

# *Hiroshima Bugi* as mischief: Indigeneity critiques Postwar Japanese-ness

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## Abstract

This paper teases out some of the ideological content of the Trickster journey across Japan. Several post-colonial lines of analysis explore how the *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57* novel critiques those aspects of the construct of Japanese-ness conjured by the cherry blossom cult of death commemorated at Yasukuni Shrine and the post-nuclear horrors of Hiroshima. In addition to addressing how the narrative of *Hiroshima Bugi* interacts with postwar self-presentations of Japanese-ness as victim, this paper also compares this Anishinaabe novel with other indigenous performances of speaking truth to the authority of colonizing power. Certain sections of this paper engage the novel stylistically by retreating from analysis directed at closure. *Hiroshima Bugi* resonates with other indigenous critiques of colonizing authority: the Melanie Hogan documentary film 'Kanyini' featuring Bob Randall and the fictocritical writing of Gabrielle Lorraine Fletcher, 'Slight Anthropologies'. The intention of these surveys is to foreground the duel between two mythologies: the slippery tropes of Anishinaabe myths and Trickster poses confound the Japanese modern mythol-

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ogy of nation as ancient sacrament.

## **Spoiler alert**

This paper does not sustain a close analysis of the Gerald Vizenor novel. Instead, it starts by exploring what it means to read this novel in English in Japan. The paper proceeds by presenting a survey of various forms of Japanese-ness while outlining my investment in sacramental performances of nationally distinctive spirituality. The instability of certain categories organized around identity is given some attention (presence, absence; author, narrator, character; individual, collective; author, critic), along with a comment on how the trope of the author functions as a meta-literary comment on the dialectic of literary theory and practices. At some point, my playful refusal to engage with the novel in a conventional manner might bring to mind the fourth lesson delivered by Malcolm McLaren in *The Great Rock 'n' Roll Swindle*: ‘Do not play, don’t give the game away.’<sup>1</sup>

## **Reading Vizenor in Japan : which Japan?**

Driven up the escalator stairs, two at a time, by the piecing pre-departure announcement. Into the carriage and straight into my seat: ‘Welcome to the Nozomi Super Express, bound for Hiroshima.’ While the bullet train is still stationary I dive into my required reading for the trip. I stall at the first sentence of the Gerald Vizenor novel: ‘The Atomic Bomb Dome is my Rashomon.’

What does this Rashōmon mean? Like the Kurosawa film, should we expect a narrative of multiple storytellers providing accounts of the same incident? The same tale told by different storytellers, with crucial differences between each version pointing out the impossibility of one definitive account of

what actually happened.<sup>2</sup> *Hiroshima Bugi* is structured by two alternating accounts: the flighty tales of Ronin are soberly interpreted by the informative guidance of Envoy Manidoo.

Or instead of being a coded signal about which reading protocols to unleash from our critical arsenal, is this Rashōmon reference a signpost for literary tourists in Japan, seeking to follow in the footsteps of Vizenor as he retraces the journeys of Bashō immortalized in his haiku writings? If so, does this place name here signify something more spatial?

During the Heian period (794–1185) the capitals of Kyoto and Nara both had gates marking the entrance to the primary avenue to the imperial palace. These august gates were both called Rashōmon:<sup>3</sup> “The broad Suzaku Avenue running north from the Rashōmon led straight to the gate of the Imperial Palace, where lived the tiny, aesthetically refined fraction of the populace depicted in the country’s greatest literary monument, Murasaki Shikibu’s *The Tale of Genji*.”<sup>4</sup>

