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RETHINKING CONFLICT AND COLLECTIVE MEMORY: THE CASE OF NANKING

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Collective memory is reputed to be an ambiguous and complex concept (Olick and Robbins 1998; Olick 2008; Roediger and Wertsch 2008); in fact, no concept is clearer or simpler. Memory is a fundamental property of the human mind, an indispensable component of culture, and an essential aspect of tradition. Mind, culture, and tradition are, indeed, inconceivable without memory. Although individuals alone possess the capacity to contemplate the past, they never do so singly (Schwartz and Schuman 2005); they do so with and against others situated in different groups and through the knowledge and symbols that predecessors and contemporaries transmit to them (Schwartz 2001, 2007). Collective memory therefore refers to the *distribution* throughout society of what individuals believe, feel, and know about the past, how they judge the past morally, and how closely they identify with it. That every distribution has a central tendency means that a total dissensual memory is impossible; but the very existence of a distribution means there can be no total consensus. Also, when these distributions reappear in samples composed of individuals unknown to one another, they must be treated as “social facts” (Durkheim [1895]1982) that are independent of the persons they comprise.

Understandings of the past, moreover, are not randomly distributed through society; different groupings, organizations, and institutions have elective affinities for different remembrances. Max Weber refers to these as “carrier strata” whose social role is to propagate their ideas and to disparage those of others.

Two perspectives, each based on unique premises about power, distortion, and objectivity, have guided the study of conflict and collective memory. The most

widely held is "the politics of memory," which assumes that power legitimates itself by determining what we remember and forget. A second perspective proceeds from the assumption that conflict is a process involving attributions of credit and blame. These two perspectives—the first structural; the second, psychological—lead to two very different views of how history and memory interact.

This case study explores the politics of memory and attribution theory through expert and popular beliefs in Japan about the 1937–1938 Nanking Massacre. Japanese debate over Nanking is a useful case because it is highly politicized, transparent, and involves participants ideologically committed to competing historical narratives.

The first part of this chapter examines the assumptions of the politics of memory and attribution theory; in the second part, the two theories are reviewed in light of Japan's Nanking debates. The final section generalizes what has been learned, specifying what new understandings of Nanking add to the existing body of collective memory scholarship.

POLITICS OF MEMORY

Conceived as a product of political conflict, memory assumes pluralistic and centralized forms. The fate of artistic and presidential reputations, Holocaust commemoration, place-naming, monument-making, and the organization of museums show how multiple memories emerge out of a context of cross-cutting interests, coalitions, power networks, and enterprises (Tuchman and Fortin 1989; Wagner-Pacifici and Schwartz 1991; Barthel 1996; Fine 2001). Memory works differently in its centralized form: Historians and commemorative elites create hegemonic narratives and symbols to manipulate the loyalty of the masses (Abercrombie, Hill, and Turner 1980; Gillis 1994).

Beliefs that serve a group interest and also happen to be *true* are anomalies, given the politics of memory's premises. Conservative agents supposedly fabricate a past that sustains existing power distributions; liberal agents challenge fixed views of the past. Counterhistory and countermemory, based on new moods rather than new data, took root in the ideologically sensitive 1980s. In an age of ideologies, according to Arnaldo Momigliano (1984), "an increasing proportion of historical research is made in the form of rhetorical and ideological analysis... while the interpretation of old facts is more frequent than the discovery of new facts" (pp. 495–496). In this context, established ideas about what *constitutes* a past are challenged. New ideas, based on the egalitarian principle of multiple perspectives and power in the service of diversity, are transparent ways of claiming that good history centers on discoveries of suffering and excluded minorities (Schlesinger 1992) and is represented in general museum display and specialized sites like the National Museum of the American Indian, the National Museum of African American History and Culture, the United States Holocaust Memorial, and the proposed national women's

and Latino history museums. The problem with such minority platforms is not that they tell painful truths about history; the problem is that, given liberal premises, what is not painful is often not worth remembering, often not worth investigating—and often not true.

That good history means the acknowledgment of past crimes and recognition of diversity is a manifesto set forth in bad faith. No museum or university is interested in teaching the perspectives of race supremacists, although they do not hesitate to include in their cultural diversity programs the ideology of radical Islam or even justifications of jihadism.¹ The internment of Japanese American citizens, a Smithsonian Museum favorite, is not contextualized by information on the size of the intelligence network that Japan had established during the 1930s on the West coast; it is unaccompanied by exhibits of Japanese massacres of American and allied prisoners of war, or information about the relatively small proportion of prisoners surviving Japanese captivity (Chambers 1999:560–561).

Museums embody cultural power, and power, according to Michel Foucault (1975), determines memory; further, "if one controls people's memory, one controls their dynamism" (p. 25). Four prominent works exemplify this point. For Eric Hobsbawm (1983), the void left by the late-nineteenth-century decline of authoritarian regimes led to invented traditions to sustain order in the face of democratic reforms. Likewise, John Bodnar (1992) explains that commemorative resources have always been controlled by a dominant stratum (Protestant middle-class businessmen in the nineteenth century; professionals, editors, and government officials in the twentieth) whose official "programmers" seek to promote loyalty to the state and its leaders.

Official programmers have their work cut out for them. Richard Handler (in Gillis' [1994] *Commemorations*) explains the dilemma. Collective identities are consecrated by hegemonizing myths, but what of oppressed minorities that have profitably created their own myths and new identities? Handler is remarkably candid. He wants to "make sure our critiques of identity focus on those mainstream claims that too often go unchallenged. Rather than writing exclusively of the 'invention' of minority identities, traditions, and cultures, we can turn our attention to the ways in which the majority or mainstream is itself continually reconstructed" (p. 38). To reveal "oppressors'" fictions while ignoring the fictions of their "victims" is Handler's project.

Handler openly converts social science into political advocacy. Maria Sturken is subtler. "Cultural memory is a field of cultural negotiation through which different stories vie for a place in history" (p. 1). In her effort to build on Foucault, she turns to the 1991 Gulf War, explaining that the United States attacked Iraq in order to test new weapons and assert its post-Cold War dominance (p. 124). That Iraq conquered and raped Kuwait, had poised troops to attack Saudi Arabia, and threatened the oil supply of poor countries, as well as rich ones, are unmentioned.

Deep similarity exists among the liberal "thought styles" (Fleck [1935] 1979) of Eric Hobsbawm, John Bodnar, Richard Handler, and Marita Sturken. All show that the victims of state power are the weak and vulnerable—double-losers

because their oppression (never their wrongdoings or gains) is factual and because earlier historians and media have ignored their plight. Roy Rosenzweig and David Thelen's *The Presence of the Past* (1998) reproduces this logic. Their telephone surveys show that family history is more relevant to most people than national history, but many family members discuss national events and individual experiences in terms of one another. Parents, when asked what their children should learn about the past, are twice as likely to name American history as family history. Rosenzweig and Thelen dismiss this answer as "blandness" and "prepackaged civic ideology," reflecting "obligation rather than conviction" (pp. 128–129). What is not prepackaged, or how to tell the prepackaged from the unprepackaged, is left to the reader's imagination. Neither African American nor Native American historical understanding is dismissed as "prepackaged" or "bland." Mexican American citizens are much less likely to define themselves as victims and more inclined to embrace the "pious," "nation-centered accounts" of American history. Why so? Fear of deportation is the only reason Rosenzweig and Thelen can fathom. Because such a fear can apply only to *illegal* immigrants, the authors exaggerate their presence in the survey in order to explain the embarrassing presence of a patriotic minority.

These recent exercises in collective memory—and many more could be cited (including Handler and Linnekin 1984 and Alonso 1988)—reflect powerfully the Gramscian and "dominant ideology" (Abercrombie, Hill, and Turner 1980) conceptions of culture, and they are energized by a multicultural, victim-centered bent of mind. But if multiculturalism grants to every community the past it wants, the result is never tranquility, for there is always a community to dispute what others claim.

Focusing on and giving "voice" to "petit narratives" (Lyotard 1984), especially those of minorities who would be otherwise written out of history, politics of memory theories set up a competitive system between admirers and critics of national legacies. These theories, inspired by multiculturalism, are beset by contradiction. They imply the elite can only exploit, never assist, the masses, exaggerate the difficulty of knowing the past, and press too far the claim that perception of the past is rooted in present interests and experience. Overestimating dissensus, they assume that conflict is the natural state of society. Strong ideological leanings make the liberal elite theoretically schizoid: They are positivist when addressing mainstream society's sins (facts about atrocities committed against African Americans are taken for granted) and constructionist when addressing mainstream society's virtues (facts about Henry Ford's accomplishments are "constructions" designed to make us love capitalism).

The politics of memory provides a rich view of the symbolic objects (books, films, monuments, etc.) that subordinate memory to political power, but it fails to clarify how these objects perform their function, which includes self-serving distortion of reality, and why some representations of the past are accepted while others are rejected. The merit of the attribution theory of memory conflict turns on precisely these issues.

CONFLICTING ATTRIBUTIONS

Conflicting historical understandings are based on conflicting attributions. Attribution theory, as Fiske and Taylor (1991) describe it, "deals with how the social perceiver uses information to arrive at causal explanations for events. It examines what information is gathered and how it is combined to form a causal judgment" (p. 23). Many versions of attribution theory exist, each addressed, in its own way, to a particular domain of activity.² In the domain of collective memory, attributions are pivotal because so many historians and commemorative agents sympathize with or despise the very groups they contemplate. The concept of "political correctness" manifests this tendency, which includes causal attributions that exaggerate minority group virtue, suffering, and achievement and/or obfuscate responsibility for wrongdoing. Political correctness is the opposite of ethnocentric distortion, which stereotypes out-group members negatively; in-group members, positively.

