, June 18, 2019.
[2] According to Yonezawa the city of Rikuzen-takata offered to demolish buildings damaged by the disaster but still standing at no charge to the owner up to (find date), after that building owners would have to pay maintain the buildings. This makes the remains or *ikō* of Yonezawa's store relatively unique. Usually if building remains are maintained for memorial or commemorative purposes following 3.11 they are done so by local government and funded with government money. Yonezawa Yuichi, in discussion with the author, Rikuzen-takata, Iwate Prefecture, Japan, June 18, 2019.
[3] A newborn child is usually taken to the family or local shrine shortly after they are born for their first shrine visit, known as *omiyamairi*, to pray for the child's good health. Yonezawa's wife and daughter, who went to visit his in-laws in Ōfunato, thankfully survived the disaster. Yonezawa Yuichi, in discussion with the author, Rikuzen-takata, Iwate Prefecture, Japan, June 18, 2019.

panicked scramble to the top of the building when he finally realized the wave was overtaking the town.[4]

Why did Yonezawa have me, and likely many others who he guided through his experience of 3.11, climb up to where he had survived to experience it for myself? What did he hope I would learn, and why was it so important to recreate the event? What are the possibilities and limitations of this, and other types of memorialization based on recreating disaster experience? How do those who enact this memory work navigate their own experiences and emotions in tension with the experiences and emotions of those they are guiding? These are some of the driving questions of this chapter, which examines the memory culture of the hard-hit coastline of the Tōhoku region in post-3.11 Japan.

This chapter explores post-3.11 memory culture by focusing on the efforts of individuals like Yonezawa, who are actively involved in the creation, enaction, and maintenance of memorial spaces and practices. Post-3.11 memorial spaces and practices are incredibly diverse ranging from the multifaceted commemorative landscapes of memorial parks funded in part by the national government to informal and private efforts to mark where loved ones were lost (or where their bodies were found).[5] The memory spaces and practices of post-3.11 Tōhoku are, in short, multivalent. These sites and practices often defy dichotomies like public/private, religious/secular, institutional/grassroots, built/found, and temporary/permanent. Likewise, the occupations, societal positions, and relationships to memorialization among individuals engaged in this type of memory work are wide-ranging. These individuals can be national government

[4] Yonezawa Yuichi, in discussion with the author, Rikuzen-takata, Iwate Prefecture, Japan, June 18, 2019.
[5] To give an example of the scale of just official memorial institutions initiated by local government, according to the research of the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Tourism (MLIT) in 2012, MLIT identified that 52 localities in the Tōhoku region had published reconstruction plans. Among those plans, 25 included plans for commemorative institutions, 17 included memorial parks, while 8 included memorials other than parks. MLIT, "Higashi-nihon daishinsai fukkō kinen kōen kentō kaigi setsumei shiryō, shiryō 3," 1, accessed November 12, 2020, https://www.mlit.go.jp/common/000188887.pdf.

bureaucrats, local government officials, designers, activists, artists, business owners, retired citizens, professional archivists, to give an inexhaustive list. Their work to create, maintain, and enact memorialization, or (in other words) their memory work, can be professional and compensated or amateur and volunteer. Despite these differences within this diverse group, they are all engaged in memory work writ large. To understand the similarities between these seemingly disparate actors this chapter uses the term memory worker to describe individuals actively engaged in the production, preservation, and enaction of memorial spaces and practices.

Specifically, this chapter will question how memory workers, many of which are disaster survivors themselves, navigate, articulate, and manage their own experiences and emotions in a memory culture that emphasizes experience. While this kind of experiential memorialization, has links to general trends in post-WWII global memory culture, this chapter shows that experience is instrumentalized in post-3.11 Tōhoku to specific ends. I show that experiential memorialization has two major modes in post-3.11 Tōhoku: experience as warning, and experience as healing. In the warning mode, memorial spaces and practices are meant to reenact simulacra of the disaster event for those who did not experience it themselves. The purpose of this type of memorialization goes beyond spreading information about the disaster and its survivors. As warnings, experiential memorialization is meant to impress upon those without disaster experience (the disaster inexperienced, if you will) the dire nature of the disaster, the scale of the destruction, and the hardship endured by survivors. The hope is that this imitative experience will engender a change within the disaster inexperienced. This change would ideally mirror changes experienced by actual disaster survivors: a heightened awareness of the threat of disaster and a commitment to disaster preparedness and prevention. In the healing mode memorial spaces and practices are meant to evoke discussion of survivors' disaster experiences

and emotions, thus giving them the opportunity (perhaps their first opportunity) to open up about, share, and reflect on their disaster experiences. In this mode experiential memorialization is meant to be a restorative practice, helping survivors to work through their personal disaster experiences.

Both of these modes, experiential memorialization as warning and as healing, elicit similar forms of emotional management on behalf of the memory workers enacting them.[6] The term "emotional management" draws greatly on and is informed by Arlie Hochschild's synonymous ideas of "emotion management," "emotion work," and "deep acting."[7] Like Hochschild's concepts, emotional management points to the work individuals must do to induce or inhibit feelings in order to render them "appropriate" for a given situation.[8] Standards of appropriateness in Hochschild's work are dictated by "feeling rules" or the parts of ideology that deal with emotion.[9] Hochschild's work is useful for its attention to how emotional management and emotional work are commoditized in the modern economy. While this link between emotion and traditional concepts of labor are useful for this analysis that centers "work," memory worker's emotional management cannot be neatly filed into Hochschild's categories of emotion work (emotion management done in private life) and emotion labor (emotion management done for a wage at one's job).[10] This is due to the ambiguities mentioned early that blur the lines between public/private space and professionalism/volunteerism for memory workers. Despite this caveat, the way Hochschild links individual emotions, societal norms, and labor makes her

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[6] In using the term "emotional management" I draw on Arlie Hochschild's idea of "emotion management." Arlie Russell Hochschild, "Ideology and Emotion Management: A Perspective and Path for Future Research," in Research Agendas in the in the Sociology of Emotions, edited by Theodore D. Kemper, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990, 117-142.
[7] Hochschild, "Emotion Work, Feeling Rules, and Social Structure." *American Journal of Sociology* 85 no.3, 1979, 551, 561.
[8] Hochschild, "Emotion Work, Feeling Rules, and Social Structure," 551.
[9] Hochschild, Arlie Russell. 1979. "Emotion Work, Feeling Rules, and Social Structure," 551.
[10] Hochschild, "Ideology and Emotion Management: A Perspective and Path for Future Research," 118.

concepts useful for my examination of memory workers' emotions. In particular, Hochschild's assertion that emotion management is important for (largely middle-class jobs) that focus on "meaning making," is instructive.[11] Memory workers are engaged in similar "meaning making" work, specifically helping visitors to memorial sites make meaning of disaster events.[12] A key aspect of this work, as Hochschild points out, is the emotional management to create an appropriate memorial experience for visitors. This emotional management is made all the more intense and vital because many memory workers in Tōhoku experienced the disaster themselves. Due to their positionality, memory workers often make carful decisions about the extent of including their own experience and emotions in their work.

3.11: Uneven Disaster, Uneven Memory

The Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami (*Higashi nihon daishinsai*) and Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Reactor Disaster (*Fukushima daiichi genshiryoku hastudensho jiko*) that occurred on March 11, 2011, commonly known as "3.11," are often considered together as a "triple disaster," due to the cascading nature of the disaster events.[13] The triple disaster started with a magnitude 9 earthquake that occurred off the coast of Miyagi Prefecture at 2:46 JST. The earthquake caused an upthrust of 20 to 26 feet along a 110-mile-wide seabed off the Tōhoku coast. This up-thrust caused a tsunami that struck coastal communities about an hour after the earthquake, with some waves reaching up to 30 feet in height. The tsunami wave overwhelmed

[11] Hochschild, Arlie Russell. 1979. "Emotion Work, Feeling Rules, and Social Structure." American Journal of Sociology 85/3:569-570

[12] For more on how memorials help mourners create meaning, see: Winter, 8.

[13] Scholars like Keiichi Tsunekawa and Brett Walker use this characterization of the disaster in their works. See: Brett L. Walker, "Chapter 15: Natural Disasters and the Edge of History," in *A Concise History of Japan*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015, 283-304, and Keiichi Tsunekawa, "Chapter 1: Toward a Balanced Assessment of Japan's Response to the Triple Disasters" in Keiichi Tsunekawa --, et al. *Five Years After: Reassessing Japan's Responses to the Earthquake, Tsunami, and the Nuclear Disaster* (Tokyo, Japan: University of Tokyo Press, 2016), 1-32.

the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant in the coastal area Fukushima Prefecture. The power plant was designed to withstand a tsunami height of 10.5 feet and was located on a cliff 13 feet above the ocean. Unfortunately, the tsunami wave was nearly twice the height of the power plant and cliff combined. The wave damaged the water-based process that normally cooled the nuclear fuel rods, causing spent fuel rods to overheat and the plant to meltdown.[14]

The disaster caused massive amounts of death, destruction, and displacement. According to official counts around 20,000 people lost their lives because of the disaster and over 2,000 are still officially considered missing.[15] The material destruction was immense with over 120,000 buildings being destroyed and over 1 million structures at least partially damaged.[16] The destruction of homes combined with the dangers of the nuclear meltdown in Fukushima contributed to a staggering number of evacuees from the affected areas. In the immediate wake of the disaster over 470,000 were evacuated from their homes and as of February 2021 nearly 18,000 evacuees were still living in temporary housing.[17]

The characterization of 3.11 as a "triple disaster," is useful when it comes to understanding the diverse experiences individuals had of the event. Some living in inland Tohoku would "just" have experienced the earthquake and others on the coast endured both the earthquake and the tsunami. Some communities in Fukushima bore the full brunt of cascading earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear disasters.[18] This has led to a significant break between how

[14] For an analysis of the meltdown at Fukushima Daiichi see: Sara B. Pritchard "An Envirotechnical Disaster: Nature Technology and Politics at Fukushima," *Environmental History,* April 2012, Vol. 17, 2 (April 2012), 219-243.
[15] Reconstruction Agency, "Great East Japan Earthquake," accessed: March 1, 2021, https://www.reconstruction.go.jp/english/topics/GEJE/.
[16] Reconstruction Agency, "Great East Japan Earthquake," accessed: March 1, 2021, https://www.reconstruction.go.jp/english/topics/GEJE/.
[17] Reconstruction Agency, "Zenkoku no hinansha-su," February 26, 2021, accessed: March 1, 2021, https://www.reconstruction.go.jp/topics/main-cat2/sub-cat2-1/20210226_kouhou1.pdf.
[18] This is not to downplay the hardship of those who "only" suffered due to the earthquake. I met those whose who had lived inland whose homes had to be abandoned because faults opened by the earthquake rendered them

3.11 was remembered in prefectures largely affected by the earthquake and tsunami, like Iwate and Miyagi, and in Fukushima, where the nuclear disaster has complicated the memory culture. One experience I had during field work illustrated the split in collective memory. In late March of 2019, I attended, as a spectator, the second meeting of the Central Region Earthquake Disaster Memorial Exploratory Committee. The committee convened to advise the city government of Sendai on the planned construction of a memorial space in the central part of the city.

Throughout the course of the meeting committee members talked about their visions for the memorial, and Sendai's critical role to play in the memory of 3.11. Committee members asserted that Sendai is among the most likely places people from outside the Tohoku region will come to visit, in part because of its accessibility by bullet train. The city was seen as a gateway to Tōhoku, and many committee members shared the view that if visitors were to engage with one 3.11 memorial in the region, it would be the one conveniently located in central Sendai.[19] This was one of the major premises of the nearly two-hour long discussion.

As the discussion went on, however, I became increasingly aware of the fact that while it was implied that this memorial would be representative of 3.11 as a whole, none of the committee members had raised the issue of the nuclear accident in Fukushima or its possible role in the memorial. As the meeting winded down it seemed as if the session would adjourn, and the

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dangerous to live in. These individuals often faced their own challenges when it came to evacuating their homes. Whereas some communities affected by the tsunami and nuclear disaster largely evacuated together, retaining a semblance of their communal life, households affected by the earthquake could be the only one in their immediate vicinity. This meant that evacuation separated them from their communities, exacerbating stress and loneliness following the disaster. Matsuzaki Midori, President of Sendai Kaeribina-kai, in conversation with the author, Sendai, Miyagi Prefecture, Japan July 19, 2019.

[19] The idea of Sendai as gateway to Tohoku and central memorial specifically as pivotal to the overall collective memory of 3.11 can be seen as early as the initial Sendai Disaster Reconstruction Memorial Exploratory Committee. This committee was convened as an advisory committee (much like the Central Region Memorial Committee), to advise the city government on the general approach to memorialization in Sendai, encompassing memorial sites in the city as well as one the coast. Sendai-shi, "Sendai-shi shinsai fukkō memoriaru-ra kentō iinkai hōkokusho," December 2014, accessed July 24, 2020, 4, http://www.city.sendai.jp/kankyo/shise/daishinsai/fukko/memorial/documents/houkokusyo.pdf.

entire discussion would be devoid of reference to Fukushima. However, the chair of the committee, Noe Keiichi, as part of his concluding remarks, highlighted the lack of discussion about the nuclear accident as a problem. Noe acknowledged that Fukushima opened a possibly endless line of discussion but urged the committee members to think about the nuclear accident as a topic for the next committee meeting. In particular, he asked them to consider if the nuclear accident should be included in the memorial, and, if included, how and to what extent the accident would be dealt with by the memorial space.[20] Although the nuclear accident was a result of the same cascading disaster events, memorials to the earthquake and tsunami victims often excluded the refugees of communities displaced by the meltdown from their narrative.