Sixty years ago, Kurosawa Akira (1910–1998) integrated elements from two stories by Akutagawa Ryunosuke (1892–1927) to create the film *Rashomon*. In ‘Rashomon’ Akutagawa presents readers with the spectacle of Heian period Kyoto after architectural and moral decline: Rashōmon had become the haunt of petty crims, a seedy area where unwanted babies and corpses were dumped. Crows gather to feast on the discarded bodies. When an old woman speaks, explaining to the unemployed servant why she is stealing hair from the bodies of dead women, she herself caws like a crow. Akutagawa positions Rashōmon as a place where moral dilemmas present themselves but are not resolved. Although the 1915 ‘Rashomon’ of Akutagawa supplied the title and some framing devices, the multiple perspectives of Akutagawa’s 1922 ‘Yabu no

naka' were adapted to structure Kurosawa's *Rashomon*. 'Yabu no naka' ('In a Grove') teases us with the contradictory accounts of seven unreliable narrators, including the testimony of the ghost of the slain man delivered through a spirit medium.<sup>5</sup>

Kurosawa's *Rashomon* took the Golden Lion prize at the 1951 Venice Film Festival and an Oscar for most outstanding foreign language film in 1952. At the time when Vizenor was enlisted in US forces serving in Japan, *Rashomon* was a major player in the postwar invention of Japanese-ness in the imaginations of European and North American cinema audiences. Film as translated literature, ikebana, tea ceremony, zen-flavoured haiku, and cuisine for the eyes, these were the primary export brands of Made-in-Japan peace as postwar economic growth was accompanied by the self-representation of Japan as cultural and pacifist.

Perhaps as readers of Native American literature who long for keywords like Trickster and survivance to lead us on an adventurous trek after the meanings of Rashōmon, the fairytale set at the Kyoto Rashōmon may bring to mind indigenous 'passing' and other disturbances of social order. In 'The Ogre of Rashomon', the ogre tricks the knight who cut off the ogre's arm and locked it in a stout box with iron bands. Having taken the form of a very respectable old woman, the ogre appears late at night and tells Watanabe that she was the woman who nursed his lord when he was a baby. After being admitted to the house, she praises Watanabe for his courageous fight against the ogre. When the unsuspecting Watanabe shows her the arm of the ogre, she suddenly seizes it, reverts to being an ogre and escapes. Watanabe waits for a return bout with the ogre but the troublesome ogre disappears, leaving Kyoto untroubled by mischievous torments of this shape-shifter.

Vizenor swings me from prose to haiku and beyond, those writing intervals defined by pulses of prostate pressure that limit how long he sits at the keyboard. That corporeal distance between desktop seat and porcelain throne, the sublime burst into thought and its compressed rendering into text collide in a mash-up with the readerly rhythms of sitting on a bullet train: tunnel, forest, tunnel, village, forest, town, station. Another tunnel, another Vizenor haiku.

From station to nation, from national to local, from local to divine. I am numb to the daily assaults of advertising peddling rarified images of Japanese nature, trying to sell me autumn clothes at the peak of summer humidity. This is my confession as a professional victim of high Japanese culture: I have been seduced by Japan posing as ancient, I am drunk on the fragrance of the fetish of tea scoops carved by men about to honorably cut their own stomachs open. Stunned by the defiant stamp on the noh stage of a warrior ghost, I dream of being ready to appease the gods of Kushida Shrine by running in a team that carries a one ton Yamakasa shrine five steaming kilometers in the summer sun of Hakata. These are the spirits that heckle me as I speed towards Hiroshima, working my way across the narrative of Ronin and Envoy Manidoo.

Some are teased into shopping by slick modern Japan. Bodysurf that exploding subculture of anime and manga before being beached in the depths of the superflat of Murakami Takashi. Wallowing in Cool Japan, still enough time for a green tea latte at the closest cosplay café. Our harmony at harvest time was consumed by the global need to be first, fastest and smallest. The smooth *shinkansen* ride guaranteed by the precision of Japanese engineers is the perfect scenario for reading literature so seamless it smirks at its own lack of narrative finality and other forms of conventional stability as it documents the *postindian* politics of its intended reception: ‘That me of creation is the face of

the other, the virtual you by my absence, and now we come to the same aesthetic vengeance of pronoun closure.<sup>6</sup> Countless groves flash by as Manidoo Envoy reports that Ronin asserts he has died seventeen times in a decade. Power to the trickster: the author is dead, long live the narrator. Each bullet-train-driven blur of green a shrine to the memory of the death by suicide of Akutagawa, marked by the mute screeches of wild crows.