At the national level, most conflict involves the exertions of the ideological left and right. Throughout the first three-quarters of the twentieth century, leftist resistance to injustice and indignity manifested itself in great acts of courage, but left-thinking people not only champion the cause of the weak and oppressed; they need the weak and oppressed to realize their own sense of who they are. Defending the oppressed, then, is not a means but an end in itself, the *raison d'être* of leftist existence. To this end, cases of real minority oppression are very often exaggerated.³

Maintaining unconditional compassion for victims requires nimble thinking: Some information must be exaggerated; some ignored; certain conventions for determining causation and responsibility must be suspended; new ways of attributing motives must be found; innovative approaches to understanding aggression and defense must be concocted. So far as left-leaning observers treat minorities as "protected groups," they cannot formulate explanations implying blame. Left observers require "external" or "structural" explanations of minority groups' wrongdoing (e.g., oppression, deprivation of opportunity, humiliation, injustice) and avoid "internal" or "dispositional" explanations that relate the conduct of the protected to personality and the internalized values of their culture (Rotter 1966; Felson 1991).

Right-leaning observers, in contrast, are more likely than the left to defend the conventions, representatives, and projects of the "dominant" majority. To realize their interests, the right applies structural (external) reasons for majority vices and psychological (internal) reasons for their virtues. That the attitude of the right is the "traditional" or what may seem the "natural attitude" is suggested by experiments demonstrating that people tend to account for in-group vices and virtues by external and internal explanation, respectively; out-group vices and virtues by the opposite rule (see, e.g., McArthur and McDougall 1995; Klein and Licatta 2001; Khan and Liu 2008). In recent years, psychologists sensitive to differences in cultural values have accumulated evidence showing, at the individual level, that East Asia's collectivist values, concern for interdependence, and harmony within society incline individuals to withhold self-serving attributions, but self-serving bias

against out-groups and foreign nations is the rule (Muramoto and Yamaguchi 1997; Ma and Karasawa 2006).

Conceiving conflict in collective memory as a process of competing *attributions* allows us to drop the misleading *power* assertion.⁴ If collective memory reflects conflict and power, it does so only by way of the attribution of credit and blame.⁵

In credit and blame analysis (Felson 1991), a theory is judged in terms of its implications for the group that the analyst wishes to protect. The Japanese left rejects theories that attribute their forebears' atrocities to external sources of motivation—provocation, fatigue, casualties, inadequate supplies, poor leadership. Conservatives emphasize precisely these factors and reject theories that attribute Japanese atrocities to an internalized culture of violence, love of aggression, contempt for Chinese inferiority, and disposition toward cruelty. Successful blame analysis, then, represents itself as a value-neutral causal theory; in fact, it does not identify the cause of an event but rather accepts or rejects causes depending on their implications for the esteem and identity of a protected group.⁶

Because liberal-conservative tension is grounded in irreconcilable attribution principles, memory wars, although variable in intensity, are long-lasting. During the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, Western memory wars, an aspect of Western "culture wars" (Hunter 1991; Himmelfarb 1999), intensified as minorities' spokespersons, in many important arenas, successfully challenged official (allegedly hegemonic) narratives—some true; some false. In these times, the theory of the politics of memory, already matured, became the dominant branch of collective memory scholarship. Politics of memory studies are typically binary: They distinguish between the memories of center and periphery, dominant and subordinate, authority and revisionist, us and them, elite and public—with the former member of each pair determining the latter's content. The tone of this scholarship ascribes disproportionate credence to minority memories, which are construed to be a form of resistance to tyranny of the majority. Conservatives, for their part, champion the majorities (to whom liberals refer disdainfully as society's "dominant" stratum), exaggerating their accomplishments and minimizing their wrongdoing.

The politics of memory is a special case of attribution theory. Many cases exist in which power fails to shape memory's content; no cases exist in which attribution fails to play a part. The politics of memory derives from attribution process because its key concepts—hegemony, construction, legitimation—result from the way credit and blame are applied. Thus, liberals and conservatives alike apportion credit and blame, reward and punishment, admiration and censure according to the same attribution principles. Power can make attributions credible, but it cannot explain why or how they are devised.

Unless power is absolute, credit and blame cannot be attributed any way one pleases. Neither political nor cultural elites can say what they want about the past because others, including reliable eyewitnesses, will challenge them. Michael Schudson (1992:208–211) believes this competitive process works best within liberal democracies; yet, the claims of a given authoritarian state, although not successfully opposed from within, are challenged by other states making competing claims.

Whether claim-makers are individuals or states, conflict inevitably adds the issue of objectivity to the issue of credit and blame. If we cannot know the past as it was, we cannot know how, or whether, a given attribution distorts or affirms it. Conflicting narratives are the principal means for this determination.

Everyone makes sense of experience by translating it into narratives (MacIntyre 1989:138–157). Narrative genres—including *tragic* and *mimetic* (of which more will be said later)—provide templates that define the significance of evidence (Smith 2005). However, James Gustafson insists that narratives, whatever their genre or function, "need to be checked against facts and figures and political analysis" (cited in Hauerwas and Jones 1989). Alasdair MacIntyre (1989), too, considers "degenerate" any research tradition that has "contrived a set of epistemological defences which enable it to avoid . . . recognizing that it is being put in question by rival traditions" (p. 147). MacIntyre concedes, however, that without omissions of truth and inclusions of falsehood, many narratives would not work. To determine whether narratives are autonomous myths or the products of real events is thus a longstanding problem.

Two theoretical approaches to conflict and collective memory are now distinguishable. The first relates history and memory to power struggles; the second subsumes these struggles under conflicting causal attributions. The question is what this relation adds to the understanding of real events. Can the study of such events lead to a synthetic theory that integrates the claims of power and attribution, or does a single, unifying element exist beneath both? Conflict over what happened in Nanking, China's capital, in late 1937 will be the case in point. The Nanking Massacre is a good specimen because the conflict over its volume and nature is intense, data-driven, and relevant to the national identities of both the Chinese and Japanese people.

NANKING DEBATE

The Japanese are widely believed to be reluctant to discuss their country's role in World War II. Charles Maier's (2000) thoughtful comparison of postwar Japan and Germany makes this belief plausible, but his qualification of Germany's repentance is more informed than his qualification of Japan's nonrepentance. In fact, the Japanese now discuss the war openly. Unlike some European countries, where denial of Holocaust atrocities is a crime, Japanese conservatives assert their point of view within a legal environment of free speech, without fear of imprisonment. Informed challenges to beliefs about atrocity sharpen debate and lead to a truer appraisal than if they were prohibited and punished. Such has not always been the case.

Between 1945 and 1972, the Japanese people felt *themselves* victims of the devastating war their government had started. Beginning in 1972, when Japan and China normalized diplomatic relations, left politicians tried but failed to catch up with new opinion by convincing their government to recognize the suffering Japan had caused.⁷

Not until the 1982 textbook controversy did the Nanking Massacre become an object of official concern (Penney 2008). In the 1990s, debate began. The number of books on Nanking published in Japanese roughly indexes the excitement. Between 1940 and 1979, a forty-year period, the Worldcat archive indicates a total of 8 books published—an average of two per decade. During the 1980s, 30 books appeared: 26 during or after 1982, the year of the “Textbook Incident.” In the 1990s, 55 books appeared: 39 during or after 1995, the fiftieth anniversary of the end of World War II. The total for 2000–2009, based on annual means for the first seven years, is 67 books.⁸ In addition to the Nanking book explosion, new topics—including comfort women; prime ministers visiting the notorious Yasukuni Shrine, which honors war criminals among ordinary soldiers, and the wartime role of Hirohito—became controversial. Iris Chang’s (1998) book, detailing Nanking victims’ accounts, became an American best-seller and stirred international indignation.

In Japan, the Nanking case divides liberal and conservative thought collectives (Fleck [1935] 1979), each gathering and analyzing large quantities of information. Out of the process emerged a centrist collective producing a third body of knowledge. From this triadic structure, which is based largely on *primary data*, arise my conclusions.”

CONTEXT

No discussion of the Nanking Massacre makes sense apart from the total wartime devastation. Japanese atrocities defy description, far transcending Nanking; they include biological experimentation on human beings, chemical weapons, torture, slave labor, rape, forced prostitution, looting. Above all were mass killings, including the bayoneting and beheading of civilians and prisoners of war. In one single killing factory, the Unit 731 biological experiment station, where human subjects were injected with lethal bacterial and other agents, 300,000 died. Biological weapons killed more than 200,000 (Chang and Barker 2003).

The war’s casualty counts signify the misery caused by Japan’s military. China, with its 20 million dead, suffered the greatest loss. In Indonesia, the war caused the death of 4 million; in India, 1.6 million; in French Indochina, 1 million. When violence against the Burmese, Koreans, Malaysians, Filipinos, Micronesians, Timorese, Singaporeans, and Thai are included, the total death count reaches almost 28 million.¹⁰

In light of the massive suffering caused by the Japanese, it seems trivial to focus on a single event, and many observers have said as much—largely because one event diverts attention from the larger atrocity. But Nanking is “good to think with”; conflict over what happened in that one city reflects efforts to comprehend the very meaning of being Japanese, to define ultimate human rights and responsibilities, and to know the world that Japanese power had destroyed. What is a nation to do with the fact that its forebears caused so much destruction, so much grief?

Memories of misconduct influence most when carried by influential groups. This chapter’s opening section drew attention to the existence of such “carrier” groups, namely, institutions, organizations, communities, and other groupings whose function is to interpret, preserve, and propagate memory of a given event—in this case, the Nanking Massacre. Such groups (for a typology, see Schluchter 1989:96–99) are versions of the moral and reputational entrepreneurs (Becker [1963] 1997:147–64; Lang and Lang 1991; Fine 2001:60–94) who have a stake in cultivating or discrediting the reputation of favored or disdained individuals. Three carrier groups participate in the Nanking memory war: (1) the maximalists, composed of moderate and radical liberals who attribute causes that emphasize their forebears’ wrongdoing; (2) revisionists—strong and extreme conservatives who attribute causes that emphasize their forebears’ virtue and minimize blame for atrocities; and (3) centrists, including moderate liberals and conservatives who, unlike their maximalist and revisionist colleagues, are unattached to organizations of like-minded analysts and deliberately detach implications of blame from their conclusions. Thus, memory wars involve not only causal and blame attribution but also casualty estimates, narrative genres, connection to or independence of organized intellectual and political communities. Assessment of each group’s premises, analysis, and conclusions clarifies the relation among power, attribution, and memory.