Unfortunately, this chapter both reflects (and thus perpetuates) this exclusion. This is due in part to the overall focus of the dissertation on earthquake and tsunami events specifically (rather than nuclear accidents, which have their own rich historiography and literature).[21] It is also a reflection of the networks I was able to access through my ethnographic fieldwork. Although I tried to get to Fukushima and study how the disaster was remembered by those displaced by the meltdown, my contacts based in Sendai consistently led me northward, to communities on the coast of Miyagi and Iwate Prefectures. Thus, this chapter is in some ways characteristic in its depiction of an uneven and bifurcated memory culture of 3.11, and reflective

[20] Sendai-shi "Dai-ni-kai chūshinbu shinsai memoriaru shoten kentō iin-kai, gijiroku," March 28, 2019, Accessed: July 31, 2020, 33, http://www.city.sendai.jp/shinsaifukko/chushin/documents/2nd_proceeding.pdf.
[21] For examples of literature on nuclear accidents and nuclear pollution see: Serhii Plokhy, *Chernobyl: The History of a Nuclear Catastrophe* (New York: Basic Books, 2019), Kate Brown, *Plutopia: Nuclear Families, Atomic Cities, and the Great Soviet and American Plutonium Disasters* (Oxford: Oxford Press , 2013), Tracy Brynne Voyles, *Wastelanding: Legacies of Uranium Mining in Navajo Country* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015), J. Samuel Walker, *Three Mile Island: A Nuclear Crisis in Historical Perspective* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), Ōishi, Matashichi, and Richard H. Minear, *The Day the Sun Rose in the West: Bikini, the Lucky Dragon, and I*, (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2011).

of the disaster memory of those who survived the earthquake and tsunami in Miyagi and Iwate, and who consider themselves as having different experiences from survivors in/from Fukushima.

The Transformative Experience of 3.11

Why was it so important that Yonezawa recreate his experience of 3.11? I argue that many survivors understand their 3.11 experiences as transformative and seek to engender a similar transformation in others. In part, this can be traced to the belief among some disaster survivors that, because they experienced 3.11, they have a heightened awareness of the threat of future disasters. This belief is intertwined with a sense that, because they were "lucky" enough to survive, they have a duty to transmit their experience. This transmission becomes a way both as a way to honor those who were lost and to save lives in future disasters.

The idea that 3.11 transformed survivors and equipped them with special insight into the threat of disasters and how to cope with the struggles of post-disaster recovery was a consistent theme in my conversations with memory workers. One survivor, who asked to remain anonymous, confided in me their desire to return to the immediate post-disaster moment equipped with the experience of the earthquake and tsunami.

> "I haven't spoken to others about this, but truthfully there are times when I want to return to that moment right after the disaster. If I admitted that, some would probably respond, 'why are you saying something so terrible,' but that's what I think. What I mean by that is, if the me who had already experienced [the disaster] were to return [to that time], there would be more that I could do."[22]

However, not everyone who lived through the disaster experience goes on to share their experiences. For some, it is likely too hard to face the memories of the disaster. I was told, for example, that the desire among survivors to forget the events of the disaster, and to avoid the

[22] Resident of Tōhoku, in conversation with the author, Spring 2019.

feelings of that time was among the top reasons for not visiting the Sendai 3/11 Memorial Community Center in Sendai.[23] For others, their survival, or the relative ease of their experience compared to other survivors, led to survivor's guilt. One person described the feelings of guilt among disaster survivors to me as "almost like a battle," an intense barrier to remembrance.[24] Another described the constant questioning of "why did I survive?" (with the implicit paired question, "when so many others did not?") as painful. Some who experienced the earthquake and tsunami firsthand, but survived, often felt that there were others who had a worse experience than them. These survivors often believed they were the "lucky ones" and thus could not talk or share their stories.[25] As I explained in the previous chapter (Chapter 3), Fukuda Yu argues that post-disaster rituals exist to mediate these feelings of guilt and uncertainty about the accidentalness inherent in modern life and death.[26] This chapter pushes Fukuda's theorization beyond ritual practice to show that other forms of memory work done by survivors in post-disaster contexts in Japan function similarly in helping survivors to cope with their guilt and anxiety as well as repurpose their experience to be used towards a more positive future.[27]

There are probably many who still experience these barriers to sharing their disaster experiences and stories, but for those who overcame the distress of survivor's guilt, many felt they had a role to play as a survivor. Those who survived believed that role was to convey their experiences to those who have not lived through disaster, because other unbelievable disaster events are certain to occur in the future. For many memory workers I met in Tōhoku the desire to

[23] This is based on surveys done by the city. Another major common reason given was that it was too far from the city center or at least felt too far. Yamaki Hirobumi, Memokan Director, in conversation with the author, Sendai, Miyagi Prefecture, Japan, March 5, 2019.
[24] Yumi Yoshikawa, Managing Director of Da-Ha Planning, in conversation with the author, Sendai, Miyagi Prefecture, Japan, April 3, 2019.
[25] Yamaki Hirobumi, Memokan Director, in conversation with the author, Sendai, Miyagi Prefecture, Japan, March 5, 2019.
[26] Fukuda, 76-78.
[27] Fukuda, 76-78.

make use of their experience, in hopes of saving others in the future, was the motivating factor in their engagement in psot-3.11 memory work.

Rubble, Remembrance, and Recreating Experience

If experiences of 3.11 were transformative, and can help equip one for future disasters, what are effective means to convey those experiences through memorial space and practice? The ways those questions have been answered in post-3.11 Tōhoku reflect the interaction between trends of global memory culture in the early 21st century and local debates over memorialization. Experiential memorialization in post-3.11 Tōhoku can be linked to the importance of survivor experience in post-WWII global memory culture as well as local community debates over what to do with disaster debris. Understanding the spaces in and practices by which 3.11 experience is conveyed, helps us then understand the conditions that memory workers navigate while managing their own experiences and emotions.

First, we must understand 3.11 memory culture and 3.11 survivors as engaging with a very particular paradigm in post-WWII global memory culture that elevated survivors and first-hand experience to a place of political and epistemic privilege.[28] As we have seen in previous chapters, survivor experiences of the disaster were not always given the same privilege of place in Japan as they were in the post-3.11 moment. In fact, Chapter 2 on the memorialization of the Great Kantō Earthquake showed that institutional forms of memory sought to negate aspects of disaster experience to engender "emotional forgetting." However, as Ran Zwigenberg shows in his work on the memory of the bombing of Hiroshima and its postwar connections with the Holocaust/Shoah in global memory culture, the creation of the "survivor" as a category, the

[28] Zwigenberg, 18.

importance of survivor/witness testimony, and the epistemic privileging of experience are all constructs of the postwar period.[29] The rising importance of "experience" in particular was linked to a "different paradigm of knowledge" that was skeptical of reason, humanism, and the Western Post-enlightenment intellectual tradition. These paradigms were seen as complicit in both World Wars and the horrors of the Holocaust and nuclear war in particular.[30] The Holocaust and nuclear bombings underlined the primacy of first-hand experience because they were considered violent atrocities without precedent, that had to be seen to be believed. It was believed that witnessing these events as well as experiencing their suffering offered one insight into the truth of them.[31] Zwigenberg shows that witnessing became central to "ethical responses to violence" and that the experience of survivors became central to global memory culture, as illustrated by the prominence of 9/11 survivors in America post-2001.[32] It is within this global memory paradigm, which emphasizes the importance of survivor experience, that post-3.11 memorialization and memory workers operate.

I argue that this experiential paradigm is operative for post-disaster memorialization in Japan. Although Zwigenberg's work focuses on the memorialization of violent acts (genocide, war, and terrorism), and while I would not equate the experience of 3.11 to experiences of the Holocaust or the nuclear bombings, it is obvious that memorials and memory workers are grappling with the same epistemic question: how can we transmit the knowledge of an unbelievable traumatic event? They answer this question in a similar way: by emphasizing experience and survivor testimony as a means of knowing the disaster event.

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[29] Zwigenberg shows that the term survivor related to growing understanding of PTSD and trauma in the field of psychiatry in the 1950's, and that the public "survivor-witness" came to prominence somewhat synchronously for holocaust survivors following the Eichmann Trial in 1961, and for bomb survivors (or *hibakusha*) in Japan during the anti-nuclear movements of the 1960s. Zwigenberg, 11, 15-16.
[30] Zwigenberg, 18.
[31] Zwigenberg 18-19.
[3232] Zwigenberg 19, 22.

The participation of 3.11 memorials and memory workers in this larger global memory culture built on experience is made explicit by the references to internationally famous memorial to war or genocide as models for post-3.11 memorial spaces. Advisory committees on various memorialization efforts following 3.11 make it a point to include spaces like the 9/11 memorial in New York City or the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial in Washington D.C. as crucial examples of effective memorialization.[33] Memorial designers in post-3.11 Tōhoku were thinking of their memorial designs in this larger international context. This was well illustrated in my conversations with Managing Director of Da-Ha Planning Work, Yoshikawa Yumi.[34] Yoshikawa and her company Da-Ha Planning Work have been involved in multiple memorial and memory projects in the town of Minamisanriku, Miyagi Prefecture both before and following 3.11. Importantly the municipal government commissioned Da-Ha Planning Work to design the town's 3.11 memorial hall and museum. A producer, curator, and director of cultural events and activities, Yoshikawa explained that she drew inspiration from experiential memorials and art pieces like the fountain at the New York City 9/11 memorial and the work of French artist Christopher Boltanski on the Holocaust.[35] The links between post-disaster memorialization and other internationally recognized forms of memorialization were explicit for memory workers in post 3.11 Tōhoku.

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[33] See for example the in the inclusion of the 9/11 memorial and Vietnam Veteran's memorial in this collection of memorial examples presented at the 1st meeting of the Sendai Disaster Reconstruction Memorial Committee, Sendai-shi, "Sankō 2: tatoshi-ra no memoriaru jireishū," July 2013, accessed November 14, 2020, 43-44, http://www.city.sendai.jp/kankyo/shise/daishinsai/fukko/memorial/documents/memorialgijiroku1.pdf, as well as in this collection of memorial examples used at the 1st meeting of the Exploratory Commitee for Great East Japan Earthquake Disaster Memorial Parks, held by MLIT: MLIT, "Shiryō 3: Higashi Nihon Daishinsai kinen kōen kentō kaigi setsumei shiryō" January 2012, accessed September 20, 2020, 14-15, https://www.mlit.go.jp/common/000188887.pdf.

[34] For more information on Yoshikawa and Da-Ha Planning Work see: Da-Ha Planning Work, "Profile," accessed March 15, 2021, http://da-ha.jp/, and Da-Ha Planning Work, "About," accessed March 15, 2021, http://da-ha.jp/.

[35] Managing Director of Da-Ha Planning Yumi Yoshikawa, in conversation with the author, Sendai, Miyagi Prefecture, Japan, April 3, 2019, These examples are also included in Da-Ha Planning's design proposal for the Minamisanriku Memorial Center, see: Minamisanriku-chō, "Minamisanriku-chō shinsai denshō shisetsu kihon keikaku," 24, June 27, 2019, accessed September 1, 2020, https://www.town.minamisanriku.miyagi.jp/index.cfm/7,22309,40,html.

With its roots in post-WWII developments in memory culture, experience as a way to memorialize and educate in the wake of disasters in Japan is not just an innovation of post-3.11 Tōhoku in Japan. Both the Disaster Reduction and Human Renovation Institute (*Hito to bōsai mirai sentā* or DRI), built in Kobe after the 1995 Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake and opened in 2002, and the Tokyo Rinkai Disaster Prevention Park (*Tōkyō rinkai kōiki bōsai kōen*), opened in 2010, incorporate experiential exhibits designed to facilitate disaster preparedness education. The DRI focuses in particular on recreating the experience of the 1995 Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake through video and life-sized recreations of post-quake Kobe streets.[36] The Tokyo Rinkai Disaster Prevention Park focuses on disaster preparedness in general, recreating a post-earthquake situation through a fictional, but life-sized, diorama of an earthquake ravaged street. Visitors work their way through way through a gamified "first 72-hours" after the earthquake, answering questions based on real-life post disaster situations on handheld tablets that grade you on your disaster response. The diorama is equipped with sound, lighting, videos, and simulated aftershocks to give one as much of a "realistic" experience as possible.[37]

How to recreate the disaster experience to promote remembrance and impress the importance of the event upon those who did not live through 3.11 was a major question in the wake of 2011. Efforts to create educational disaster experiences like the DRI and Tokyo Rinkai Disaster Prevention Park have been employed in post-3.11 Tōhoku. One example is the planned memorial center in the hard-hit town of Minamisanriku proposed by Yoshikawa and Da-Ha Planning Works. Slated to open in Fall of 2021, the center was proposed as "a place for everyone to contemplate,

[36] DRI, "Moderu kōsu," accessed: March 1, 2021, https://www.dri.ne.jp/exhibition/recommended-route/.
[37] Tokyo Rinkai Disaster Prevention Park, "Bōsai taiken gakushū (sonaeria tōkyō)," accessed March 1 2021, https://www.tokyorinkai-koen.jp/sonaarea/.

learn about, and sense 'nature,' 'humanity,' and 'living.'"[38] In order to facilitate this, the facility will center on an experiential learning space. The "learning room" (referred to as the "white cube" in earlier renditions of the proposal) will consist of white screens on the walls and floor, onto which images of the disaster will be projected.[39] These images would be accompanied by narration and an employee facilitator will accompany visitor groups in "learning programs" of around 45 minutes. Crucially the learning programs, in contrast to those at the Tokyo Rinkai Disaster Park, will not be a quiz format, but are designed to ask difficult questions without easy answers to encourage deep contemplation.[40] It is possible that because the videos would feature images from the actual destruction of Minamisanriku, and the center will be located where many lost their lives in the tsunami, that a game-like simulated experience with quizzes and points like that at the Tokyo Rinkai Disaster park was considered inappropriate, and planners instead opted for a more contemplative and open-ended learning experience.