Perhaps then, we should expect these three possible interpretations of Rashōmon as partial and contradictory narratives, Rashōmon as a gateway between two worlds presented by Ronin and Manidoo Envoy, and Rashōmon as a shape-shifting spirit to have their utility exhausted by some surprises unleashed by this 2003 novel. At the least, Vizenor's repetition of the word Rashōmon asks us to willingly suspend our desire for an authentically accurate account of the representations that we read. As we take the Vizenor tour de force from the ruins of Hiroshima to the war museum of Yasukuni Shrine, with a dancing detour in the upscale shopping area of Ginza where Johnny Cash is honored as a divine *kami* spirit, we are occasionally teased by the tensions between the sincere trickery of Ronin and the more grounded accounts of the Ronin tale administered by Manidoo Envoy.

### **Postmodern identities: tricky instabilities of narrator and character as theory**

Vizenor undercuts this neat binary of the play of Ronin versus the well-referenced certainty of Manidoo Envoy and his patient explanation of Japanese minutiae. Manidoo is more than being merely an editorial curator of the manuscript entrusted to him, *Manidoo* is spirit. In the case of the thunder spirit, 'The voice is the *manidoo*, not a mere representation of the spirit.'<sup>7</sup> But our in-

itial set of analytical concerns here goes beyond the probable instability of Manidoo Envoy along a continuum of identity spanning human presence and natural forces, a character performing as editor, curator and narrator. Instead, in the collective construction of *Hiroshima Bugi* we have more than an Anishinaabe vision of the death of the author. This novel is meta-literature, the tricky practice of literary theory being survivance writ large and a challenge to the certainty of the dominant narratives of history and the hermeneutic pronouncements of well-intentioned critics:

The postmodern turn in literature and cultural studies is an invitation to the ruins of representation; the invitation uncovers traces of tribal survivance, trickster discourse, and the remanence of intransitive shadows. ... The ironies and humor of the postmodern are heard in tribal narratives; the natural reason of tribal creation has never been without a postmodern turn or counterpoise, a common mode that enlivened the performance and memories of those who heard the best of their own experience in stories. The shadows of the heard and that touch of coherence in natural reason persists in the postexclave literature of resistance, and in the stories that are told after federal exclaves and reservations.<sup>8</sup>

*Hiroshima Bugi* begins inside the theme park of Hiroshima: what the curse of black rain struck down, the World Heritage Committee has sanctified. The Atomic Bomb Dome is the gate of ruins where performances of survivance melt into a sticky amalgam with the theoretical concerns of postmodern ironies and the gritty frictions of identity politics.

Each morning the children of incineration survive in a nuclear kabuki theater: ‘The children became dust, eternal atomu cries at that moment in the ghost parade.’<sup>9</sup> Intransitive shadows refuse to fade because of the lethal flash of

that bright and vicious light. Stunning us with the fierce cruelty of beauty, the annual remembrance of ancient ghost stories as summer entertainment is shamed by those atomu horrors of Hiroshima unleashed by the postcolonial putsch of an evolved Manifest Destiny. Compounded by the bonds of transpacific histories of occupation and emancipation, boundaries that unify the permeable identities of former friend and foe as they harmonize in a gospel version of street karaoke. Trickster poses that revive, the orphan-leper-mongrel allegiance resists, shadows without subject persist.<sup>10</sup>

Manidoo Envoy writes that Ronin penned accounts of his immortal flits across multiple planes of totem affiliation on ‘scraps of paper, tickets, notices, hotel stationery, advertisements, and several brochures from the peace museum, in honor of the courage, the unbearable dedication of Ota Yoko.’<sup>11</sup> Although Manidoo Envoy informs us that Ronin sorted these travel chits and chats into *random* bundles during the month he lived in the museum residence of Lafcadio Hearn by posing as the native descendant of that Greek-Irish-American author who took Japanese citizenship as Koizumi Yakumo, Ronin himself had a thematic structure in mind:

My notes, scraps, and scenes were neatly stacked, one by one, around the room.