MAXIMALISTS

Katsuichi Honda’s *Travels in China* (1971), a series for the *Asahi Shimbun* newspaper, published later as a book (1999), was the first hint of an impending public debate. Honda, a well-known journalist of the left and longtime critic of Japan’s moral shortcomings, interviewed one hundred Chinese survivors of World War II and reported their accounts of Japanese cruelty. Shichihei Yamamoto attacked the *Asahi Shimbun* newspaper’s serialized version of Honda’s book, which included a fictional account of the “One-Hundred Man Killing Contest.”¹¹ Honda’s repetition of this myth made him vulnerable to criticism, as did his belief that Hirohito was a war criminal who should have been tried by the Tokyo Tribunal.¹² The essence of his exposé, however, was valid and won supporters.

Honda introduced his witnesses, one by one, describing their stories of the killing of innocent civilians by gunshot and bayonet. He documented the disappearance of entire families, the terror of arbitrary bloodlust. He showed a defeated army abandoned by its own leaders and a conquering army allowed by its leaders to murder and rape at will. He revealed commanders ordering soldiers to execute prisoners of war in open fields and along river banks. He recorded Westerners’ efforts to protect civilians by pleading with generals and diplomats at Japan’s embassy.

Honda's narrative is *tragic*. The basics of tragedy, according to Philip Smith, comprise

the futility of human striving, including the striving for self-preservation, the horror of suffering, the disintegration of society, and the movement from social integration to social isolation and atomization. In effect, things go horribly wrong. . . . The object of struggle is often an innocent and largely passive victim who has been sadly let down by the poor decisions, bad luck and evil doing of others. (p. 23)

To say that Honda gave his countrymen a tragic vision of Nanking is to say he gave them a narrative of what atrocities were committed in Nanking, who caused them, and how. Doing so, he challenged his countrymen by contrasting Nanking's fate with their own ideals.

However, if Nanking was "the forgotten Holocaust," as Iris Chang declared, few countries forgot more completely than China. Between 1946 and 1982, a thirty-six-year period, Jeffrey Alexander and Rui Gao (2007) found only fifteen articles in which the key words "Nanking Massacre" appeared in the Chinese *People's Daily*.¹⁴ Not until 1979, as Xiaohong Xu and Lyn Spillman (2009) demonstrate, did Chinese middle school textbooks, for political reasons, begin briefly to mention Nanking.

Extreme Japanese claims accelerated the rise of Nanking in Chinese consciousness during the 1970s. Many maximalists accepted the Nationalist government's (1945) estimate of 430,000 Nanking deaths.¹⁴ Akira Fujiwara, a leftist Japanese historian, believed his forebears murdered 300,000. Tomio Hora, a moderate maximalist, calculated 150,000 to 300,000 deaths; Kasahara Tokushi, author of *One Hundred Days in the Nanking Safety Zone* and one of the original members of the Research Committee on the Nanking Incident, an organization formed to fight the massacre deniers, estimated between 100,000 and 200,000 killed in Nanking and its six counties between December 4, 1937, and March 28, 1938—a four-month period (Yamamoto 2000:254; Yoshida 2006:138).

Maximalists work with data ranging from the International Military Tribunal for the Far East (IMFTE), which estimated 200,000 illegal deaths, to the *Ch'ung shan-t'ang*, a charitable organization whose estimate of buried bodies ranged from 30,000 to 100,000. The IMFTE and *Ch'ung shan-t'ang* figures are inconsistent, probably because the former are exaggerated; the latter, forged. The more dependable records of the Red Swastika Society, a Chinese charitable organization using the Buddhist/Hindu swastika symbol, indicate 38,000–42,000 burials.

The main issue separating maximalists from their right-wing challengers, however, is the execution of civilians, which Askew (2007) estimates at approximately 3,266 (p. 102), and the execution of prisoners of war and "plain clothes soldiers" (many of whom were armed). Liberals consider prisoner of war executions illegal; moderate conservative revisionists rarely question their legality. Extreme conservatives openly declare that Japan's limited force made these executions necessary (Yamamoto 2000:254).

Although maximalists undertake no systematic analyses of what caused the Japanese army to act as brutally as it did, their beliefs are clear. They see Nanking as one phase of a continual campaign of atrocity, and they believe conditions unique to the city cannot explain the brutality that occurred within it. Japan's culture of racism and aggressiveness were the strong links of the causal chain (Honda 1993:47–126). Fujiwara is certain that early denials of the Nanking Incident were connected to both the central command's ordering the murder of prisoners of war and the postwar yearning of Japan's right wing to restore early-twentieth-century militarism. Maximalist analysis, thus, focuses on the atrocity's internal, not structural, causes, locating, by implication, Japanese blame in Japanese ruthlessness (Honda 1993, 1999). Fujiwara (1997), in particular, names five internal causes leading to the massacre: (1) officers' faith in an irrational "fighting spirit"; (2) military training that made officers contemptuous of international laws governing war; (3) inadequate training, including failure to suppress recruits' personal motives; (4) a resulting decline of discipline and soldiers' ignorance of the broader purpose for which they were fighting (cited in Takuji 2007). Among Chinese historians, however—and almost without exception—the Nanking Massacre was "a major display and act of Japanese militarist *bushido* spirit" (Yang 2001:73).

In the late 1990s, a fresh analysis of qualitative data appeared in English. Iris Chang, a Chinese American educated in journalism, was inspired to write about Nanking because her own grandparents had escaped from the city and told her stories about what they had seen. Her book is based largely on survivor interviews and secondary sources chosen to suit her beliefs.

Chang's logic is as problematic as her sampling. Extrapolating the number of deaths in a six-week period to four years, the approximate duration of the Jewish Holocaust, she concludes that Nanking, on a per diem basis, was comparable in severity. She was also less than meticulous. The Japanese publisher, distinguished for its careful editing and translation, presented Chang with a long list of factual errors, which she refused to correct. A long controversy led to the cancellation of her book contract. Many neutral and highly informed American historians¹⁵ found the book to be wanting, but Chang wrote it to inform the public, not to advance Asian studies. *The Rape of Nanking: The Forgotten Holocaust of World War II* (1997) was an immediate sensation.

Despite its bias and abundant errors, including the uncritical acceptance of the People's Republic's death estimate and serious inflation of the number of civilian casualties, Chang reinforces Honda's tragic narrative by elaborating its fundamentals. Her book does not center on fatality counts but on the life of ordinary people during six weeks of Japanese barbarism. Her respondents, like Honda's twenty-five years earlier, recounted the aerial bombardments; mass killings of prisoners of war, alternately by machine gun, sword, and pistol. Some of Chang's other reports are controversial: live burials; mutilation (the excision of body parts by sword and knife); the setting of human beings on fire; turning loose of hungry dogs on helpless crowds; rapes followed by shooting and mutilation, including the insertion of bamboo poles into victims' vaginas. One need not tarry over the validity of this or that

testimony; the magnitude of the accumulated cruelty, however great Chang's exaggerations, is convincing and unforgettable.

John Rabe (1998) was no historian, but his diary, which Chang discovered, provided the single most compelling eyewitness account of the Nanking Incident. A German representative of the Siemens Company, Nazi party member, and director of the International Committee of the Nanking Safety Zone (ICNSZ), Rabe had been in close and regular contact with the Japanese military and in a position to describe its atrocities in detail. The ICNSZ was located in the area containing most of Nanking's embassies and large institutions—local and foreign-supported hospitals, foreign businesses, universities, and municipal service units. The zone was considered neutral by its residents and most of Nanking's population, a large proportion of which took refuge there. The Chinese and Japanese military, however, routinely violated its neutrality. Rabe's diary accounts of soldiers running amok could not be more harrowing, and nothing in it suggests that unique circumstances forced the Japanese to do what they did. Mid-level officers' failure to command and control their troops enabled the latter to follow their own inclinations, which included looting and rape. Rabe's analysis is less gripping than Chang's, but its scope is wider; its documentation, more certain.

Chang and Rabe prompted a backlash on the Japanese right. "In recent years," observed Tokushi (2001), "more books questioning the massacre have been published [in Japan] than those confirming the facts of the incident" (cited in Askew 2002:12). Iris Chang, despite her raising consciousness of the Nanking massacre in the United States, had a devastating effect on the maximalist project in Japan. Her exaggerations, open contempt for the Japanese people, attribution of the massacre's causes to their inner character, refusal to correct errors, and, of equal if not greater importance, her statue, which stands prominently in Nanking, China outside the Nanking Memorial, led Japan's maximalists into the peculiar position of arguing against their most influential Western spokesperson.

Maximalism, however, transcends the activity of any one of its members. Institutionalized through special-purpose organizations, their views are *sui generis*. In the post-World War II years emerged the Japan Teachers Union; Association for History Educators (1949); Association for Japan-China Friendship (1950); Association for Preserving Peace (1950), and Returnees from China (1957)—former prisoners of war, unharmed by the Chinese, who condemned Japan's atrocities out of a debt of gratitude to their former captors. After 1990, the very period in which Japanese surveys showed a dramatic increase in both critical attitudes toward the war and friendly attitudes toward Japan's neighbors, at least ten maximalist groups formed, including the Society to Support the Demands of Chinese War Victims (1995). These groups were supported by sister organizations outside Japan, such as the Global Alliance for Preserving the History of World War II in Asia. As these and other maximalist bodies disseminated their findings, they hosted numerous international conferences on Nanking. If such efforts had not been effectively opposed, however, we would have a weaker grasp of the truth.