These efforts are not confined to just memorial spaces. An example of the breadth of practices considered to preserve and promote 3.11 memory are the comments of Miyahara Ikuko, Chair of the Sendai Disaster Reconstruction Memorial Exploratory Committee, at the committee's first meeting in July 2013. In her comments at the committee Miyahara brought up the possibility of using the anniversary of the disaster as a day of remembrance including special practices meant to recreate (to some extent) the reality of the 3.11 experience. Noting that she thinks Sendai will be establishing 3.11 as a "day of commemoration" (*kinenhi*), Miyahara suggested that city

[38] Minamisanriku-chō, "Minamisanriku-chō shinsai denshō shisetsu kihon keikaku," 1, June 27, 2019, accessed September 1, 2020, https://www.town.minamisanriku.miyagi.jp/index.cfm/7,22309,40,html, Tawada Shinchi, ed., "Miyagi-ken Minamisanrku-chō, 2021-nen aki opūn yotei no 'shinsai denshō shisetsu' no meishō kobo," *Toraberu Watch*, June 8, 2020, https://travel.watch.impress.co.jp/docs/news/1257523.html.
[39] Minamisanriku-chō, "Minamisanriku shinsai denshōkan, kashō: Minamisanriku 311 memoriaru kōryūkan, kihon keikaku kōshian," 11, April 17, 2019.
[40] Minamisanriku-chō, "Minamisanriku-chō shinsai denshō shisetsu kihon keikaku," 1, June 27, 2019, accessed September 1, 2020, https://www.town.minamisanriku.miyagi.jp/index.cfm/7,22309,40,html.

residents should spend the day "eating emergency rations or refraining from the use of gas or water," in order to remember the disaster.[41] It is clear that this was meant to recreate a degree of the hardship faced by disaster survivors. This is reminiscent, to a certain extent, of religious commemorations of hardship, like the Jewish celebration of Passover, for example. It is unclear if Miyahara's suggestions for this type of memory practice were enacted, but her comments do show that experiential memorialization in post-3.11 Tōhoku was not solely thought of in terms of the memory space.

Memorial spaces, were however, still seen as incredibly important to post-3.11 memory culture and were seen as working in tandem with practices like those advocated by Miyahara. Immediately following her comments on possible commemoration day memory practices Miyahara emphasizes the importance of "hard" measures, like memorials, that would ideally be used in tandem to other educational experiences like lectures and emergency drills. The question for Miyahara is how would memorials fit in with existing models of education and everyday life to facilitate remembrance of the disaster and the lessons learned in its wake?[42]

One answer to this question in post-3.11 Tōhoku was to use remnants of everyday life left by the disaster in the form of ruined buildings (*ikō*) and debris (*gareki*) in disaster memorial spaces to facilitate the (re)creation of experience. This is due in part to the material reality of the disaster zone. As mentioned earlier, over 120,000 buildings were destroyed by the disaster and over 1 million were at least partially destroyed or damaged by the earthquake and the tsunami. Many of the damaged buildings that remained standing after the disaster were in areas that became restricted

[41] Sendai-shi, "Dai-i-kkai Sendai-shi shinsai fukkō memoriaru-ra kentō iin-kai – gijiroku," July 2, 2013, accessed September 16, 2020, 19, http://www.city.sendai.jp/kankyo/shise/daishinsai/fukko/memorial/documents/memorialgijiroku1.pdf.
[42] Sendai-shi, "Dai-i-kkai Sendai-shi shinsai fukkō memoriaru-ra kentō iin-kai – gijiroku," July 2, 2013, accessed September 16, 2020, 19, http://www.city.sendai.jp/kankyo/shise/daishinsai/fukko/memorial/documents/memorialgijiroku1.pdf.

to certain types of new buildings (like private residences) due to their proximity to the ocean (and thus vulnerability to future tsunami events).[43]

In the wake of the disaster some of these disaster ruins were preserved with the intention of using them to help visitors "feel the scale of the damage and mourn those lost."[44] The utilization of ruins to communicate the scale and visceral reality of the disaster can be seen in an institution like the Ruins of the Great East Japan Earthquake Kesennuma City Memorial Museum. This memorial is comprised of a museum attached to the ruins of the Kesennuma Koyo High School building. The ruins, which can be toured along a fenced path within the school building, are left largely untouched and filled with debris to give visitors a sense of the destructive power of the tsunami.[45] Arahama Elementary School in coastal Sendai, were many survived by climbing to the building's roof, was similarly preserved along with the remaining foundations of former residences in the surrounding Arahama district. The ruins of Arahama Elementary house informational exhibits on the 2nd and 4th floor, that, together with the state of the building itself, enable visitors to "understand the threat of the tsunami that struck [the school]."[46] The preservation of ruins like Kesennuma Koyo High and Arahama Elementary shows that ruins are seen as powerful tools for communicating the reality of the disaster and enabling some sort of understanding of the 3.11 experience to the visitor. It is this same logic that partially informed Yonezawa's decision to maintain the remains of his family business to aid his recounting of his survival experience.

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[43] For instance, the restricted building zone on Sendai's coastline. Sendai shi, "Sendai-shi shinsai fukkō memoriaru-ra kentō iinkai hōkokusho," December 2014, accessed: July 24, 2020, http://www.city.sendai.jp/kankyo/shise/daishinsai/fukko/memorial/documents/houkokusyo.pdf.

[44] Sendai shi, "Sendai-shi shinsai fukkō memoriaru-ra kentō iinkai hōkokusho," December 2014, accessed: July 24, 2020, 13, http://www.city.sendai.jp/kankyo/shise/daishinsai/fukko/memorial/documents/houkokusyo.pdf.

[45] Ruins of the Great East Japan Earthquake Kesennuma City Memorial Museum, "About," accessed March 1, 2021, https://www.kesennuma-memorial.jp/about/.

[46] Sendai-shi "Shinsai ikō, Sendai-shiritsu Arahama shōgakō – shisetsu no go-shōkai," accessed March 2, 2021, https://www.city.sendai.jp/kankyo/shisetsu/ruin_arahama_elementaryschool.html.

Despite the ubiquity amongst the post-3.11 memorial landscape, the question of whether to preserve disaster ruins often provoked controversy in communities across the Tōhoku coast. Specifically, there were heated debates between survivors who wanted disaster ruins removed and those who wanted them maintained. Those on each side had an emotional valence to their argument. Those who wanted ruins and debris removed insisted that seeing such prominent evidence of the disaster was distressing. Advocates of maintaining ruins and debris left by the tsunami argued that in addition to their use in illustrating the violence of the disaster, the objects were connected to survivor's memories of life before the disaster. Understanding these controversies allows us to contextualize the emotional stakes of recreating experience in spaces like disaster ruins for memory workers.

The Emotional Meaning of Ruins

In the wake of 3.11 ruins and debris became powerful symbols of the disaster.[47] Certain pieces of wreckage or building remains became well known throughout Japan and around the world due to media coverage. These iconic pieces of wreckage seemed to encapsulate essential aspects of the disaster. The *No. 18 Kyotoku-maru*, a 200-foot fishing boat washed inland in Kesennuma, could represent the sheer power of the tsunami wave. The ruins of Ōkawa Elementary School in Ishinomaki, where 74 children and 10 teachers died, in part due to inadequate disaster preparation and response, encapsulated the costly mistakes in disaster preparedness and evacuation made by parts of government.[48] The remains of the Minamisanriku Disaster Emergency Center,

[47] Tsunekawa, 3.
[48] Richard Lloyd Parry, "The school beneath the wave: the unimaginable tragedy of Japan's tsunami," *The Guardian* August 24, 2017, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/aug/24/the-school-beneath-the-wave-the-unimaginable-tragedy-of-japans-tsunami. For Parry's more in depth look at the tragedy and aftermath of Ōkawa Elementary, see: Richard Lloyd Parry, *Ghosts of the Tsunami: Death and Life in Japan's Disaster Zone*, (New York: MCD/Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2017).

where the town's emergency staff, including the town's mayor, were forced to climb to the antenna of the building as the tsunami hit and 34 of the 44 workers died symbolized the efforts and sacrifices of local officials.[49] Each of these locations became make-shift memorials in their own right, with visitors and the bereaved erecting temporary altars, leaving flowers, offering incense and enacting other practices of mourning.

Even though these remains and others became potent media symbols and sites of remembrance, some saw them as impediments to the material and emotional recovery of Tōhoku and disaster survivors. In general, the Japanese government moved swiftly to dispose of the majority of earthquake and tsunami "waste." One scholar cited the removal of almost 100% of debris by March 2015 as evidence of positive aspects of the government's disaster response.[50] Some survivors would agree with that positive assessment.

The raw emotions that underlie the desire to get rid of disaster remains are evident in debates around whether to maintain these symbolic pieces of wreckage. The dismantling of the remains of the *Kyotoku Maru* fishing vessel was the result of such emotions. There were talks in Kesennuma of preserving the *Kyotoku Maru* indefinitely as a reminder of the disaster, to change it from an spontaneous and informal memorial site to a permanent monument. However, in 2013, 70% of the residents in Kesennuma voted to have the boat removed. Many said it evoked bad memories and difficult emotions. One resident, Abe Yoshimi explained, "it's just a constant reminder of the

[49] While this is the dominant narrative, there is also controversy over whether the emergency staff should have been ordered to evacuate earlier to avoid this tragedy by the town's Mayor Satō Jin, with some bereaved relatives blaming Satō for the death of their family members. Despite this controversy, Satō has been reelected twice as Mayor since 3.11. Chico Harlan, "Tsunami still tears at a Japanese town, as mayor's decisions are debated," *Washington Post*, June 27, 2014, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/a-japanese-city-famed-for-its-workers-sacrifice-in-the-2011-tsunami-now-has-doubts/2014/06/26/d0763478-b550-4373-bfcf-b44fcb31329f_story.html.

[50] Tsunekawa in part argues that in many ways the national government responded to the earthquake and tsunami disaster swiftly and effectively, despite the critique of other scholars, journalists, and citizens. He argues that the governments mishandling of the nuclear disaster in particular colors the overall assessment of the government's response to 3.11. See: Tsunekawa, 1-32.

terrible disaster…when I walk by it every morning, my heart aches."[51] Even in cases where local authorities decided to preserve remains, like in the case of Ōkawa Elementary, the painful emotions of some survivors shaped how the ruins were preserved. Local authorities decided in 2016 that Ōkawa Elementary school would be maintained indefinitely as a memorial to those who lost their lives and also as a warning for future generations about disaster preparedness.

The choice caused misgivings on the part of some parents who lost children, who stated "they did not want to see" the school building. This led to a plan to surround the memorial site with trees to shield it from the view of those passing by.[52] For some survivors, disaster ruins and wreckage were too effective at recreating an experience that they never wanted to relive or think about again.

[51] Rupert Wingfield-Hayes, "Japanese town to scrap marooned 'tsunami boat,'" *BBC News*, August 13, 2013, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-23678723.
[52] "(Shinsai Ikō) Ōkawashō zentai hozon, Kadowakishō ichibu" *Kahoku Shinpō Online News* March, 26, 2016, https://web.archive.org/web/20161009070616/https://www.kahoku.co.jp/tohokunews/201603/20160326_11009.html.

Image 12: Photograph of the Ruins of the Ōkawa Elementary School Building. A small altar is erected to the victims of 3.11 in front of the building in April 2019. Photograph by the author.

This negative emotional response to ruins was not uniform among all survivors. Some saw remains as tangible pieces of their lives before the disaster, the only remaining material connections to joyful memories of the past. Instead, it was the further destruction and removal of debris that proved distressing. The removal of these objects would not only erase traces of their lives before the disaster, but also erase evidence of their traumatic experiences during the earthquake and tsunami. Before Ishinomaki ultimately decided to preserve Ōkawa Elementary School, there was a provisional plan to tear down the remains of the building. Speaking at a conference at Meiji University in 2014 Tadano Tetsuya, one of the few students who survived the

tsunami at the school, expressed his dismay with plan to remove Ōkawa Elementary and the general approach to disaster debris.