REVISIONISTS

The revisionist school consists largely of conservative academics, politicians, and ideologues publishing in popular magazines, conservative newspapers, and books. The most extreme revisionists believe the Nanking Massacre to be a left-wing fantasy, and among these, Shudo Higashinakano is most representative (Tokushi 2007:304–329). A former student of social thought, he established the Japan Nanking Studies Association at Asia University, a center of conservative and reactionary activity. Asia University was founded in 1955 by a prewar ultranationalist and wartime minister of education arrested for war crimes but released and denied future government positions. Its board of directors in the late 1990s was chaired by a former general in charge of tactical military planning in China. Higashinakano denies that any illegal killings occurred, and his vision is dramatized in a (2008) film titled *The Truth about Nanking*.

Higashinakano's fatality estimates are totally wrong, but the structure of his argument exemplifies the revisionist case. Where maximalists present their case in the form of a tragic narrative, extreme revisionists find no tragedy to report, little or no blame to be attributed. Japanese forces committed blameworthy actions because of circumstances beyond their control, including the illegal tactics of Chinese officers and soldiers, which is why Higashinakano and other revisionists tend to present their narrative in an impersonal and passive voice. Furthermore, Higashinakano proceeds not with case studies of suffering but methodological principles. First, one must begin with an assumption of innocence, not guilt. Because the Nanking Massacre never happened, the burden of proof is on those who claim it did. Second, validity can only be established by interconnected proofs: If one part of a claim is disproven, the entire claim must be rejected.

Higashinakano confronts the maximalists one point at a time. He asks how many Chinese died during and after the battle of Nanking. If 300,000 died, where are their corpses? Rabe's diary indicates 5000 burials in the month of February 1938; the Red Swastika Society, a total of 30,000. Without explaining why, Higashinakano (2002) declares the Red Swastika's comprehensive number to be "inflated" and endorses Rabe's partial figure (p. 99). Both figures omit the thousands executed and deposited into the Yangtze River.

How many prisoners of war were executed? International law, set down in the Le Hague Regulations of 1907, defines a belligerent to be a fighter under the command of a superior. He must be in uniform, carrying weapons openly and conducting combat operations legally. Because Chinese commanders fled to escape the Japanese army's advance, soldiers got into civilian dress and concealed their weapons, rendering themselves illegal combatants. Unprotected by Le Hague, they were fair game. Recognizing that only legal combatants could be "executed," even foreign journalists reported that Chinese prisoners were "slain" or "killed." By implication, they acknowledged Japan's right to eliminate illegal uniformed and plainclothes soldiers (Higashinakano 2002:102).

Higashinakano (2002) goes further. He believes no mass murder of civilians occurred in Nanking, and he indicates that a principal source of statistics, the Documents of the Nanking Safety Zone, provides no information on the total number of civilians illegally killed; "Therefore, I think that there were two or three cases of murder in Nanking" (p. 107). He draws on the same non-sequitur, and the same premises, in his account of rape.

In cases where data are available, imperfections render them useless. For example, Miner Bates, an American professor at Nanking University, reports from burial statistics that "close to forty thousand unarmed persons were killed within and near the walls of Nanking, of whom some 30 percent had never been soldiers." How could Bates partition his data so finely when the Red Swastika Society made no military-civilian distinction in its records? Any honest observer is forced to the conclusion that only soldiers were buried (Higashinakano 2002:110).

The Chinese themselves confirm Higashinakano's argument. Chiang-Kai shek's propaganda machine said nothing about Nanking; it emphasized Japan's poison gas and air attacks on civilians. The Communists, likewise, said nothing about Nanking in their wartime newspapers (Alexander and Gao 2007). They ignored Nanking because nothing unusual happened there.

If the maximalist narrative evokes Northrop Frye's conception of tragedy, the revisionist template is *low mimetic*, the term "mimetic" being based on Greek for "copy" or "realist representation." In the low mimetic mode, all characters, Japanese and Chinese alike, are morally similar; each side acts rationally, if not successfully. Low mimesis is a mundane narrative based on bureaucratic criteria of efficiency. Its discourse is low-key, void of moral passion. But the adjective in *low mimesis* suggests a vertical continuum of mimetic templates. Smith's (2007) adaptation of Frye's *low mimesis* is most applicable to Higashinakano's writing because no particular moral informs his story; no one theme ties everything together. Low mimesis, as Smith defines it, "sits very uncomfortably with military action because it does not provide a convincing and legitimate justification for blood sacrifice" (p. 25). Low mimesis resonates weakly with slaughter because it evokes none of the ideals, feelings, or moral sentiments that would motivate it. Higashinakano's low-mimetic account does not even condemn the Chinese "enemy"; he only attacks critics whom he believes dwell on a situation that never existed. Higashinakano, like other Nanking deniers, claims that Nanking stories are not even hyperbole; they are illusions.

Revisionists who recognize that a massacre occurred in Nanking are represented by the works of Tadao Takimoto and Yasuo Ohara (*Japan's Rebuttal to China's Forged Claims*, 2000) and Masaaki Tanaka (*What Really Happened in Nanking: Refutation of a Common Myth*, 2000). Tanaka had attended the funeral of Central China commander General Matsui Iwane, hanged in 1948 by the Tokyo Tribunal. He condemns his forebears for surrendering after Nagasaki and regularly expresses his hatred of the West. He believes in the legality of executing prisoners of war, but he counters inflated death statistics with Lewis Smythe's household survey, which listed 2136 dead, 2745 injured, and 4200 (probably war prisoners) "taken away" (Yoshida 2006:51-52). Cartoonist Yoshinori Kobayashi, for his part, believes that much of the evidence on

which the maximalists depend is hearsay. He concludes that the number of massacre victims was about 10,000. Tadao Takemoto, a professor of French literature, and Yasuo Ohara, a Shinto scholar, concede that atrocities happened, but they believe China inflated the number of Nanking deaths in order to drive a wedge between Japan and the United States. They estimate 10,000 deaths, which is in line with other revisionist counts, including textbook revisionist Nobukatsu Fujioka's 10,000.

All revisionist estimates exclude prisoners of war. The Chinese surrendered in massive numbers, and by allowing them to live, Fujioka and others believe, the Japanese would have put themselves in danger (Yoshida 2006:145). The prisoner of war narrative is low mimetic because it describes rational conflict. Rational? Ten thousand executions in one city? *C'est la guerre*.

Revisionist deniers and minimizers of the Nanking atrocity have two further things in common: Not only do both exclude prisoners of war from their atrocity estimates; both denounce Japan's "masochistic" history textbooks and resent Japan-bashing by other nations. A kind of paranoid streak runs through their discourse. Given the universal hatred of Japan, opposition to maximalism is imperative: "If we remain silent," television executive Satoru Mizushima declares, "anti-Japanese propaganda will speed across the world" (Yoshida 2006).

Shortcomings in the maximalists' argument strengthen the revisionists'. The initial population of Nanking was one million, but 80 percent abandoned the city after Japanese bombing began, leaving 200,000 behind. The number of illegal killings, therefore, could have been nowhere near the typical maximalist count of 300,000. The 200,000 who remained could not afford to leave the city, and after it fell to the Japanese army, almost all took up residence in the Nanking Safety Zone (12.5 percent of the city's area, which afforded considerable if not total protection. (For detail, see Askew 2007.)

Japan's brutality must not prevent us from asking whether its wrongdoing has been exaggerated by the left. Nationalist China's massacre claim appeared long after the war ended, and international discussion began only after China complained about it for political reasons in 1982. Victim counts presented at the various war crimes trials were notoriously padded by prosecutors, while many photos exhibited in Chinese museums and Iris Chang's book are famous forgeries.

Maximalists also ignored the context of the battle for Nanking, and by doing so, they produce what Clifford Geertz (1974) would call a "thin description." The result: excessive blame on the Japanese. Ill-conceived logistics forced the Japanese to live off the land and to pillage. The assault on Nanking itself was long and difficult, and history shows that atrocities are common after costly sieges. Although Nanking was indefensible and constituted a natural trap for the Chinese army, Chiang-Kai shek refused to surrender peacefully; in fact, he decided to use an already worn-out army in a fight to the death in house-to-house warfare. His special "battle encouragement" forces not only killed soldiers unwilling to throw themselves against the Japanese; they brought wounded soldiers into the city to die. In the chaos of retreat, surviving Chinese soldiers committed rape and pillage. The Chinese army even insisted on building defenses within the International Safety Zone, which rendered

its inhabitants military targets. After Nanking fell to a relatively small and tired Japanese force, tens of thousands of Chinese soldiers discarded their uniforms (which the Japanese counted) and then merged with the general population. They were impossible to distinguish from the guerrillas who had caused havoc during the Japanese advance from Shanghai. Were it not for these circumstances, more than one revisionist explained, the Japanese military would have occupied the city without violence. Attributing blame for Japanese atrocities to Chinese soldiers merging with civilians may be a case of blaming the victim, but it is a reasonable, if fallible, case.¹⁶ In this connection, Ian Buruma (2002), a man never known for conservative views, has observed: "The revisionists may be onto something, for the wrong motives, perhaps, and drawing the wrong conclusions, but onto a legitimate problem nonetheless. The history of the Nanking Massacre has indeed... been encrusted with a mythology of one kind or another. If the revisionists encourage us to act as proper historians and start sifting facts from myths, they will have done us all a service" (p. 5).

The presence of deniers and minimizers suggests two levels of revisionist discourse. If the narrative of Higashinakano and his associates is *low mimetic*, that of Kobayashi, Takemoto, Ohara, Tanaka, Itakura, and Fujioka may be described, in the absence of a better term, as *high mimetic*. It is clearly the minimizers, not the deniers, the high rather than low mimeticists, that "may be onto something"—and for good (scholarly) rather than wrong (ideological) motives. Both sets of revisions, however, are reinforced by the Chinese state, which, in order to propagate its progressive narrative, with its emphasis on optimism and strength, let thirty years pass before recognizing the story of Nanking (Xu and Spillman 2010).