> "Our possessions are now called *gareki* [rubble/debris]. Until the disaster, they were part of our life. Now they contain our memories. I don't like to hear all those things referred to as 'rubble.'…If [Ōkawa Elementary] is demolished, people in the future will not know what happened here, I don't want the building to be destroyed."[53]

Other survivors have echoed Tadano's sentiments surrounding the preservation of disaster ruins, especially the feelings of erasure surrounding the removal of ruins. Kugiko Akira, another disaster area guide I interviewed, expressed something similar when I asked him how he felt about the removal of disaster debris and reconstruction efforts in his community. Based in the town Rikuzen-takata like fellow guide Yonezawa, Kugiko shared his distress at the local government's effort to clear away the rubble and raise the coastal part of town up by 30 feet with landfill to protect against future tsunami.[54] He told me that watching the landfill efforts made him sad because the newly filled land made Rikuzen-takata look like a "place that contained nothing." He shared that the plot where his house once stood before it was destroyed by the tsunami was one of the last places to be filled in. When that happened Kugiko said it was incredibly hard for him.[55] "It was as if my own history was wiped away with an eraser," he explained.[56] In contrast to those survivors who could not bear to see physical evidence of the disaster in their communities, Kugiko explained that some residents of Rikuzentakata could not

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[53] Richard Lloyd Parry, *Ghosts of the Tsunami,* 229.
[54] Kugiko Akira, *Hisaichi-Kataribe,* in conversation with the author, Rikuzen-takata, Iwate Precture, Japan, June 18, 2019. Nakane Keiichi, "Higashi-nihon daishinsai jū-nen hiwa, (1) Fukkō jigyō kasa-age, hadomenaku…Rikuzen-takata," *Yomiuri Shinbun Onrain* January 10, 2021, https://www.yomiuri.co.jp/shinsai311/feature/20210109-OYT1T50224/.
[55] Kugiko Akira, *Hisaichi-Kataribe* in conversation with the author, Rikuzen-takata, Iwate Precture, Japan, June 18, 2019.
[56] Kugiko Akira, *Hisaichi-Kataribe* in conversation with the author, Rikuzen-takata, Iwate Precture, Japan, June 18, 2019.

take the feelings of erasure and loss associated with the landfill and had decided to move away.[57] On his guided tour with me, Yonezawa echoed these concerns about Rikuzen-takata. Another reason Yonezawa preserved his family's business was because, as the only remaining building of the old city center, it gave community members a reference point for where their nearby homes used to stand and was tangible evidence of the existence of the now destroyed town.[58]

Image 13: Photograph of Disaster Zone Guide Yonezawa Yuichi giving a tour. He points out his family's store in a picture of pre-3.11 Rikuzen-takata. Photograph by Shishido Kiyotaka for the Kizuna Project, used with permission from the creator and The Osaka Committee of Chicago Sister Cities International (CSCI).

Some even argued that preservation, rather than removal, should be default approach to ruins. Speaking on the issue of the debris preservation at the first meeting of the Sendai Disaster

[57] Kugiko also brought up the possibility that bodies of victims were still buried underneath the land and that some people probably felt they could not live on top of the bones of those who died during the disaster. Kugiko Akira, *Hisaichi-Kataribe* in conversation with the author, Rikuzen-takata, Iwate Precture, Japan, June 18, 2019.
[58] Yonezawa Yuichi, in discussion with the author, Rikuzen-takata, Iwate Precture, Japan, June 18, 2019.

Reconstruction Memorial Exploratory Committee, committee member Murakami Takashi called for a "wait and see" approach to disaster ruins.[59] He explained that in the wake of 3.11 "in quick succession the opinions of residents are heard, and the trauma of specific people is taken into account," resulting in a large number of demolished ruins.[60] Instead, Murakami advocated for "preservation first" approach which would emphasize long-term vision of what preservation might mean for "future generations."[61] An Associate Professor at Miyagi Education University and founder of the disaster relief non-profit MMIX Lab, Murakami himself was part of this preservation effort. In addition to taking emergency supplies into the disaster zone, MMIX Lab made a concerted effort to preserve the material objects left behind by the disaster. In Murakami's view "real objects" had a tremendous ability to communicate the reality of the disaster to future generations.[62]

Through the incorporation of ruins in memorials sites and the debate about their preservation and destruction in recovering communities, it is evident that these material traces of the disaster have the power to evoke distressing as well as comforting emotions. For memorial designers seeking to create experiential learning spaces on the disaster, ruins' ability to provoke distress is seen as an asset. In order to gain some sense of the scale of destruction and suffering, a visitor should be distressed by the experience. The hope is that this distress will serve as a

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[59] Sendai-shi, "Dai-i-kkai Sendai-shi shinsai fukkō memoriaru-ra kentō iin-kai – gijiroku," July 2013, accessed September 16, 2020, 15-16. http://www.city.sendai.jp/kankyo/shise/daishinsai/fukko/memorial/documents/memorialgijiroku1.pdf.

[60] Sendai-shi, "Dai-i-kkai Sendai-shi shinsai fukkō memoriaru-ra kentō iin-kai – gijiroku," July 2013, accessed September 16, 2020, 15-16. http://www.city.sendai.jp/kankyo/shise/daishinsai/fukko/memorial/documents/memorialgijiroku1.pdf.

[61] Sendai-shi, "Dai-i-kkai Sendai-shi shinsai fukkō memoriaru-ra kentō iin-kai – gijiroku," July 2013, accessed September 16, 2020, 15-16. http://www.city.sendai.jp/kankyo/shise/daishinsai/fukko/memorial/documents/memorialgijiroku1.pdf.

[62] Sendai-shi, "Dai-i-kkai Sendai-shi shinsai fukkō memoriaru-ra kentō iin-kai – gijiroku," July 2013, accessed September 16, 2020, 15-16. http://www.city.sendai.jp/kankyo/shise/daishinsai/fukko/memorial/documents/memorialgijiroku1.pdf.

warning and an impetus to disaster awareness/preparedness. For some survivors the distress evoked by these objects is too overwhelming and they felt that their continued presence in the community impeded their ability to emotionally recover. For others, these objects were tangible links to both the trauma of the disaster as well as the joy of life before, and were seen as important tools to preserve memories, good and bad. It was amongst the contested emotional space of ruins that memory workers, often disaster survivors themselves, operated in post-3.11 Tōhoku.

Memory Work as Warning

As has been shown above, a major motivation of memorializing 3.11, and conveying the experience of the event, was to warn and prepare others and future generations of the destructive protentional of disasters. Memory workers, especially those that are disaster survivors, were seen as playing a key role in this process. As bearers of the physical and emotional experience of 3.11 and its aftermath, they were understood as vital to the recreation of these experiences for visitors. However, while their memories and emotions were considered pivotal to the recreation of the disaster experience, this memory work required skilled emotional management, especially for those workers who were also survivors. Much like the efforts to recreate experience of the disaster through curated spaces and preserved ruins, the activities of memory workers also showed the possibilities and limits of sharing the lived experience of the disaster.

The idea that memory workers, especially their sharing of the lived experience and emotion of the disaster, were essential to the memorialization of 3.11 can be seen in documents like the Sendai City Disaster Reconstruction Memorial Committee Report, published in 2014.[63]

[63] Sendai-shi, "Sendai-shi shinsai fukkō memoriaru-ra kentō iinkai hōkokusho," December 2014, Accessed: July 24, 2020, http://www.city.sendai.jp/kankyo/shise/daishinsai/fukko/memorial/documents/houkokusyo.pdf.

This report, compiled by the first advisory committee charged with tackling the memorialization aspect of Sendai's larger reconstruction plan, was the result 10 meetings held between July 2013 and December 2014. In its statement on "Basic Principles," the committee saw the memorialization of 3.11 as a "duty and obligation" to pass down the memory of the disaster "beyond this generation to posterity, and beyond the seas to the rest of the world."[64] The authors argued that "doing so will leave others more prepared for future disasters and save lives."[65] As part of this memorialization project the committee called for an "archive of emotions and feelings," where survivors would share their memories and experiences of the life before, during and after the disaster.[66] In addition, survivors would add to visitors' experience of preserved areas like the Arahama district by "[sharing] their memories of the 3.11 disasters and feelings on the areas."[67] While the language in the document identified these individuals with the term "citizens," implying a sort of amateur volunteerism, there was some indication that the ideal citizen-memory worker would involve formalized aspects. For instance, it suggests that these citizens be trained to aid their efforts to add a more personal connection for visitors touring eastern Sendai."[68]

Survivors, as memory workers, were envisioned as adding emotions, personal connection, and their memories to make the recreated experience of 3.11 more immersive for visitors, and to enhance the efficacy of disaster memorials to warn of future disasters. The

[64] Sendai-shi, "Sendai-shi shinsai fukkō memoriaru-ra kentō iinkai hōkokusho," December 2014, Accessed: July 24, 2020, 2, http://www.city.sendai.jp/kankyo/shise/daishinsai/fukko/memorial/documents/houkokusyo.pdf.
[65] Sendai-shi, "Sendai-shi shinsai fukkō memoriaru-ra kentō iinkai hōkokusho," December 2014, Accessed: July 24, 2020, 2, http://www.city.sendai.jp/kankyo/shise/daishinsai/fukko/memorial/documents/houkokusyo.pdf.
[66] Sendai-shi, "Sendai-shi shinsai fukkō memoriaru-ra kentō iinkai hōkokusho," December 2014, Accessed: July 24, 2020, 8, http://www.city.sendai.jp/kankyo/shise/daishinsai/fukko/memorial/documents/houkokusyo.pdf.
[67] Sendai-shi, "Sendai-shi shinsai fukkō memoriaru-ra kentō iinkai hōkokusho," December 2014, Accessed: July 24, 2020, 12, http://www.city.sendai.jp/kankyo/shise/daishinsai/fukko/memorial/documents/houkokusyo.pdf.
[68] Sendai-shi, "Sendai-shi shinsai fukkō memoriaru-ra kentō iinkai hōkokusho," December 2014, Accessed: July 24, 2020, 12, http://www.city.sendai.jp/kankyo/shise/daishinsai/fukko/memorial/documents/houkokusyo.pdf.

imagined role of memory workers was that they would infuse experiential memorialization with a more human and emotional element, and that would allow visitors to connect on a deeper level with the experience. However, my interviews and ethnographic work with memory workers engaged in these memorial practices show that the transmitting of the emotional experience of the disaster was not a simple process of sharing one's emotions. Instead, it was a careful act of emotional management.

In part, memory workers perhaps "incomplete" sharing of their emotions could reflect the sheer difficulty of grappling with the experience itself, both in the moment and afterwards. Even though Yonezawa did his best to recreate the experience for those he guided, his descriptions of his own experience showed the difficulty of understanding what he endured. The sheer amount of chaotic sensory stimulation, the scale of the destruction, and the physical exertion required to hang on to the rooftop for 30 minutes meant that there were aspects of the experience that Yonezawa did not remember because of the sensory overload. He could recall, and described, the sight of the dark surging water that he watched, transfixed and unable to move, for that half hour. He also remembered overwhelming sound made by the waves picking up debris like buildings and cars and smashing them together. However, he could not recall if there was strong wind, and it was only after the water began to recede that he realized his legs were sore from crouching as well as wet and freezing cold. The totality of the experience was impossible to recreate, even for Yonezawa himself.[69]

Likewise, Yonezawa's retelling of his emotional experience of the disaster was not necessarily, an unmanaged sharing of his feelings. Yonezawa was one of the most open and frank guides of the disaster area that I met in my fieldwork. He described his anxiety after

[69] Yonezawa Yuichi, in discussion with the author, Rikuzen-takata, Iwate Precture, Japan, June 18, 2019.

spending the night of the 11th stuck on the roof of his family's building. In particular, he worried he would not be rescued and would be forced to spend another night alone and in the cold. He shared that his thoughts during that period became strange, likely due to a combination of shock, fatigue, thirst, and hunger. Yonezawa even recounted how when a Self Defense Force (SDF) helicopter rescue team did come to save him, that he could barely speak from the shock.[70] He acted out being physically pushed by an SDF member, who yelled "Yonezawa-san, you're ok! You're being saved!" at which point Yonezawa's shock subsided, and he collapsed.[71] Yonezawa even shared his feelings of joy and his memory of weeping with his wife as he realized she and their daughter had survived when he was able to find them four days after the tsunami.[72] Throughout the sharing of these intimate details Yonezawa's emotions in the moment were relatively calm and reserved. He was candidly and openly sharing these events, but it did not appear he was upset, and if he was in the moment, he did not share that with me and my group member as he guided us on the tour. That emotional reality was concealed during the tour. In part this could be explained by the fact that I was experiencing the tour 8 years following the disaster, after Yonezawa had gone through numerous iterations of his reenacted disaster experience. However, my interviews and experiences with other disaster guides illustrated that retelling and reenacting the disaster event was not a simple act of sharing one's emotions.

In contrast to the idealized vision of memory workers as those that infuse emotions into the experience of the disaster zone and memorial spaces, memory workers themselves often employed "objective" and non-emotional techniques in sharing their experiences. When I asked those memory workers who engaged in giving guided tours of the disaster area regularly, many

[70] Yonezawa Yuichi, in discussion with the author, Rikuzen-takata, Iwate Precture, Japan, June 18, 2019.
[71] Yonezawa Yuichi, in discussion with the author, Rikuzen-takata, Iwate Precture, Japan, June 18, 2019.
[72] Yonezawa Yuichi, in discussion with the author, Rikuzen-takata, Iwate Precture, Japan, June 18, 2019.

said that they keep their emotions out of it and stick to the facts.[73] This is illustrated by Kugiko's response when I asked him if being a disaster area guide was an emotionally difficult job. He replied that it was, "it is hard to talk about these things every day, you can't speak from the self, you can't speak frankly."[74] This was reflected in how he conducted his tour of Rikuzen-takata. Kugiko used a small microphone and speaker that he wore on his hip to amplify his voice during the tour. This was especially useful during the portions that occurred outside. For most of the tour he kept his microphone on, working through his usual route and routine. However, in a moment when I asked him more personal questions, like his views on certain recovery policies, he turned his microphone off. He continued to share, unamplified. I think in this act I saw Kugiko switch between "Kugiko the memory worker," and "Kugiko the private survivor." I got a glimpse of what he felt he could and could not share in his capacity as a disaster area guide.