At the very end of the twentieth century, revisionists, like their maximalist rivals, organized themselves into a web of organizations. The list is long and even a small segment of it would be tedious to readers if it did not convey the character of opposition to the maximalist agenda: the Nippon Council (formerly National Council to Defend Nippon), the Society for Japanese History Textbook Reform, the Association for the Advancement of the Liberalist [conservative] View of History, National People's Council to Defend Japan, the League of the Diet (which also advocates returning the emperor as the head of state), Association of Bereaved Families, Diet Members' League for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the End of World War II (1994), Diet Members for the Transmission of a Correct History (1995), Diet Committee to Examine History (1993). The Japan Association for Nanking Studies (2000) also supported the revisionist account. Revisionist commemorations include "The Celebration of Asian Nations' Symbiosis," which recognizes Japan's contribution to the end of Western colonialism.¹⁷ These organizations institutionalize and so reinforce revisionism's content.

The mood driving revisionists reveals itself within these organizations, dramatized by the Diet debate (1994) over attribution of blame during the tenure of Morihiro Hosokawa, the first nonconservative prime minister since 1955. In his inaugural address, he admitted Japan's war guilt and urged Diet members to declare their remorse for the suffering Japan had caused. The conservative Liberal Democratic

Party condemned Hosokawa's view of the war. When he appeared before the budget committee, one of its members asked him whether the Russian army, which had invaded northern Manchuria and Japan's northern islands, committed atrocities against civilians. Hosokawa answered in the affirmative, whereupon his interrogator asked whether he intended to demand an official apology. Another committee member declared that the prime minister had been brainwashed by American and Japan Teachers Union propaganda (Yoshida 2006:133). There was no need to apologize to anyone, the two LDP men claimed, for other nations had conducted the war with equal ferocity.

The revisionist movement gathered steam in 1995, the fiftieth anniversary of the end of World War II, when Socialist Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama proposed to his cabinet a resolution promising to reflect publicly on Japan's aggression. Angry Liberal Democratic opponents agreed only to a revised, meaningless resolution. Japan's conservatives not only opposed government admission of war guilt; they were also bent on revising the Japanese textbooks that implied such guilt. The 1997 statement of purpose of the Society to Create a New Japanese History Textbook, whose vice chair was Tokyo University's Nobukatsu Fujioka, raised a serious issue: whether Japan is suffering from a surfeit rather than deficit of memory:

Postwar education in history has not just ignored culture and tradition that must be passed on to the Japanese people; it has stripped them of all pride in being Japanese. The history of modern and contemporary Japan, in particular, is portrayed in ways that force children to view themselves as convicted felons bound by fate to apologize for past sins until they die. Even their children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, too, must continue to beg for forgiveness. Such masochistic trends in education intensified after the Cold War ended, so that textbooks now in use present wartime enemy propaganda as historical facts (cited in Tokushi 2007:305).

Fujioka's statement seems to favor the substitution of blame analysis for causal analysis in history texts. His version of history, indeed, makes the entire Japanese nation a "protected group" and immunizes it against blame. The statement could have been rephrased: Even if all the atrocities of the war were affirmed and accepted, do they define the essence of Japanese history? Can Japan's national identity be reduced to its darkest historical moments? Is there no end to what left-oriented textbooks demand, no limit of liability that severs national identity from past wrongs?

CENTRISTS

Between the accusations of maximalism and defenses of revisionism stand the claims of the centrists. The centrist school consists of both liberal and conservative investigators, but its estimates, and the narratives that go along with them, typically

conform more closely to the revisionists'. Unlike the revisionists, however, centrists insist that Japan committed great atrocities in Nanking, and they have a story to tell about them. It is not the kind of story told by Honda, Chang, and other maximalists, one filled with dramatic accounts of murder and rape. It is more like a documentary history punctuated with case studies. From the outset, it is clear that the authors of this story are writing from a distance and see themselves as outsiders; they give the impression of "understanding" the offenders whom they criticize and sympathizing with victims with whom they cannot identify.

According to Nanking scholar Bob Wakabayashi (2001), Masahiro Yamamoto's *Nanking: Anatomy of an Atrocity* is the best-documented, most thoughtful and objective account of the Massacre (pp. 531–537.) In the first segment of his book, Yamamoto takes up the matter of "What Causes War Atrocities." His is a highly contextualized story sandwiched between a detailed account of the battle of Shanghai, the march to Nanking, the Nanking Massacre's aftermath up to 1945, the War Crimes trials, and present controversies, wherein he critically examines the existing maximalist and revisionist literature. Yamamoto's narrative falls between the *tragic* and *low mimetic* dimensions we have taken from Smith (2005), but to name its mimesis as high (rather than low) would underestimate its recognition of the Massacre's seriousness. The centrist narrative would be more accurately defined as *low tragedy*, for one reads centrist accounts with a definite sense of something hideous having occurred. Centristism embodies deflated tragedy rather than inflated mimesis.

In the centrist case, too, numerical data frame narrative understanding. Kazuya Fukuda, a self-professed nationalist, estimates 50,000 illegally killed at Nanking; David Askew (2002), a Nanking Massacre scholar, expressly identifies himself as a centrist and sets his estimate a little below Fukuda's. John Rabe,¹⁸ who helped to save tens of thousands of Chinese, was present and active during the December-January massacre period, and he estimated 50,000 unlawful deaths—a figure close to that of Fukuda, Askew, and the high end of Yamamoto's 15,000–50,000 estimate. Businessman and amateur historian Yoshiaki Itakura leans strongly toward the revisionists, even co-authored works with well-known revisionist writers like Tanaka, but he broke with the school by asserting openly that the killing of prisoners of war was illegal. He estimated the number killed between 10,000 and 20,000. Historian Ikuhiko Hata is sympathetic to the Chinese people and recognizes, in a sense, their belief that 300,000 had been killed. Hata defines the high count as a "symbolic figure"—a sign, as it were, of the inhuman carnage beginning December 1937. The exaggeration, he adds, was unintentional, "ascribable to the victim's psychology" (Yamamoto 2000:253). At the same time, he condemns the "intellectual masochism" of the left, their uncritical acceptance of the IMFTF figure, and concludes on the basis of his own research that 38,000–42,000 had been killed. What binds Hata and Itakura (moderate and conservative centrists) together is their denial that civilians were murdered en masse¹⁹ and their belief that prisoners of war, including many soldiers believed to be out of uniform, comprised the bulk of the illegally executed (Yamamoto 2000:251–258).

Masahiro Yamamoto (2000) mentions the many mitigating circumstances that form the backbone of the revisionist argument but emphasizes their uniqueness to the Nanking battle. Hangzhou, after all, fell about the same time as Nanking but suffered no wholesale massacres, lootings, rapes, or burnings. Yamamoto places particular emphasis on the Shanghai to Nanking offensive in which the Japanese incurred many casualties, mainly from guerrilla fighters. This campaign, including the siege of Nanking, sensitized soldiers to the danger of all Chinese men, whether in or out of uniform. But unlike the revisionists, and this point cannot be overemphasized, Yamamoto defines external factors as causes, not mitigating circumstances reducing blame. His list of "internal" factors—derision of Chinese culture; revenge killings to offset the dishonor of casualties; and, above all, deeply-rooted contempt for soldiers who surrender, and there were tens of thousands of them—is as long as his list of "external" factors that would diminish blame. Yamamoto's is a causal analysis, not a blame analysis, of the Nanking Massacre.

Of all the atrocity estimates, Yamamoto's is assembled most carefully, which does not mean it is the most valid, but that it is the most transparent and open for inspection by other scholars. He divides casualties into four categories: deaths caused by the Chinese army; by Japanese in normal combat; execution of prisoners of war and plainclothes soldiers, and murder of civilians of military age. His analysis begins with burial statistics, including corpses thrown into the Yangtze River and those killed outside the city in one particular suburb.²⁰ Assuming two ratios for illegal to military-related deaths, he estimates a total fatality count of 45,000–65,000; among these, 15,000–50,000 were killed illegally, including 5000–22,000 civilians (pp. 109–115).

Yamamoto's range, 15,000–50,000, will dissatisfy those who wish more precise information on the number of innocents slaughtered in Nanking, but its significance is threefold: First, it reflects the barriers that the most careful and honest researcher faces in trying to make an accurate estimate; second, he presents strong evidence of an upper limit: no more than 50,000 innocents were murdered. The maximalist estimates, as noted, range from 150,000–300,000. Finally, many of his documents indicate that local Japanese commanders were responsible for allowing their soldiers to rampage and to murder prisoners of war.

Maximalists criticize Yamamoto both for limiting his analysis to the city and one of its counties, and for limiting the time frame of the massacre to four weeks. Yet, the six "counties" surrounding the city equal the size of the state of Delaware. The one county that Yamamoto does include is Kiangning Hsien, in which Nanking itself is located. Given the topic of his book, the Nanking Massacre, Yamamoto believes the addition of this entire county is inappropriate, but he includes it in order to make his analysis "as flexible as possible" (p. 114). As for the four-week duration of the massacre, Yamamoto's critics are right. His analysis missed a seven-day orgy of violence that took place in late January and early February. When Chinese officials at the time urged the Safety Zone refugees to return home, no one expected another wave of Japanese murder, theft, rape, and mayhem (Brook 1999:8, 215).²¹ Equally reasonable are criticisms of Yamamoto's sources, which include a

larger than average number of battle reports and military administrative reports. Such documents were never meant to identify atrocities (Wakabayashi 2001:533-537). Yamamoto's omissions, then, suggest that his estimate of 15,000-50,000 illegal killings is low, but even if we set his upper limit at 75,000 rather than 50,000, it would fall far short of the maximalists' estimates. On the other hand, Yamamoto claims that because Japanese committed no atrocities in Hangchou, which fell shortly after Nanking, the latter carnage must have been unique. This statement is dubious. Notwithstanding Hangchou, the Japanese army committed atrocities throughout China.

One striking feature of centrism is that so few of its members are associated with organizations devoted to study of the Nanking atrocities.²² Centrists approximate Karl Mannheim's "relatively unattached intelligentsia," which is supposedly trained and disciplined to envisage problems from multiple perspectives. The term *relative* is important because none of the parties to the Nanking debate is absolutely unattached. There is no purely neutral position; there is a centrist group whose members lean acutely toward neither the right nor the left. Centrism's carriers are therefore relatively *sozialfreischwebende* (socially free-floating): their views, unlike those of the maximalists and revisionists, evolve outside tightly knit organizational networks.