[73] The perceived efficacy of objective or fact-based accounts of the disaster on tours can be seen in the comments of Miyahara Ikuko, the chair of the Sendai Disaster Reconstruction Memorial Committee who called for commemorative practices to recall hardship, like the eating of emergency rations during commemoration days. Even though Miyahara obviously thinks the recreation of physical hardship is a powerful too, she seems to think that objective and unemotional recalling of the disaster is also laudable. Directly following her comments on possible commemoration day practices, she praises a bus tour she took of the disaster zone on Oshika Peninsula as being "unsentimental" and "unprovocative" in its presentation of stories about the disaster event. For her the accurate and unemotional presentation of facts and statistics of the disaster event were the most appropriate way for visitors to first be introduced to the events of 3.11. Sendai-shi,"Dai-i-kkai Sendai-shi shinsai fukkō memoriaru-ra kentō iin-kai – gijiroku," July 2013, accessed September 16, 2020, 19, http://www.city.sendai.jp/kankyo/shise/daishinsai/fukko/memorial/documents/memorialgijiroku1.pdf.

[74] Kugiko Akira, *Hisaichi-Kataribe* in conversation with the author, Rikuzen-takata, Iwate Precture, Japan, June 18, 2019.

Image 14: Photograph of Disaster Zone Guide Kugiko Akira Beginning Our Tour. The tour started in his Rikuzentakata Kugiko-ya space, which houses a self-made gallery of images from before and after 3.11. Photograph by Shishido Kiyotaka for the Kizuna Project, used with permission from the creator an The Osaka Committee of Chicago Sister Cities International (CSCI).

Even in their efforts to recreate the disaster experience for visitors and younger generations who did not live through 3.11, memory workers did not transmit unvarnished or unmanaged emotions. One of the best illustrations of this dynamic were my experiences with another disaster area guide who I met in passing in 2012 when he was a first responder working on recovery efforts. Now retired, he manages a small farm plot and travels around Japan sharing his experiences of 3.11 as a first responder to raise disaster awareness and promote disaster preparedness. Central to his story is that he continued his work as a first responder even though his wife had gone missing in the immediate aftermath of the disaster. Her body was later found by a local beach, and he goes regularly to offer flowers, pray, and memorialize her where her remains were discovered, even after the location was filled in as part of the community's sea

wall construction project. He incorporates this part of his disaster experience as part of his memory work, often interviewed by local and national news outlets about his work as a disaster area guide and his continued commemoration of his late wife. He goes so far as to invite those he guides around the disaster area to pay their respects to his wife with him both where her remains were discovered and at the *butsudan* altar in his home. The intimacy with which he shares his experience, and his loss is intense.[75]

Still, even these public emotions seem to be managed for this memory worker. Recently I spoke with him as part of a panel on disaster remembrance on an online radio show in Japan over Zoom. After we taped the discussion for later broadcast the host invited the panel to stay and have an informal chat, especially since the group had not gathered since before the Covid-19 pandemic. During this chat, which included deeper discussion of the remembrance of 3.11, this disaster guide openly wept over the zoom call about the emotional difficulties of survivance, even all these years later.[76] I realized even he, who allows such intimate access to his personal life as a memory worker, navigated the difficulty of telling rather than showing his emotions. There in the informal space of a "chat," I was privileged to see a different sort of emotionality than I had before.[77]

Memory Work as Healing

This type of emotional management on the part of memory workers can also be seen in memory practices focused on getting survivors to open up about their disaster experiences. As

[75] Disaster area guide, in conversation with the author, Miyagi and Iwate Prefecture, Japan, June 2019.
[76] The work of emotional responses of disaster survivors and how they intersect with gender have long focused on women, but recent scholarship has started to explore the gendered emotionality of men in the wake of disaster. See: Ashleigh Rushton, Suzanne Phibbs, Christine Kenney, Cheryl Anderson, "The gendered body politic in disaster policy and practice," *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction* 47, 2020, 101648.
[77] Disaster area guide, in conversation with the author, Zoom Call, October 2020.

was saw in debates amongst survivor communities surrounding disaster debris, recreating the disaster experience through material remembrance was understood by some survivors as an opportunity to honor and work through their pre-disaster and post-disaster memories. Tadano Takuya's quote illustrated the emotional attachment some survivors felt for these material remains and how they saw these objects as not only preserving the collective memory of 3.11, but their memories of 3.11 and before. In post-3.11 Tōhoku, memorialization was not just seen as a means of warning others of the threat of future disaster events, but it was also be a means of helping survivors heal.

Specifically, experiential disaster memorials post-3.11 were also seen as locations that could enable survivors to tell their stories.[78] This conception of the experiential disaster memorial can be seen in the permanent 3.11 exhibit at the Rias Ark Musuem of Art in Kesennuma.[79] The exhibit, which documents the disaster through photographs and pieces of debris, is the result of two years' worth of collection activities and photography on the part by the museum team. The exhibition itself includes 203 pictures as well as 155 material objects collected from the disaster zones of Kesennuma and Minamisanriku. Although, like other memorial spaces, the exhibit is intended to convey the destruction of the disaster in order to foster awareness in visitors of future disaster events.[80] In addition, however, the curators at Rias Ark have articulated a therapeutic use for disaster objects.

Echoing Okawa Elementary survivor Tadano and MMIX Lab's Murakmi, Rias Ark curators saw these preserved objects as able to "trigger the memories" of the disaster and to get

[78] This vision of memorialization is a key part of the "central site" memorial in Sendai's memorialization plan. See: Sendai-shi, "Sendai-shi shinsai fukkō memoriaru-ra kentō iinkai hōkokusho," December 2014, Accessed: July 24, 2020, 12, http://www.city.sendai.jp/kankyo/shise/daishinsai/fukko/memorial/documents/houkokusyo.pdf.
[79] Rias Ark, "Introduction, 1st floor Permanent Exhibition Documentary of East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami and History of Tsunami Disaster," accessed March 2, 2021, http://rias-ark.sakura.ne.jp/2/en/sinsai/.
[80] Rias Ark, "Introduction, 1st floor Permanent Exhibition Documentary of East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami and History of Tsunami Disaster," accessed March 2, 2021, http://rias-ark.sakura.ne.jp/2/en/sinsai/.

people to express their subjective experiences of the disaster. The explanation of the exhibit reads, "for victims of the East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami, there is nothing we may call 'rubble.' They are the remnants of one's precious house, which are devastated and taken away from us, and assets that were dear to us. They carry precious memories of our lives."[81] The twin modes of warning and healing can even be seen in Rias Ark's categorization of these pieces of the debris. One category is defined as "debris that shows obvious destructive power," while the other includes everyday objects that "epitomize everyday life lost in the disaster and…reminds people of memories of everyday life before the disaster."[82] In this latter conception, disaster objects, and the recreation of experience are not only a warning, but also an invitation for survivors to reflect on what they lost. By recreating experience, spaces like Rias Ark tried also to create the circumstances where remembrance might be possible.

The position of memory workers in this mode of disaster memory was similarly difficult. Conversations I had with the then Director of the Sendai 3/11 Memorial Community Center (*sendai 3.11 memoriaru kōryū kan*), or "Memo-kan," Yamaki Hirobumi during my fieldwork illuminated the challenges for memory workers engaged in memory work as "healing." Director Yamaki was chosen as the first director of the Memo-kan when it opened in 2017 by his employer the Sendai Cultural Foundation, an organization subsidized by the city government that serves the Sendai's cultural institutions.[83] Trained in stage production, specifically stage lighting, he remarked to me that he was not sure why he was chosen as the director, because his background was in fine arts and he had no obvious link to the Memo-kan. However, he

[81] Rias Ark, "Introduction, 1st floor Permanent Exhibition Documentary of East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami and History of Tsunami Disaster," accessed March 2, 2021, http://rias-ark.sakura.ne.jp/2/en/sinsai/.
[82]Rias Ark, "Introduction, 1st floor Permanent Exhibition Documentary of East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami and History of Tsunami Disaster," accessed March 2, 2021, http://rias-ark.sakura.ne.jp/2/en/sinsai/.
[83] Sendai Cultural Foundation, "Zaidan nitsuite," accessed March 2, 2021, https://ssbj.jp/about/.

speculated that because his fine arts training allowed him to think about the "creation" of artistic works or performances he was particularly well suited and flexibly when it came to creating something without an existing model.[84]

Despite being out of his professional "comfort zone" it was obvious that Yamaki thought about his role as memory worker seriously. In particular, Yamaki saw the Memo-kan as a space where disaster survivors could "open up" and talk about their experiences.[85] Even as the Director of the museum, he would often great people who visited and guide them through the exhibits. He explained that some visitors, when he would strike up a conversation, "would suddenly start speaking, it was if they couldn't stop."[86] When that happened Yamaki said he would stop explaining the exhibits and just listen, allowing the visitors to speak to the point of "overflowing."[87] Yamaki speculated that this would happen because they had not had other chances to speak about their experiences. In Yamaki's mind this ability to share allowed them to "recover" (*kokoro wo fukusu*).[88] Experienced in art museums, Yamaki was struck that unlike visitors to art museums, visitors to the Memokan would thank him and say, "I am glad I came." It is based on these experiences with visitors that Yamaki believed the Memokan was a place that "opened people's hearts."[89] By creating a space where one could share the memory of the disaster, Yamaki believed the Memo-kan helped people to heal.

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[84] Yamaki Hirobumi, Memo-kan Director, in conversation with the author, Sendai, Miyagi Prefecture, Japan, March 5, 2019.
[85] Yamaki Hirobumi, Memo-kan Director, in conversation with the author, Sendai, Miyagi Prefecture, Japan, March 5, 2019.
[86] Yamaki Hirobumi, Memo-kan Director, in conversation with the author, Sendai, Miyagi Prefecture, Japan, March 5, 2019.
[87] Yamaki Hirobumi, Memo-kan Director, in conversation with the author, Sendai, Miyagi Prefecture, Japan, March 5, 2019.
[88] Yamaki Hirobumi, Memo-kan Director, in conversation with the author, Sendai, Miyagi Prefecture, Japan, March 5, 2019.
[89] Yamaki Hirobumi, Memo-kan Director, in conversation with the author, Sendai, Miyagi Prefecture, Japan, March 5, 2019.

Yamaki also thought his presence helped facilitate this healing. He remarked, only half-jokingly:

> "I'm like the fairy godparent (*yōsei*) of this place. You know kind of like cupid, with the little wings on his back? Now, I don't have that appearance, but for visitors who come here and are able to have a conversation with me, that probably makes them happy. I'm not a fairy godparent, but I probably appear that way when someone can open up their heart."[90]

As Yamaki's quote suggests, it is not just memorial spaces themselves that enabled healing. Memory workers acted as facilitators and interlocutors who helped survivors to open up. It is also useful to pause and consider what Yamaki meant by calling himself the "fairy godparent" of the Memo-kan. This is my translation of the Japanese word "*yōsei*." In Japanese folklore *yōsei* can be seen as loosely analogous to the fairies of English folklore. Similar to the fairies of western folklore yōsei can be both benevolent and mischievous. The example Yamaki gave me, I think tailored to western myth for my benefit, was Cupid; the boyish and chubby fairy-like god of love. The main meaning Yamaki seemed to be gesturing towards was that he sees himself as a benevolent and unassuming helper or facilitator of the Memo-kan. To capture this nuance of benevolence, I have translated it as "fairy godparent" in the title, rather than the more ambiguous "fairy." However, as I have thought more deeply about an appropriate analog for Yamaki's role, a more fitting translation might be a video game "sprite."[91] Sprites are meant to helpfully players throughout the game, assisting players controlling the main character through the puzzles and challenges of the storyline. I think this is closer to how Yamaki saw himself, a helpful and unobtrusive guide through the Memokan, allowing visitors to become the main characters in their stories.

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[90] Yamaki Hirobumi, Memo-kan Director in conversation with the author, Sendai, Miyagi Prefecture, Japan, March 5, 2019.
[91] For example, the tiny blue sprite "Navi" from *Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time*.