Maximalist and revisionist investigators form organizations to cultivate data, support research, and inform the public; these same organizations energize their like-minded members, multiply relations among them, accelerate the exchange of ideas, and put their members into closer agreement.²³ This is perhaps why maximalists and revisionists, each carrying important truths about the Nanking Massacre, nevertheless ignore one another's value.

Ideology is the chain binding liberal and conservative extremists to their respective organizations. For these men and women, the quest for historical truth is not only a search for fact but also for a definition of the national community, its enemies, and the nature of Japaneseness. Each side, therefore, needs the other. Many years ago, Georg Simmel declared in his ([1908] 1955) essay "Conflict" that contestants who believed they represented a cause transcending their personal interests struggled most intensely against their opponents (pp. 38-43). Because centrism is relatively unpoliticized, however, its members play neither the *divide et impera* nor *tertius gaudens* role that Simmel (1964) attributes to third members of triads (pp. 145-169). That truth, not domination, is at stake is evident in the value-neutral tone of centrist rhetoric: The language is decidedly less angry, less accusatory, less self-righteous, less self-confident. Centrism, however, performs no *mediator* function, as Simmel defines it. Centrism does not strip maximalist-revisionist debates of their passion and reformulate the factual residue. Its goal is not to refine and synthesize extreme positions. Centrists distinguish themselves by expressly refusing to infer *blame* from the establishment of *cause*.

Differences among maximalists, revisionists, and centrists are summarized in Table 20.1, which aligns each of the three schools with their characteristic fatality estimates, narrative genre, justification for Japan's operations, target of attribution, and affinity with public opinion.

Table 20.1 Three Conceptions of the Nanking Massacre

	Fatality Estimates	Narrative Genre	Justification of Japanese Action	Target of Causal Attribution	Affinity with Public Beliefs	Relative Ideological Bias	Supporting Organizational Structure
Maximalists	200,000-300,000	Tragedy	None	Internal	Closest	Liberal	Very strong
Centrists	15,000-50,000	Low Tragedy	Weak	Internal/External	Close	Neutral	Very weak
Revisionists	0-10,000	Low Mimesis	Strong-Very strong	External	Least close	Conservative	Very strong

Although this table describes attributions of cause, it makes no causal claims of its own. It merely summarizes the configuration of attitudes, story genres, and correspondences that compose the Nanking memory war.

DEATH COUNTS, RESPONSIBILITY, AND PUBLIC BELIEF

It is only a matter of time until more adequate statistical analyses are performed, with geographical and temporal breakdowns of illegal deaths. But how critical will they be? Here we come to a key distinction. For maximalists and liberal centrists, Japan's moral responsibility for crimes committed in Nanking and elsewhere is independent of body counts. This is not to say that maximalists are indifferent to numbers; on the contrary, they have assembled considerable bodies of evidence and gone to great lengths to establish their validity. Rather, maximalists believe that the magnitude of Japan's crime is irrelevant to Japan's moral responsibility. Japan is unconditionally responsible for all suffering, whatever its magnitude, for the simple reason that Japan started the war. Conservative centrists, on the other hand, believe that Japan's responsibility must be aligned to the damage done in specific incidents. As we move from maximalism to centrism, the cause of the war loses relevance and its consequences gain relevance. In Yamamoto's (2000) words, the centrist position is the strongest because it is the most clear-cut: "It tries to determine the scale and nature of the atrocities by critically analyzing documentary and numerical data for the purpose of establishing how and to what extent the Japanese were responsible for the atrocities" (p. 258). If, by this reasoning, 50,000 rather than 300,000 illegal deaths occurred in Nanking, then Japan is five-sixths less responsible than the maximalists believe.

The obfuscatory implications of Yamamoto's comment are unmistakable. Notwithstanding its low tragic content, Yamamoto's narrative not only minimizes the state's responsibility for causing a devastating war; it also relativizes moral consequence by calibrating it with degrees and types of harm caused. Memory war, however, presses facts about degree and type of harm caused to the service of morality—the opposite direction of Yamamoto's calibration. This is why Japanese history textbooks, despite compelling centrist evidence, shifted toward the maximalist position in the 1990s. By 1997, six out of the seven major texts informed students that 100,000–200,000 Chinese were killed during and after the battle of Nanking, and that the Japanese military made no effort to protect innocent civilian victims. Four of the texts mentioned, but did not endorse, the Chinese claim of 300,000 deaths (Yoshida 2006:139–141). Nevertheless, these texts triggered strong conservative reactions. By 2005, in fact, history books generally omitted fatality estimates, the word "massacre" appeared less often, as did mention of the word "rape" (Schneider 2008:116). The 2005 revisions in one of the textbooks were so striking to

the Chinese government that, despite useful relations with Japan, it tolerated, if not encouraged, anti-Japanese street protests.

All disputes over moral responsibility are disputes about the attribution of blame, but the details of the Nanking dispute, however politically laden, are empirical, and in this it differs from the typical conflicts reported in the Western memory literature. Instead of "narratives" that marginalize or elevate minority groups, we see fact-finding, analysis, and contested conclusions. Askew (2002:10) observes, presenting only partial detail, that the maximalists have revised their estimates "dramatically downward." This means that maximalists, although still committed ideologically (pp. 16–17) to the left, recognize and respond to evidence. Maximalist compromise, however, is not limitless. Askew (2002) believes the differences between maximalist and centrist death tolls would diminish greatly if comparisons were made within the same units of geographical and temporal analysis (pp. 9–10;17); but neither of the contending parties has an interest in doing so. Centrists stay within Nanking's municipal limits for analytic reasons: to assess "the rape of Nanking," not "the rape of China." In contrast, maximalists include all contiguous counties, despite their independence of the Nanking metropolitan area, in order to maximize the death count. They extend the length of the Nanking Massacre far beyond the point of the last spate of killings. Methodology remains ideology-laden.²⁴

Maximalists have revised their argument in a way that reinforces the status of the Chinese as a "protected group" and underscores their suffering. Reluctance to offend China, according to Yamamoto (2000), is one of the reasons maximalists avoid debating the death count issue publicly (pp. 250–251). Tokushi, to take one example, removed himself from any scientific debate when he declared, for the sake of protecting Chinese feelings, that "over 100,000, perhaps nearly 200,000 or even more" were killed in Nanking. The undefined upper limit exemplifies a hesitation to limit the *volume* of harm to be analyzed.

MEMORY PROBLEM

Conflict reduction and consensus about Nanking do not presuppose one another, for they are both part of a broader, Northeast Asian memory war. Despite rapid modernization, memory runs deeply and vitally through Asia, and nowhere is this more evident than in the fact that elites have developed a concept—"the history problem," to describe it—and that ordinary citizens recognize and feel this problem themselves. No comparable "history problem" exists in the West, where relations among former enemies are relatively free of recrimination and international business proceeds without reference to the sins of earlier generations.²⁵ Over transactions among Asian businessmen, however, looms the cloud of World War II (Schwartz and Kim 2010).

Japan's history problem refers to the question of blame for World War II and how the Japanese people conceive responsibility for their ancestors' wrongdoing.

In 2000, the *Asahi Shimbun Survey* asked respondents whether they should “reflect on Japan’s past wrongs.” Eighty-five percent said “yes.” The same year, the *Asahi Survey* asked, “Do you think that Japan has apologized and compensated those victim countries and people in those countries enough for Japan’s invasion and colonial rule?” Fifty-one percent answered, “not enough”; 36 percent, “enough.” In 2001 and 2005, national surveys commissioned by the *Asahi Shimbun* and *Yomiuri Shimbun* newspapers asked, “Do you think the history issues are important for Japan’s relations with China and South Korea?” Sixty-seven and 75 percent, respectively, replied “important.” In 2005, a comparable sample was asked, “What should Japan do to better relations with China?” Two-thirds responded, “Respect Chinese culture and history.” Three years later, Japanese were asked, “What do you think both China and Japan should do in order to improve the relationship between the two countries?” The modal response (36.7 percent) was “Solve history issues between Japan and China.” A full 60 percent answered negatively when asked, “Do you think that the history issue of Japan’s compensation to the former victims in the era of colonization has been solved?” The same percentage (60 percent) answered “no” to the question of whether “the issue of Japan’s history issue with neighboring countries such as China and South Korea has been solved.”²⁶ The content of these history issues involves material compensation, but it is also premised on assumptions about causation. A significant minority of the Japanese population believe their country was forced by external circumstances to go to war. In 1994 and 2000, surveys conducted by NHK (a television company) showed that 27 and 30 percent of respondents believed the war to have been inevitable (Takui 2007:350). The *history* problem, then, includes the conflicting emotions and moral judgments of memory (Schwartz and Kim 2010:1–27).

These findings suggest that the public leans toward a tragic rather than mimetic narrative of the Japanese war in China. But what does this mean on the level of personal responsibility, and does it include the Nanking Massacre? When students at two Japanese universities were asked to name the greatest source of “dishonor, disgrace, and shame” in Japanese history, the most frequently named was Japan’s war in Asia (54.4 percent); the second most frequent response was the Pacific War (against the United States and its allies [24.6 percent]). Also, a substantial percentage of students felt a personal connection with the events about which they were questioned. Forty-two percent of the respondents agreed with the statement, “As a Japanese national, I consider myself [or my generation] responsible for the 1937 ‘Nanking incident.’” Regarding the annexation of Korea and the comfort women issue, the responses were almost identical. These figures, compared to those in the United States, indicate that Japanese are four times more willing to accept responsibility for their country’s wrongdoing (Schwartz, Fukuoka, and Takita-Ishi 2005:258–262. See also Fukuoka and Schwartz 2010). The *NHK Survey* (September 2000) on “responsibility for the national past wrongs,” based on a nationwide sample of Japanese adults, shows similar results: Fifty percent believed the Japanese must, personally, bear responsibility for historical offenses. The figures for the wartime, postwar, and current generations, however, are 37 percent, 52 percent, and 60 percent,

respectively.²⁷ Those who attribute the cause of war to their own country are thus drawn disproportionately from the younger sectors of the population.