While able to half-joke about his role at the Memokan, Yamaki did not take this responsibility lightly. He explained that he felt like his responsibility as an interlocutor to visitors was something that he "constantly carried."[92] His approach to fostering these healing conversations for visitors, was similar in many ways to memory workers like Kugiko, who carefully managed their personal feelings with those they guide. To facilitate these conversations Yamaki stressed that his approach was to always remain "neutral."[93] He explained further that "If at home there is something enjoyable or something distressing, I don't bring those feelings here. When I commute to work, as soon as the Memo-kan comes into view, I put my gear into neutral and enter [the building]."[94] This emotional neutrality is something that he cultivated in the almost 3 years that he had served as the director of the Memo-kan. This approach was something he, and the other employees of the Memo-kan settled on in the first years of the center's operation. Although they had known some visitors would have painful memories of the disaster when they first opened, the memory workers of the Memo-kan had not necessarily thought out how they would approach those survivors. Yamaki said the thought of approaching those with painful memories was initially scary for him, but he became comfortable in his emotionally neutral approach.[95]

In contrast to the idealized vision of the memorial worker that would infuse emotions and personal connections into experiential memorialization, my fieldwork with memory workers showed that, whether engaging in the warning or healing mode of post-3.11 memory, these

[92] Yamaki Hirobumi, Memo-kan Director, in conversation with the author, Sendai, Miyagi Prefecture, Japan, March 5, 2019.
[93] Yamaki Hirobumi, Memo-kan Director, in conversation with the author, Sendai, Miyagi Prefecture, Japan, March 5, 2019.
[94] Yamaki Hirobumi, Memo-kan Director, in conversation with the author, Sendai, Miyagi Prefecture, Japan, March 5, 2019.
[95] Yamaki Hirobumi, Memo-kan Director, in conversation with the author, Sendai, Miyagi Prefecture, Japan, March 5, 2019.

memory workers were carefully managing their personal emotions. They felt that this emotional management facilitated the ends (whether educational or therapeutic) of their memory work. This on the ground view of how memory workers navigated experiential memorialization shows us the extent to which the experience of the disaster could be transmitted through memorial spaces and practices.

Conclusion

After I had climbed up to the very top of Yonezawa's building and, as he requested, tried to imagine what it would be like to survive the tsunami wave like he did, my first question for Yonezawa was born out of amazement and disbelief. That question was not about how he survived the disaster. Although his story was impactful, and I felt real fear climbing up the thin chimney-like portion of the building where he survived, I could not adequately comprehend what that experience was like. Nothing in my life gave me a frame of reference for what Yonezawa described.

Much like it demands a great deal of emotional work on the part of the memory worker, experiential memorialization also demands considerable emotional work on part of the disaster inexperienced like me. Despite the tremendous effort, organization, and even technology put to the task, there is no guarantee that memory workers can evoke enough of the experience that was necessary in their own transformation into the disaster aware. Furthermore, how can the disaster inexperienced induce themselves to understand what their disaster guides went through?

What struck me instead was Yonezawa's continued personal enacting of experiential remembrance. As I climbed down the small ladder and collected myself, I asked if this was how Yonezawa conducted the tour every time. Yonezawa replied that yes, he guides people through

his day, his harried scramble up the building as the tsunami waves overtook it and asks everyone to climb up to where he crouched and to imagine the experience. I told him that if it were me, I wouldn't want to re-live my experience. Yonezawa responded quickly to my admission, "for me, I don't want to forget. I feel like I don't want to forget what I experienced. Moreover, I want to share it with others. I want people to hear just how frightening a tsunami is from me."[96] Although I did not say I would necessarily want to forget the experience of the disaster, Yonezawa's quick response revealed the extent to which reliving, or at least reenacting, the experience was tied to remembering it in his mind.

It is almost as if Yonezawa intuitively, or perhaps consciously, recognized the impossibility of transmitting the full reality of his experience to those he guided. Despite this, we can see, in the work of Yonezawa and other memory workers in post-3.11 Tōhoku, concerted efforts to recreate the disaster experience. These recreated experiences, meant to engender a similar transformation towards disaster awareness as felt by survivors, has both physical and emotional aspects. They are facilitated by disaster ruins as well as the stories shared by memory workers. These memory workers, however, do not give their unfiltered experience. Instead, both in the warning and healing modes of memorialization, we should understand the practice of sharing disaster experience as an act of careful emotional management on the part of memory workers on the Tōhoku coast.

[96] Yonezawa Yuichi, in discussion with the author, Rikuzen-takata, Iwate Prefecture, Japan, June 18, 2019.

Epilogue:

Tying Things Together

> "There are many amazing people gathered here today, however, I feel a little anxious, a little worried, that there isn't even one historian among us." [1]
>
> —Nishiotachime Shōko at the 1st meeting of the Sendai Reconstruction Memorial Committee on July 2, 2013.

Disaster Memorials and Missing Historians

In the Introduction to this dissertation, I showed how modern Japanese disaster memorials, as part of "participatory historical culture" were part of the longer lineage and big tent definition of public history. However, as was surely noticeable, the mention of "public history" has been largely absent among the rhetoric of the main historical actors in our narrative. Like public history, historians have been just as conspicuously absent as participants in our various case studies of disaster memorialization. Instead, our protagonists have been architects, religious organizations, and ward associations (Chapter 1), prefectural bureaucrats, local governments, and rural citizens (Chapter 2), business leaders, politicians, and installation artists (Chapter 3), and archivists, designers, government agencies, and survivors (Chapter 4) to name a few prominent examples. In some ways this is unsurprising. Just like the disconnect between the definitions of public history offered by Robert Kelley and Ronald Grele, those who utilize the past as part of the participatory historical culture outside of the academy in their art, architecture, activism, religious expression, community organizing and/or advocacy "tend not to identify with

[1] Sendai-shi, "Dai-ikkai Sendai-shi shinsai fukkō memoriaru-ra kentō iin-kai – gijiroku," July 2013, accessed September 16, 2020, 14, http://www.city.sendai.jp/kankyo/shise/daishinsai/fukko/memorial/documents/memorialgijiroku1.pdf.

the professional public history movement."[2] In fact, they may not connect their use of the past with the practice of "history" at all.

As an historian, and a public historian, the relative absence of those professionally trained to think about and work with the past in the conception, construction, and maintenance of disaster memorials made me anxious. I was, however, heartened to see my anxieties voiced by the historical actors I studied, such as Nishiotachime Shōko, who is quoted above. My anxiety is not born out of a desire to engage in professional gatekeeping, but rather an expression of my commitment as a historian and critical disaster scholar to foster greater understanding about disasters and the past. In this regard my fear is that historians are missing an opportunity to engage with larger and more general audiences in many of the spaces where disaster memory and history are produced. As memory scholars have shown, the types of public spaces, objects and practices that constitute disaster memorials have and continue to be important sites of meaning making and historical understanding for various publics. Although academics largely debate, reevaluate, and explain history in monographs, various history wars and monument controversies across the globe have shown that for many, sites like memorials are where people are able to experience history in their daily lives are at least as significant for the contestation, creation, and consumption of historical narratives.[3]

I want to be careful here to not make a strawman argument. Historians, in Japan and elsewhere, have played and continue to play, important roles in the creation of maintenance of

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[2] Ashton and Trapeznik, 4.

[3] Ashton and Trapeznik, 3 For examples in Japan see: John Dower, Dower, John W. *Ways of Forgetting, Ways of Remembering: Japan in the Modern World*. New York: New Press, 2012., in the context of the "Comfort Women" issue see: Soh, Chunghee Sarah. *The Comfort Women: Sexual Violence and Postcolonial Memory in Korea and Japan.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008. in America see: Tom Engelhardt and Edward T. Linenthal --, et al. *History Wars: The Enola Gay and Other Battles for the American Past*. New York: Metropolitan Books, 1996, in Australia see Macintyre, Stuart, Anna Clark --, and Anna Clark. *The History Wars*. New ed. Carlton, Victoria, Australia: Melbourne University Press, 2004.

disaster memorials and memory projects.[4] In fact the city of Sendai itself seems to at least partly listened to Nishiotachime's critique, with the inclusion of historically minded disaster researchers (if not technically historians), like International Research Institute of Disaster Science (IRIDeS) researchers Elizabeth Maly and Satō Shōsuke, on the Exploratory Committee for a Centrally Located Memorial (*Chūshinbu shinsai memoriaru shoten kentō iinkai*) convened in early 2019.[5] I do not mean to suggest that memorial spaces or efforts that are produced without the consultation of professional historians are inferior. I also do not want to imply that memorial designers or practitioners who do not see themselves as working in public history, or do not have a working theory of public history, are deficient in their activities. Doing so would go against the commitment of critical disaster studies to be skeptical of top-down recovery, expert overreach, and "technocratic solutionism," that already pervades standard responses disaster events.[6]

Instead, I see this dissertation as opening a productive and urgent conversation about the practical aspects of disaster history, disaster memory, and disaster remembrance amongst academic historians, public historians, memory workers, and disaster survivors alike. All have important perspectives, experiences, and expertise to offer in memorializing disaster events. I, myself have worked in multiple capacities in this effort, helping produce various 3.11 disaster memory projects and participating in public discussions on 3.11 memorial plans in Sendai in addition to producing this dissertation. Nishiotachime, for her part, is freelance writer based in Sendai and was highly involved in the Sendai Cultural Foundation's *Re: Project*. As part of the *Re: Project* Nishiotachime and other writers visited various localities affected by 3.11 to

[4] For an example in Japan see: Kōji Katō, "The Story of Cultural Assets and their Rescue: A First-Hand Report From Tōhoku," *Fabula* Vol. 58, Issue 1-2, July 2017, 51-75. 2022,
[5] Sendai-shi, "Shiryō 1: Chūshinbu shinsai memoriaru shoten kentō iinkai meibō," January 30, 2019.
[6] Remes and Horowitz, 3.

interview residents as part of an effort to preserve and share their lifestyles, cultures, and memories.[7] In the capacious definition of public history that I embrace in this dissertation, Nishiotachime can be classified as a public historian and the *Re: Project* as an important work of public history on 3.11. She was certainly qualified in participating in the Reconstruction Memorial Committee and proved to be a prescient and valuable voice throughout her tenure.

Climate Crisis and the Possibilities of Disaster Memorials

> "We cannot welcome disaster, but we can value the responses, both practical and psychological." [8]
>
> —Rebecca Solnit, *A Paradise Built in Hell*

Modern Japanese disaster memorials, as we have seen across the case studies presented in this dissertation, have been the result of different configurations of aesthetic, ideological, religious, socio-economic, emotional, and public historical concerns. They have, in a variety of contexts, been designed to do the work of national glorification, disaster mitigation, disaster awareness, social welfare, memory preservation, future imagination, and emotional healing to provide an incomplete list of potential functions. Some, especially those that received government backing, represented significant public investment in disseminating and preserving knowledge of the event being memorialized.

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[7] The PDF versions of the Re: Project's publications are available here: Re: Project, "Re: Purojekuto seisaku nisshi," accessed April 16, 2022, http://re-project.sblo.jp. An interview with Nishiotachime can be seen here, J:COM Channeru go-tōchi jizukan, "Sendai jinzukan dai-205-kai Nishiotachime Shōko-san (3/7 hōsō)," YouTube Video, March 17, 2020, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QvSdmGaFwJw. Sendai-shi, "Dai-ikkai Sendai-shi shinsai fukkō memoriaru-ra kentō iin-kai – gijiroku," July 2013, accessed September 16, 2020, 19, http://www.city.sendai.jp/kankyo/shise/daishinsai/fukko/memorial/documents/memorialgijiroku1.pdf.

[8] Rebecca Solnit, *A Paradise Built in Hell: The Extraordinary Communities That Arise in Disaster* (New York: Viking, 200), 5.

As one example, places like memorial museums and disaster think tanks can store archival holdings, enable educational opportunities for visitors, and provide support for interested researchers.[9] For example, such institutions like Tokyo's Reconstruction Memorial Hall, Kobe's DRI, and Sendai's Memo-kan, provided me with the support to research the disasters covered in this dissertation. While my focus has been disaster history, institutions like the DRI foster research across a range of humanistic, social scientific, and applied scientific disciplines.[10] In short, disaster memorials in Japan are imagined as being part of the response to past disasters, as well as the preparation for future disaster events.

Disaster memorials, as a memorial genre, are not confined to Japan, but they are an underexamined and still nascent form within the larger world of global memory culture. With the acceleration of climate change, the (realized and projected) increase in climate-related disasters, and growing conscious/activism around the climate crisis, disaster memorials' marginal status in memory cultures focused on war and human atrocities may be changing. New disaster memorials related to climate change, including those memorializing and commemorating the environment itself, are being built across the world.[11]

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[9] Scott Gabriel Knowles, "Why We Need a National Hurricane Memorial and Museum," *Huffington Post* September, 16, 2017, https://www.huffpost.com/entry/hurricane-harvey-irma-disaster-memorial_b_59badc76e4b02da0e1405aa9.

[10] DRI, "Kenkyū – saigai shien," accessed March 14, 2022, https://www.dri.ne.jp/research/.

[11] For example, see the plaque commemorating the glacier Okjokull's "death" in Iceland. The memorial itself is framed as a warning for the future, the text reading "A Letter to The Future, Ok is the first Icelandic glacier to lose its status as a glacier. In the next 200 years all our glaciers are expected to follow the same path. This monument is to acknowledge that we know what is happening and what needs to be done. Only you know if we did it. August 2019 415 ppm CO_2." Toby Luckhurst "Iceland's Okujokull glacier commemorated with a plaque," *BBC News* Published August 18, 2019, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-49345912 accessed February 17, 2022.

Image 15: Photograph of a Commemorative Plaque to Ok Glacier. The plaque was later installed in western Iceland, memorializing the "death" of Ok glacier (*Okjökull*) installed in 2019. Photograph by Rice University *Source*: Wikimedia Commons, "Plaque at the Monument. Photo: Rice University," accessed July 10, 2022, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Okjökull#/media/File:Okjökull_glacier_commemorative_plaque.jpg.