These surveys were conducted at the turn of the twenty-first century when media and academic attention to World War II peaked and Japanese attitudes toward their neighbors assumed unprecedented sympathy and friendliness. During this time, respondents not only expressed willingness to assume responsibility for their forebears’ wrongdoing; they also identified *themselves* as Asians, thus forging a civilizational connection that had not existed since Japan’s rush to modernity. Student interviews, however, show decidedly more ambivalence about Nanking than national surveys suggest (Fukuoka and Schwartz 2010). Also, students rarely refer to their high school textbooks when asked to explain their answers to atrocity questions, but they do seem to know that Japan started the war and caused immense hardship and bloodshed.²⁸

This gap between expert opinion and popular opinion leads to an important point about ideology and the academy. Although social scientists resent being told that their research conclusions are ideologically driven, liberals complain routinely that certain theorists are too conservative (uncritical lovers of the system), while conservatives insist that most theorists are too liberal (unloving critics of the system). These charges hang at the edge of blame analysis. Commenting on Masahiro Yamamoto’s “thick (highly contextualized) description” of the mop-up of plainclothes soldiers and his observation that no large-scale massacres occurred after Nanking, Bob Wakabayashi (2001) declares that Yamamoto “risks being mistaken for advancing the very denial thesis that he disputes” (p. 537). To identify dispassionately the conditions promoting atrocity without taking this risk is difficult—unless one is prepared to substitute blame analysis for causal analysis. Likewise, David Agnew (2004) approaches the boundary of blame analysis when he explains that the discussion of Nanking is a threat to Chinese identity. “It is sometimes difficult to distinguish between legitimate revisionism and illegitimate apologetics” (p. 63). “I am not arguing that the Chinese orthodoxy needs to be accepted without question.... However, once aware of the fact, all who participate in the debate need to show some sensitivity to it” (Askew 2002:20–21). Askew’s caution cannot increase confidence in his objectivity. Whether or not a particular investigator is “sensitive” or “insensitive,” his or her problem is to know how problems are framed, causes inferred, and conclusions validated. Clearly, blame is inferable from every causal analysis, whether the investigator resides on the left or the right, but the investigator has no *professional* warrant to exploit this inference.

CONCLUSION

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This essay is concerned with two approaches to the analysis of conflict and collective memory: the politics of memory, which traces the substance of beliefs about the past to those possessing the power to impose them, and memory as an attribution

process that assigns causes, credit, responsibility, and blame—at once a scientific and moral exercise. The present analysis of the Nanking debate demonstrates why conflicting memories cannot be understood if viewed solely as a political contest. When memory is partitioned into attributions of credit and blame, we learn at once that blame activates sharper moral distinctions than does credit (Tilly 2008). Blame creates firmer boundaries, greater distance between in-groups and out-groups, accentuates antithesis, binary relations, and the resentments accompanying social distance. The Nanking memory war is a war about cause and blame alike, and our major problem is to distinguish between them.

The conversion of cause to blame is practiced with equal skill on the Japanese left and right. Because right-leaning revisionists are sympathetic to Japan's 1937 Japanese military situation, they cannot formulate causal explanations implying fault. Right observers depend not only on structural explanations of their protected group's atrocities but also condemn cultural and psychological explanations as "masochistic." Not Japanese cultural values or character but shortages of supplies, heavy battle losses along the trek to Nanking, fear of invisible enemies in civilian dress, the universality of post-siege rage, inadequate discipline, and poor tactical leadership—these conditions, over which ordinary soldiers lacked control, make terror at least understandable.

These and other attribution patterns become morally meaningful when translated into narratives—maximalists' high tragedy, revisionists' low mimetic, and centrists' low tragedy. For most men and women, these genres affect the way the past is contemplated, felt, and judged. Among experts, casual evidence, not blame, informs theoretical conclusions. In other words, and here I wish to specify Philip Smith's conclusions in *Why War?* (2005), Japanese attribution of blame is conveyed, not produced, by means of tragic and mimetic genres.

Narratives, according to Milton Rokeach (1960), express cognitive patterns that satisfy two needs: to accumulate information in order to know and manage the world, and to defend against knowledge that undermines existing worldviews. Liberals have an interest in knowing about Japanese lust for vengeance, socialization within a culture of violence, eagerness to do the will of a bloodthirsty emperor. Their interest is *not* to know that *Manchester Guardian* correspondent Harold Timperley, who first reported on Japanese atrocities, was a paid propagandist for the Nationalist Chinese government, or that a collaborationist army of 2 million Chinese soldiers fought for Japan, or that Japanese officers entering the Safety Zone to recruit Chinese girls for brothels found that "a considerable number of young refugee girls stepped forward" (Brook 2007:204), or that Chinese municipal officials collaborated with the Japanese military in governing Nanking after the massacre. Nanking's local government included the Nanking Self-Government Committee, an anti-Western body that helped to round up Chinese men and boys for execution. Conservatives, for their part, have an interest in knowing how the Chinese army's riotous withdrawal from Nanking, including thousands of soldiers transforming themselves into civilians, precipitated indiscriminate Japanese violence, and in *not* knowing about direct orders from Japanese general officers to kill prisoners of war.

That most professional scholars are aware of one another's biases takes us to the inner working of narrative forms. Japanese liberals are more critical of their country, more likely than their conservative counterparts to believe Japan has dealt unwisely with "the history problem," that the government is a force for harm, that conservatives cherish the old days of militarism and seek to reinstate the vestiges of an oppressive imperial regime. Conservatives, on all counts, believe the opposite, seeing in their country a lamp of virtue for all the world. In the matter of ascribing credit and blame, liberals and conservatives differ only in what they consider commendable and blameworthy. Both protect their favored groups by attributing their wrongdoing to external circumstances; both attribute the righteous conduct of their protected groups to internal traits: virtuous character, beneficent values, moral sentiments, and personal dispositions.

Whatever the merit of their exculpatory accounts, revisionists force maximalists to reexamine old documents, search for new ones, and lower their victim count. Maximalist-revisionist conflict thus differs from Western memory wars. In the Western view, whoever controls the memory factories—producers of research monographs, textbooks, and commemorative symbols—controls the past. Power makes more of a difference than it should; reality, less of a difference. This argument cannot be generalized very far, for journalists and academicians are influential, not hegemonic. Changing textbook and research monograph content cannot explain Japanese public opinion, which, on the Nanking Incident, leans to the left.

Much has been left unsaid. One of the biggest issues is the Nanking Massacre's parameters. Death count differences between the maximalists and centrists would narrow if temporal and spatial units were uniform, but this does not mean that centrists deliberately limited the Nanking campaign to four weeks in order to minimize atrocity estimates. If they did make their choice on such grounds, it would mean they had constructed rather than discovered their evidence. In contrast, maximalists insist on including in their data massive areas that are functionally independent, economically and politically, from the capital city. They also insist on stretching out to twelve weeks an operation whose last surge of violence ended in late January/early February 1938—slightly more than six weeks after the city was conquered. Expanding the Nanking Massacre's temporal and spatial limits is not needed to prove that Japan's war against China was a war of continuous cruelty and atrocity. Insisting on definitions that possess little geographic or temporal significance, the maximalists undermine their own argument and become vulnerable to the charge of fabrication.

Space limits prevent exploration of *the politics of regret* (Olick 2007) that, in the Northeast Asian case, with its controversial rituals and culture of apology, would require a separate essay.²⁴ The same limits prevent us from explaining why leftist scholars elsewhere distort trauma in such characteristic ways. The American left, which sympathizes with Japanese suffering, fixates on the number of Hiroshima and Nagasaki casualties, while vastly underestimating the casualties America would have suffered in an invasion of the Japanese homeland. Left scholars not only underestimate Japanese power opposing a 1945 American invasion of Kyushu and Honshu

(Allen and Polmar 1995); they ignore the 1000 Americans killed and wounded daily during the week *before* the bombing of Hiroshima (Fussell 1988).³⁰

Eventually, conflict provides the force that gets objects at rest to move and change; it prompts the formation of new organizations and energizes new biographical and historiographic projects. Conflict generates knowledge. One side's discovery of facts eventually forces opponents to revise their conceptions. This point is clearest when the objects of dispute are not *perspectives* but documented *actions*. Reality is the essential object of memory wars—at once the object of dispute and the criterion for dispute resolution. Therefore, no one can observe the Nanking debate without concluding that the politics of memory, at least in its vulgar form, requires revision.

The question raised in this chapter's introduction is how the politics of memory and attribution theories of memory are related to one another. The theory of the politics of memory is a special case of the attribution theory of memory, while power enhances one's ability to make attributions stick. All attributions, however sticky, are biased, but we can identify them as such only if we *know* the historical truth, and we can *theorize* that truth only if we include it, as an attribution benchmark (Gingras and Schweber 1986), in empirical accounts of the world's memory wars.

To insist that we should parenthesize historical reality, that we only know its narratives and texts, not the past itself (White 1978), leads to a theoretical dead-end. Without a *best estimate* of the past, including the Nanking Massacre as it actually was, we (1) cannot know whether accounts of a historical event have been accurately represented or distorted; (2) cannot tell what kind of distortion is occurring: Exaggeration or muting? Fabrication of external or internal, structural or dispositional, factors? Selective remembering and forgetting? Removing an event from its context? Deliberate misrepresentation? Unwitting error? Without a best estimate of the past as it was, we (3) cannot adjudicate among competing interpretations and attributions; (4) cannot know what symbolic structures would be most appropriate to commemorate it, and (5) cannot know its consequences.³¹

Memory analysis is weakest when investigators commit themselves to a theoretical program before they attend to the facts to which the theory refers; as a result, facts become theory-laden without theory becoming fact-laden.³² As Michael Schudson declares in his groundbreaking essay "The Resistance of the Past," "there are limits to the past that can be reconstructed, and there is an integrity to the past that deserves respect" (p. 221). Conflict promotes this resistance and this integrity. The merit of the Nanking debate is to demonstrate conflict's *primary* function: not to accumulate power by reinterpreting the past but to make known its reality.