Nor am I alone in my promotion of disaster memorials or advocacy of increased historian involvement in their development and management. Disaster historian Scott Gabriel Knowles, writing in the context of the United States, has made similar arguments in his 2017 opinion piece, published in the wake of Hurricanes Harvey and Irma, entitled "Why We Need a National Hurricane Memorial and Museum." Knowles writes that while American memory culture excels in memorializing war casualties or victims of terrorism, memorials to disasters like hurricanes or floods remain local, small, and overlooked affairs.[12] American innovation in memorializing

[12] Knowles, "Why We Need a National Hurricane Memorial and Museum."

victims of violent acts, like war or terrorism, was borne out by my research. For example American national memorials like the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial or 9/11 Ground Zero Memorial Site were cited regularly by Japanese designers, advisory committees, and planning documents as models to emulate when thinking about post-3.11 memorials.[13] Even more recent developments in memorialization, like the Equal Justice Initiative's Legacy Museum and National Memorial for Peace and Justice, further prove America's place on the cutting edge of memory culture.[14] Knowles laments, however, that such commitment at the national level in particular is lacking in the U.S. when it comes to disasters.[15] He writes that an institution like a "National Hurricane Memorial and Museum" would be an important place to recognize the lives lost in the numerous hurricanes in American history, an educational resource for researchers and visitors, and an opportunity to unmake the term "natural" disaster for the public.[16] Knowles envisions such a memorial would be an ideal location to connect "individual hurricanes and the slow disaster of climate change," imagining that in the future it could even be renamed "the National Climate Change and Hurricane Memorial and Museum."[17]

In this vision Knowles argues that a National Hurricane Memorial and Museum would be a statement that the American government respects those who died in disaster events and has a commitment to learn from their deaths by mitigating ongoing and future disasters.[18] His memorial vision should sound strikingly familiar to readers, because it has been articulated

[13] Yoshikawa Yumi, in conversation with the author, April 2, 2019. For examples of citations of American monuments in Japanese memorial planning documents see: MLIT, "Higashi-nihon daishinsai fukkō kinen kōen kentō kaigi setsumei shiryō, shiryō 3," accessed November 12, 2020, 14-15, https://www.mlit.go.jp/common/000188887.pdf.
[14] See: Equal Justice Initiative, "Museum and Memorial," accessed February 20, 2022. https://museumandmemorial.eji.org.
[15] Knowles, "Why We Need a National Hurricane Memorial and Museum."
[16] Knowles, "Why We Need a National Hurricane Memorial and Museum."
[17] Knowles, "Why We Need a National Hurricane Memorial and Museum."
[18] Knowles, "Why We Need a National Hurricane Memorial and Museum."

among the many configurations of disaster memorials in modern Japan. It should be no surprise that Knowles references national memorials to 3.11 in Fukushima, Miyagi, and Iwate Prefectures among his inspirations as sites that honor the dead, raise the profile of the disaster, and promote education aimed at disaster prevention.[19]

So, what are the possibilities of disaster memorials in the era of climate change, in other words, what could they do? Additionally, what role can historians play in the conception, creation, and maintenance of disaster memorials? The history explored above shows that the answers to this question are potentially numerous, and warrant further interdisciplinary research, discussion, and collaboration that goes beyond the remaining pages of this epilogue. The case studies I analyzed show that disaster memorials have been diverse in form, purpose, and impact in modern Japan. Further configurations of and innovations in disaster memorialization are likely possible beyond my capacity for imagination. What follows are preliminary answers to these questions, based on the case studies of this dissertation and my own experience working in 3.11 memorialization. My hope is that this provisional discussion spurs further interest and activism for disaster memorials in our disastrous age.

The Role of the Historian

To offer one answer to the question of how historians can play a role in disaster memorialization, I would like to return to the remarks of Nishiotachime at the 1st meeting of the Sendai Reconstruction Memorial Committee in 2013. Nishiotachime's primary concern about the lack of historians on the memorial committee was the problem of time. Specifically, she

[19] Knowles, "Why We Need a National Hurricane Memorial and Museum."

worried about the inherent incongruity of geophysical timescales, during which seismic events like 3.11 play out, and the relatively short timescales of human memory and attention.

Nishiotachime remarked that when she went to the disaster zone to listen to and collect stories of disaster survivors, she got the sense that 3.11 was a disaster that struck amidst a much longer 400-year recovery process from the earlier Keichō-Sanriku Earthquake and Tsunami of 1611.[20] Nishiotachime explained that the patterns of settlement and landscape that contributed to communities' vulnerability to 3.11 were set into motion by the post-1611 recovery. She fretted that although these communities had experienced tragedy in 1611, vital memories of the earthquake and tsunami were lost sometime along the 400-year process.[21] She expressed her concern about the incongruity of seismicity, memory, and recovery like this:

> "Are we just thinking about right now, or are we thinking about the breadth of 500 years, are we thinking at a scale that would include things like the movement of the earth's crust, a span of many tens of thousands of years, when thinking about recovery? Those are all very different things."[22]

For Nishiotachime, how one would answer the questions posed by these variable timescales would fundamentally alter the design of a given memorial. As I argued in Chapter 2, historians are well-situated to grapple with the spatial and temporal problems inherent in the gap of human and planetary scales.[23] What I also showed in that chapter, was the difficulty of designing memorials that are effectively resilient to those scalar issues. Nevertheless, historians,

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[20] Sendai-shi, "Dai-i-kkai Sendai-shi shinsai fukkō memoriaru-ra kentō iin-kai – gijiroku," July 2013, accessed September 16, 2020, 19, http://www.city.sendai.jp/kankyo/shise/daishinsai/fukko/memorial/documents/memorialgijiroku1.pdf.
[21] Sendai-shi, "Dai-i-kkai Sendai-shi shinsai fukkō memoriaru-ra kentō iin-kai – gijiroku," July 2013, accessed September 16, 2020, 19, http://www.city.sendai.jp/kankyo/shise/daishinsai/fukko/memorial/documents/memorialgijiroku1.pdf.
[22] Sendai-shi, "Dai-i-kkai Sendai-shi shinsai fukkō memoriaru-ra kentō iin-kai – gijiroku," July 2013, accessed September 16, 2020, 19, http://www.city.sendai.jp/kankyo/shise/daishinsai/fukko/memorial/documents/memorialgijiroku1.pdf.
[23] See: Chakrabarty *The Climate of History in a Planetary Age*, Hecht, "Interscalar Vehicles for an African Anthropocene: On Waste, Temporality, and Violence," and Knowles and Loeb "The Voyage of the Paragon: Disaster as Method."

would add valuable insights to conversations about how to construct memorials that had the potential to remain materially and culturally durable for the long-term recovery process and the unpredictable rhythms of environmental hazards. This could be accomplished, in part, by not only looking at examples of memorials that remain in the present, but also examining those that failed. Memorial committees in the wake of 3.11 often collated examples of successful memorials in Japan and abroad on which to model their eventual disaster memorials.[24] However, as I have argued and shown throughout this dissertation, delving into the histories of unsuccessful, aborted, and defunct memorials also provide rich lessons for the potential and limits of the memorial form.

To prove truly useful, however, historians engaged in brainstorming and advising on disaster memorials must not only become comfortable with the unnerving temporal implications of the deep past, but also with the unfamiliar horizons of the future. This is implied in Nishiotachime's remarks. Nishiotachime mused that historians' point of view could help the committee understand what recovery might mean on the scale of 500 or 10,000 years *from now*. Some historians will balk at this prospect. After all, our specialty is in analyzing the past. Knowledge of the past, in turn, cannot guarantee the ability to accurately predict the future. Historians, like many other professionals, make bad fortune-tellers, but should that make us forever unwilling to, at least, become informed, yet cautious, futurists?

[24] See for example the in the inclusion of the 9/11 memorial and Vietnam Veteran's memorial in this collection of memorial examples presented at the 1st meeting of the Sendai Disaster Reconstruction Memorial Committee Sendai-shi, "Sankō 2: tatoshi-ra no memoriaru jireishū," July 2013, accessed November 14, 2020, 43-44, http://www.city.sendai.jp/kankyo/shise/daishinsai/fukko/memorial/documents/memorialgijiroku1.pdf. as well as in this collection of memorial examples used at the 1st meeting of the Exploratory Commitee for Great East Japan Earthquake Disaster Memorial Parks, held by the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Tourism (MLIT): MLIT, "Higashi-nihon daishinsai fukkō kinen kōen kentō kaigi setsumei shiryō, shiryō 3," accessed November 12, 2020, 14-15, https://www.mlit.go.jp/common/000188887.pdf.

Not all historians are squeamish about thinking with the future. In *The History Manifesto*, historians Jo Guldi and David Armitage argue that "the discipline of history holds particular promise for looking both backwards and forwards."[25] They note that historians are trained to excel at thinking about long-term change, oftentimes over vast expanses of space. This capacity to think over large scales of time and space, in addition to a knack for questioning "received knowledge," provide historians the means for thinking about, and even shaping, the future.[26] Like my concerns in this epilogue, Guldi and Armitage also share a preoccupation with the role of historians and "historical thinking" in the era of climate change.[27] They argue that historians' ability to engage in three types of thinking, thinking about destiny and free will, counterfactual thinking, and utopian thinking, all make them well disposed to think about the future.[28]

The historian Terada Masahiro goes beyond describing the aptitude of historians for future thinking in relation to climate change, and argues for the *necessity* of historians to think and write about the future.[29] Terada asserts that having a plurality of "precise vision[s]" of the future is necessary to enable a sustainable future for the planet. To this end, he encourages historians to engage in writing "futurography" with the same vigor as we have historiography. By doing so, he argues historians could unlock previously unseen potentials and thus "humanity might obtain their own future by themselves."[30]

Historians engaged in conception of disaster memorials related to climate change would then be engaged in a kind of public and material futurography. Imagining how memorials might be received by future generations and how they could remain socially relevant, durable, and

[25] Jo Guldi and David Armitage, *The History Manifesto* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 14.
[26] Guldi and Armitage, 14-15.
[27] Guldi and Armitage, 30.
[28] Guldi and Armitage, 30-37.
[29] Terada, 871-872.
[30] Terada, 871-872.

useful will require historians to produce visions of potential future societies. Luckily, as Guldi, Armitage, and Terada argue, we have the analytical tools to do so at our disposal.

Disaster Memorials as Sites of Emotion

Like those communities in Japan affected by disaster events, communities across the Earth afflicted by climate related disasters will face destruction, disruption, and loss wrought by the deadly entanglement of both natural and anthropogenic hazards. Climate change will lead to mourning various losses, of humans, of ecologies, and even of possible futures. These emotions will affect those directly and indirectly impacted by climate disasters.[31] Originally theorized by clinical psychologists over a decade ago, "eco-anxiety" and "climate anxiety" are also now beginning to affect individuals who fear the disruptions of climate change.[32]

How will survivors (both direct and indirect) of these disasters cope with their grief, mourn their losses, and create meaning in the wake of the destruction? As I showed in Chapters 1, 3, and 4, disaster memorials can be designed and used as powerful emotional tools for disaster survivors and the bereaved. Drawing on the work of Jay Winter, I took disaster memorials seriously as sites and practices meant to facilitate grief and mourning.[33] In Chapter 4 I showed how the work of memory and memorialization provided some survivors a sense of purpose and the means to heal through utilizing their own disaster experiences. However, as was illustrated in

[31] Clinical psychologists have theorized for over a decade that climate change will impact the mental health and wellbeing of individuals and will require therapists to recognize climate change as a social as well as a geophysical issue. Thomas J. Doherty and Susan Clayton argue that humans will be emotionally affected directly (experiencing adverse climate change related events/disasters), indirectly (witnessing the effects of climate change through various media sources), and psychosocially (by living through adverse social conditions exacerbated like climate change i.e. political unrest, migration, resource scarcity etc.). Thomas J. Doherty and Susan Clayton, "The Psychological Impacts of Global Climate Change" *American Psychologist* Vol. 66, No. 4, (May-June 2011) 265-276.
[32] Ellen Berry, "Climate Change Enters the Therapy Room," *New York Times* Feb. 6, 2022, https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/06/health/climate-anxiety-therapy.html.
[33] Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning,* 78-79.

Chapter 1, to be effective sites of mourning, disaster memorials are subject to the cultural politics and possibilities of a given historical moment.