NOTES

1. The politicization of Middle East programs has been a topic of intense debate, within and outside the academy, for many years, as has been the Middle East Studies Association (MESA), long regarded as a bastion of anti-Western rhetoric and activism.

If one work represents the mind-set of such programs, it is *Orientalism*, written by a comparative literature scholar who knows nothing of classical Arabic and is innocent of the great issues of Islamic research. For a detailed critique of Edward Said's Islamic "scholarship," see Bernard Lewis, 1993, *Islam and the West*, New York: Oxford University Press (pp. 99–118).

2. See Fiske and Taylor 1991 on the distinction between general "attribution theory" and "attributional theories" restricted to specific content domains (p. 23).

3. Correspondingly, the representatives of such minorities are assigned virtues they never possessed. Prominent examples include the far left's canonization of Fidel Castro, Mao Zedong, Ho-Chi Minh, and Yasser Arafat. The term "canonization" refers to the total ignoring of the millions of innocents murdered by these anticapitalist and anticolonial champions. Falsehoods embodied in film also exemplify the new canonization motif. In one popular film, boxer Rubin "Hurricane" Carter is portrayed as the clear winner of his 1964 middleweight fight against champion Joey Giardello. The judges, as portrayed in the film, are racist and give Giardello the most rounds and declare him the winner. Sportswriters on the scene, however, all attest to the beating Giardello gave to Carter. Giardello sued the film producer for libel and won an out-of-court settlement. No such redress is possible for the victims of trendy dictators.

4. For a related interpretation, see Tilly 2008:120–151.

5. Fritz Heider (1944, 1958) demonstrated that people perceive a finite amount of causal force: For any spate of credit or blame attributed to one source, the less is attributable to another. Causal *theories*, however, are judged in terms of their capacity to explain variation in conduct, not to their capacity to attribute credit and blame.

6. The consequences include legal claims for compensation and remedial action. For details on the functions of blame analysis, see Felson 1991.

7. Lack of recognition, as Xu and Spillman (2010) have shown, does not imply lack of knowledge. For detail, see Penney 2008.

8. At a given time, a small number of books on Nanking might be unrelated to the massacre, but their percentage of the total remains constant across the years.

9. These conclusions do not lend themselves to Karl Mannheim's "synthetic method" based on competing perspectives (see especially Mannheim 1936:147–153). "All points of view," Mannheim observed, are partial because "historical totality is always too comprehensive to be grasped by any one of the individual points of view which emerge out of it. Since, however, all these points of view emerge out of the same social and historical current, and since their partiality exists in the matrix of an emerging whole, and it is possible to see them in juxtaposition, their synthesis becomes a problem which must be continually reformulated and resolved" (p. 151). The things to be synthesized, for Mannheim, however, are "points of view," not the facts to which they refer.

10. Decisions of the war crime tribunals established throughout victim countries after the war have been widely criticized. The Tokyo trials lasted almost three years and resulted in more than 5300 indictments, 920 executions, 475 life sentences, 2944 prison terms, and 1018 acquittals. Although legally imperfect, the correspondence between crimes committed and penalties imposed was not entirely arbitrary. For evidence on Korean, Philippine, Singaporean, and Chinese war fatalities, see Rudolph J. Rummel, 1998, *Statistics on Democide: Genocide and Mass Murder since 1900*, New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction; Rummel, 1991, *China's Bloody Century*, New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction (pp. 32–38). For evidence on Burma, see Michael Clodfelter, 2002, *Warfare and Armed Conflicts: A Statistical Reference to Casualties and Other Figures, 1500–2000*, 2nd ed., Jefferson, NC: McFarland (p. 556). For evidence on French Indo-China, Indonesia, and

Malaya, see John W. Dower, 1986, *War Without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War*, New York: Pantheon (pp. 296–297); for India, see Commonwealth War Graves Commission, *Annual Report, 2007–2008*, Statistics and Service (p.10; available at <http://www.cwgc.org>); for Timor, Australian Department of Defence, 2002, *A Short History of East Timor*.

11. For a full discussion, see Wakabayashi 2000.

12. One supporter, Suzuki Akira, who identified himself as a non-fiction writer, had no interest in the Nanking Massacre until he read Honda's account. So struck was he by the high victim estimate that he conducted his own investigation and deemed the left-wing accounts of mass murder to be an "illusion." But Suzuki never denied the reality of the massacre itself, and he allied himself with the centrists (Yoshida 2006:85–87), who will be discussed later.

13. To say that China "forgot" the Nanking Massacre is to underestimate the significance of oral communication, including many instances in which its content differs from or conflicts with the interests of the state. Yet, the consequences of state interests are patent. Between 1937 and 1945, Communists and Nationalists regarded one another as enemies, despite their temporary coalition against Japan. Between 1945 and 1949, the civil war accelerated, with each side condemning the other rather than Japan. After the 1949 Communist takeover of China, new fears of the United States and Japanese remilitarization preoccupied the People's Republic. The act that brought the Nanking atrocities to the center of official Chinese attention was the 1982 "Textbook Incident," which openly and dramatically challenged China's understanding of the war. For detail, see Xu and Spillman 2009.

14. This and all subsequent information about the nature and consequences of the Nanking Massacre is taken from English translations of the major Japanese publications. For an English-language survey of primary Nanking data, see Timothy Brook, 1999, *Documents on the Rape of Nanking*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

15. Prominent reviewers include David M. Kennedy (1998) and Joshua A. Fogel (1998).

16. Maximalists' tendency to overlook the shortcomings of their protected group transcends local issues. Honda Katsuichi, for example, covered the Vietnam War before he wrote his groundbreaking book on Nanking. He believed American forces were the main reason for the suffering of the Vietnamese people, but he never asked why these forces were in Vietnam to begin with. Embracing the North Vietnamese as his protected group, he was silent about the 200,000 "bourgeois" landholders executed and millions who fled south after the 1954 Geneva Accords, the countless thousands imprisoned, and the millions who fled the country after the fall of Saigon. Honda never even attributes these atrocities to external (extenuating) circumstances; he simply ignores them.

17. Takashi Yoshida (2006) presents the most comprehensive listing and description of maximalist and revisionist organizations.

18. Rabe was a devoted Nazi and anti-Semite, but when he returned to Germany to tell his story about its ally, he was arrested and warned not to say or publish anything about his experience. He died impoverished.

19. The Red Swastika Society reveals only 129 women and children among more than 40,000 corpses buried. The overwhelming predominance of men does not mean that most of the dead were soldiers, but that they died in war-related situations, that is, combat or execution as prisoners of war.

20. These figures are based on Ginling College [Nanking] Professor Lewis Smythe's household survey entitled *War Damage in Nanking Area: December 1937–March 1938*.

21. Brook (1999) mentions this peak, but he gives no victim count.

22. The most prominent of these few organizations is the Center for Research and Documentation on Japan's War Responsibility.

23. See also Durkheim's ([1911] 1974) comment on "the movement of collective enthusiasm which, in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, bringing together in Paris the scholars of Europe, gave birth to Scholasticism. Such were the Reformation and the Renaissance, the revolutionary epoch and the Socialist upheavals of the nineteenth century.... At such times the ideal tends to become one with the real...." (p.92).

24. Revisionist and centrist definitions of Nanking's boundaries are accepted by the Chinese because they concentrate and thus increase the hideousness of the now official 300,000 fatality count.

25. The tone and texture of this history problem are evident in Japan's "Textbook Incidents." When, in 1982, the Japanese Ministry of Education suggested that an author revise his textbook to show that Japan "advanced" into rather than "invaded" Chinese cities, the Chinese government reacted explosively: It withdrew its ambassador, condemned the Ministry's action, and declared that bilateral relations would never be the same. In the streets, angry Chinese students demonstrated their indignation. Later, in November 1982, Japan's Ministry adopted a "Neighboring Country Clause" to make history textbooks consistent with international harmony. Because this clause was only a symptom of the still unresolved history problem, however, future textbook crises were inevitable.

26. These survey materials were brought to my attention by Kazuya Fukuoka, Department of Political Science, St. Joseph's University, Philadelphia, PA.

27. For detail on generation differences in factual and moral judgments of World War II among Germans and Japanese, see Schuman, Akiyama, and Knauper 1998.

28. Public beliefs about important issues and events are typically based on fragments of knowledge rather than detailed mastery of the facts. Nevertheless, different fragment clusters are uniform across different groups and consistent with their interests and values (Page and Shapiro 1992).

29. See, for example, Wagatsuma and Rosett 1986 and Lee 2006.

30. This high death rate is a measure of the *cost* of giving the Japanese government more time to decide whether to surrender.

31. Consequences define the significance of historical events. For example, 25 percent of the Confederacy's military-age males died during the Civil War. The resulting postwar sex ratio determined the fate of women, marriage choices, and family structures. The same effect is evident in massacres that target or affect one sector of the population more than another. The present status of European Jewry would be different if the Holocaust had not occurred, regardless of whether, how, or when information about it was transmitted. The *consequences* of events are, thus, independent of their representation.

32. Jeffrey Alexander's (2004) effort to understand the nature of trauma and its relation to collective memory illustrates this problem. "Only if the patterned meanings of the collectivity are abruptly dislodged," he declares, "is traumatic status attributed to an event. It is the meanings that provide the sense of shock and fear, not the events in themselves. Whether or not the structures of meaning are destabilized and shocked is not the result of an event but the effect of a sociocultural process" (p.10). Trauma-work, as Alexander conceives it, involves claim-making, carrier groups, unfolding of the event into a new master narrative, depictions of victims and their pain, the relation of a victimized group to an audience, attribution of responsibility. His point is reasonable: If one is investigating the construction of trauma, one cannot invoke the trauma itself as a determinant without engaging in circular argument. Because the measurable consequences of the trauma can be separated from the way people react to it, however, the event cannot be solely defined by its subjective meaning.

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