As Chapter 1 and Chapter 3 show forgetting, hope, and even fun can also be sought after affective registers elicited by disaster memorials. This insight adds an affective aspect to the issue of futurity and futurography explored in the previous section. In addition to facilitating the expression and exploration of grief and anxiety, disaster memorials in the age of climate change should also spark hope, resolve, and determination for the future. These emotions will be key in inspiring visitors to disaster memorials to envision the plurality of potential sustainable futures that Terada argues are vital if humans are to shape their own destiny amidst the climate crisis.[34]

Disaster Memorials and Disaster Recovery

As was explored in Chapter 1, public memorials, in their need to garner popular and monetary support, are inherently constrained by the need to appeal to and adhere to the desires of a wide array of interested stakeholders. The need for memorials to be broadly acceptable, in combination with their claims to immutability and existence in perpetuity, is what makes "public monuments…the most conservative of commemorative forms" according to Kirk Savage.[35] This inherent limitation of the memorial form is further pronounced in disaster memorialization because an integral constituency of these memorials, disaster survivors, are oftentimes still experiencing great material hardship and scarcity. As practitioners of disaster memorialization historians cannot ignore the material realities of scarce resources and attention that define immediate post-disaster moments. As was illustrated in Chapter 3, disaster survivors are keenly aware of this scarcity and can be highly critical of memorial projects that are seen as wasting

[34] Terada, 871-872.
[35] Savage 4-7.

money and attention that could be better spent on those still displaced and struggling to recover financially. A statement released by the Chuō kōen fureai sentā (a community mutual aid center) in anticipation of the memorial events commemorating the 2nd anniversary of the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake in January of 1997, illustrated this sentiment well:

> "While grand memorial ceremonies (*irei-sai*) are well and good, we think the very best memorial (*irei*) would be the ability for survivors to live their lives in security. Each of us light our votives with resolve, holding fast our desire for the peace of the departed (*chinkon no omoi wo yoseaitai*)."[36]

The material needs of disaster-stricken communities and the practices of disaster memorialization need not be opposed. As was shown in Chapter 2, disaster memorials can, and have, been configured as means of distributing resources in ways that are useful to recovering communities. However, as also shown by Chapter 2, this approach could also undermine some of the key commemorative, pedagogical, and preventative ambitions of disaster memorials. Important too is a sensitivity to *who* is benefitting materially from disaster memorials and *how* those benefits are manifested. As was shown in Chapter 3, the *Kobe Luminarie* was also envisioned as an economic recovery tool but was squarely aimed at business and tourist industry interests. This left some critical of the festival, which attracted financial support from government funding and private donors alike while some survivors still struggled in temporary housing.

Happily, successful examples of disaster memorials as disaster recover also exist outside of the Japanese context. For instance, the *Surviving Katrina and Rita in Houston* (SKRH) project developed by folklorist Carl Lindhal in the wake of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita on the Gulf Coast of the United States provides a powerful model for disaster memorials as disaster

[36] "Ireisai no oshirase," Box 122 *Iki-iki kurasō-kai (Wakabachō kasetsu jutaku C・D tō)*, File 001014, DRI, Kobe, Japan.

recovery.[37] Working with storm evacuees living in Houston SKRH trained, empowered, and (importantly) compensated survivors to collect oral histories of each other's disaster experiences. In addition to providing financial resources SKRH served as an emotional outlet where disaster survivors could have their stories heard by and connect with fellow survivors. Moreover, the recordings they collected produced a critical archive of disaster history for current and future researchers.[38] In post-disaster communities, disaster memorials and memorialization must be more than "luxury goods," and should be understood as a part of the larger recovery effort.

Disaster Memorials, Disaster Justice, and Disaster Solidarity

Finally, I would like to leave the reader with a provocation related to the ethical possibilities of disaster memorials. As I argued in the introduction, and showed throughout the dissertation, while disaster memorials in modern Japan have surprising connections to the war and atrocity-related memorials that dominate global memory culture, disaster memorials are distinguished from other memorials in their ability to help humanity grapple with its relationship to past, present, and future environmental hazards. Here, however, in the spirit of breaking down the analytic boundaries between "natural" and "man-made" disaster advocated by critical disaster scholars, I would like to explore what disaster memorials and memorialization could gain from further borrowing memorials to war and atrocity.

In the introduction I explained that the term "natural" disaster had fallen into disfavor among disaster researchers. The rhetorical and ideological power of "natural disaster" is the

[37] See: Carl Lindahl, "Legends of Hurricane Katrina: The Right to Be Wrong, Survivor-to-Survivor Storytelling, and Healing." The Journal of American Folklore 125, no. 496 (2012): 139-76., and Carl Lindahl "Storms of Memory: New Orleanians Surviving Katrina in Houston." Callaloo 29, no. 4 (2006): 1526-1538.
[38] Lindahl "Legends of Hurricane Katrina: The Right to Be Wrong, Survivor-to-Survivor Storytelling, and Healing," and Lindahl. "Storms of Memory: New Orleanians Surviving Katrina in Houston."

ability to naturalize disaster events, obscuring human culpability and the role of prevailing systems of power in creating the conditions of vulnerability that lead to disastrous outcomes when met with environmental hazards. The earthquake and tsunami disasters analyzed in this dissertation were largely understood and labeled by elite and non-elite actors alike as "natural disasters" (*shizen saigai* or *tensai-chihen*). This meant that these disasters were "unprecedented since the dawn of history" (*yūshi irai mizō no dai-saihen*) or "unforeseeable" (*sōteigai*). By using these terms historical actors in modern Japan gestured, in part, towards the historical importance and singularity of these disaster events. However, also implied in the "unprecedented" or "unforeseeable" nature of these "natural" disasters, was that no one could have possibly known to do anything to avoid them beforehand. These implications in turn suggest that no one could reasonably be considered culpable or at fault, offering disaster victims no one to blame and no recourse to a form of restitution or justice.

I want to be clear that I do not equate the type of culpability implied by a critical reading of disasters and their causes with the culpability for atrocities like war, slavery, or genocide. Importantly, these crimes are distinguishable from the choices that can make individuals, organizations, and societies culpable in disaster in the knowing intent of perpetrators of atrocity to harm their victims violently and viscerally. Nor, considering the current emphasis among scholars of disasters' origins in systematic and structural failures, would I advocate for the singling out of guilty individuals.[39]

With these important caveats in mind, I argue that disaster memorials would stand to gain by positioning themselves as vehicles for justice, akin to the ambitions of some war and atrocity memorials, like, for example the Equal Justice Initiative's National Memorial for Peace and

[39] Ryan Hagen in Remes and Horowitz, 41-46.

Justice to African American victims of lynching.[40] What would that justice look like? In keeping with the spirit of critical disaster studies, disaster memorials devoted to disaster justice would indict the systems and status quo that made communities vulnerable to disaster and exhort visitors to change them.[41]

One can surely see how making a disaster memorial committed to disaster justice would be difficult in Japan or anywhere else.[42] As illustrated throughout this dissertation, disaster memorials were and are often erected under the guidance and with the approval of those in political power and governmental authority. Thus, as the overseers, protectors, and oftentimes beneficiaries of the status quo that created the conditions of disaster, it would be hard to endorse or encourage the construction of a memorial that is inherently critical or even hostile towards the prevailing systems of power. To do so would be to open the system and themselves as individuals to accusations of culpability and guilt, and to encourage visitors to pursue political and societal change to prevent similar disasters in the future.

While such a disaster memorial is structurally unlikely, if not impossible, it does not mean that all aspects of disaster justice are out of reach. One aspect that I find promising is the possibility of solidarity that arises out of disaster. We see this possibility expressed intellectually in the project of critical disaster studies to break down the conceptual and disciplinary boundaries between natural and man-made disaster, and to draw parallels between the experience of earthquakes, tornadoes, and hurricanes, with war and famine.[43] We also see it expressed in

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[40] Equal Justice Initiative, "Museum and Memorial," accessed February 20, 2022, https://museumandmemorial.eji.org.
[41] Remes and Horowitz, 3.
[42] "Disaster Justice" is a concept articulated by professor of emergency management, Samantha Montano in Samantha Montano, *Disasterology: Dispatches from the Frontlines of the Climate Crisis* (Toronto: Park Row Books, 2021), 279-309.
[43] See: Kenneth Hewitt "Acts of Men": Disasters Neglected, Preventable, and Moral," in Remes and Horowitz, 184-192.

more concrete and mundane ways in the way people oftentimes (although not always) spontaneously help each other in post-disaster moments as has been famously explored by Rebecca Solnit.[44] At the core of these expressions is the sense that the experience of disaster can foster community, commonality, and coordination. Samantha Montano, the coiner of the term "disaster justice," articulates the power of disaster experience to bridge conceptual, material, and political divides, in her book *Disasterology: Dispatches from the Frontlines of the Climate Crisis*. In particular she writes about the connections between disparate movements, like the Standing Rock protests, youth-led climate actions, and the March for Our Lives that she saw as all born out of disaster events.[45] Montano's passage drawing these connections warrants quoting in full:

> "These movements and protests, the majority youth-led, are in large part a response to disasters, and demonstrate the urgency and righteousness of the broader movements they represent. Disasters are themselves a manifestation of why these movements matter. Each protest intertwines the climate change, and environmental justice movements, anti-austerity, anti-colonialism, anti-racism, and gender equality. Disaster Activism is built from the foundation and guidance of these other social movements. Disaster is a common thread that weaves these movements together. If that thread were recognized and elevated, a unified disaster movement could emerge."[46]

Again, much like the expansive mandate claimed by critical disaster scholars, we could read Montano's passage cynically as an effort to expand the scope of disaster justice to encompass what we might simply recognize as justice itself. However, I was heartened to discover that, much like I found Nishiotachime, who shared my anxieties about historians and their absence in disaster memorialization, I also found Montano's articulation of disaster justice and solidarity reflected in my own research and experience.

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[44] Solnit, *A Paradise Built in Hell*.
[45] Montano, 291.
[46] Montano, 291-292

I encountered the expression of disaster solidarity in the context of Japanese disaster memorials as part of my participation in the Kizuna Project. The Kizuna Project was an initiative founded by Yoko Noge-Dean through the Osaka Committee of Chicago Sister Cities International (CSCI) in 2011 to raise awareness about 3.11 and commemorate victims of the disaster in the Chicagoland area. Active through the 10th anniversary of the disaster in March 2021, the Kizuna Project consisted of a yearly thematic photo exhibition and memorial ceremony held in Chicago.[47] I was taken to the 2018 memorial ceremony and opening of the *Kizuna 7: Women of Tōhoku* by the Japanese Research Librarian at University of Chicago, Ayako Yoshimura, who introduced me to members of the Kizuna Project like Yoko Noge-Dean, Kimiyo Naka, and Mayumi Lake.

Thanks to this introduction, I was able to volunteer with the Kizuna Project, helping collect interviews in Tōhoku alongside photographer Mayumi Lake for the 2019 *Kizuna 8: Artisans of Tōhoku* photo exhibition. In 2019 I was honored to conceive and help produce the 2020 exhibition entitled *Kizuna 9: Memory* alongside Sendai-area photographer Shishido Kiyotaka, although the exhibition and memorial ceremony were both cancelled due to the outbreak of COVID-19 in mid-March 2020. I also facilitated the creation of the Kizuna Project Digital Archive, cited below, by a team of University of Chicago graduate students as part of the Public History Practicum, to ensure that project was accessible beyond the 10th anniversary. Finally, I was honored again to serve as master of ceremonies for the (virtual) 10th anniversary memorial service entitled *Kizuna 10: Inochi (Life)*. In the closing remarks of the 10th anniversary

[47] For information on the Kizuna Project see: Kizuna Project Archive, "About Us," accessed March 4, 2022, https://www.311kizunachicago.com/about-us. For information on Humans of Minamisanriku see: Yuko Prefume "BIJ in Minamisanriku: How We Got Started," accessed March 4, 2022, https://sites.baylor.edu/bijm/.

ceremony Yoko Noge-Dean pleasantly surprised me with her own articulation of disaster justice and solidarity, which I provide below:

> "We are living in…through a historic global pandemic as well all know, millions of lives lost, jobs are cut people are suffering, but through these pains and sorrows, I believe something beautiful came up. We now have [a] deeper understanding of other people's pain. Empathy is here. Just look at how the nationwide protest about racial inequality came and spread. How people contributed to the food bank for the poor people…people are helping people. [W]e hope that our effort of telling stories about people in Tōhoku—their resilience, their strength—could also help people in Chicago to deepen their empathy and understanding [towards] those who live outside the United States. Indeed, to help people is to help yourself. This is universal, we all have *inochi*, we are not alone."[48]

By tying 3.11, to the COVID-19 Pandemic, as well as the subsequent Black Lives Matter Protests against police violence and racial inequality, Noge-Dean clearly illustrated the same impulse towards connection that we find in Montano's articulation of disaster justice.

It is fitting to close on the possibilities of connection contained within disaster memorials. As I described in the introduction, disaster memorialization in Japan has its roots in religious practices meant to manage the restless spirits of disaster victims. These spirits were believed to have suffered violent deaths, with those who died without familial connections to mourn them (*muen*) being particularly worrisome. We can read the memorial rituals of early modern Japan, in part, as a collective effort to reestablish and maintain connection in the wake of disaster, in this case between the living and the dead.

This impulse towards connection and reconnection is reflected in the name of the Kizuna Project itself. *Kizuna* in Japanese refers to the bonds or ties that connect people in

[48] Chicago Sister Cities International, "Kizuna 10: Inochi (Life) Commemoration Ceremony," YouTube Video, March 22, 2021, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7hxE-ecVRng.

human relationships and can be translated as “the ties that bind.” The project’s name was inspired by the popularity of the word *kizuna* in Japan following 3.11, the character for which was chosen as the 2011 *kanji* of the year as part of the annual ballot conducted by the Japanese Kanji Proficiency Society.[49] It is my hope that disaster memorials, in Japan and beyond, continue to provide opportunities for solidarity and connection as we all face the climate crisis.

[49] “Japanese public chooses ‘kizuna’ as kanji of 2011,” *BBC News* December 24, 2011, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-16321999.

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