The mounds of my notes on tickets, hotel stationery, napkins, advertisements, and recent scenes written on brochures from the museum and gallery were sorted by stories of the ruins, museum actions, park adventures, the nanazu, roamers, invisible tattoos, and other visual memories.<sup>12</sup>

Did Manidoo Envoy fail to understand the structure of the collection of Ronin writing he was curating and narrating, or was he engaging in a little tease of



his own, having been inspired by the moves of Ronin? Perhaps Vizenor is splaying out conflicting layers of narrational authority to delight recent initiates to the Close Readers clan and their Pointyhead kin. If so, then the slipperiness of that dialog between several accounts implies that the certainty of the manifest manners, their dominating tales of evolutionary necessity and the interpretative pronouncements of critics should be approached with a cautious skepticism.

Like some postmodern art, the writing of Ronin is *bricolage*. He makes do with the materials at hand, including scraps of paper collected in the peace park by roamers. But there is a deeper authenticity in this improvisation with an impoverished aesthetic. Ronin was inspired by Ota Yuko to mimic the post-Little Boy absence of manuscript paper: ‘She was hibakusha and wrote the *City of Corpses* on shoji and scraps of paper in one month of extreme misery after the atomu bomb destroyed the city.’<sup>13</sup>

Positioning the chance-driven conduct of Ronin as postmodern allows the same location to be extended to trickster discourse. When Jacques Derrida comments on *La Pensée sauvage* [*The Savage Mind*] of Levi-Strauss, he observes that ‘If one calls *bricolage* the necessity of borrowing one’s concept from the text of a heritage which is more or less coherent or ruined, it must be said that every discourse is *bricoleur*.’<sup>14</sup>

Discourse is jumbled foundations, the ruined representation of shadows all the way down. In the gloom that follows the atomu flash and between the silence of stones under the shadow of the bear, the reader too must perform the trickster as bricoleur.<sup>15</sup> Liberated by something borrowed, empowered by buying something blue: even the tribal is postmodern.<sup>16</sup>

While the notion of bricolage hints at the impossibility of discursive purity,

exploring the Ronin making-do improvisations as a mythopoetical activity reveals that claims for some idealized ‘authentic’ identity are fictions, polite fictions. As *postindian* Ronin makes a political pilgrimage through the spiritual landscape of Japan, he creates new modes of engaging other individuals, Japanese authority and the sacred belief in Japanese uniqueness. These chancy encounters are not confined to those conventional moves that integrate individual identity into communal structures:

In Native American studies, the transcendent power that is given through ritual performances is that of community identification. To put it in other terms, ritual has the power to transform a person from a state of alienation and place him or her into a condition of community. A very practical way this is achieved is through participation. Ritual requires the person to confront the other.<sup>17</sup>

The friendship between Ronin and the leper Oshima and the camaraderie between the roamers living in the peace park and the mongrel dogs are examples of how Ronin uses the daily ritual of the atomic kabuki parade of ghosts to sustain those who have been excluded from Japanese society. This entourage of these internal others whose presence has been suppressed from the mainstream of Japanese historical awareness accompany Ronin as he creates situations where individuals are confronted with the mockery of their own communal standards of conduct.<sup>18</sup> Institutions have their assumptions and modes of authority subverted as they are co-opted into the swerve of the trickster narrative.<sup>19</sup>

This collective action co-ordinated by Ronin is indigeneity speaking truth to various forms of Japanese power. The critique unleashed by this band of kabuki samurai contrasts with the universal concerns of mythopoetical vision as ‘a

way of becoming whole, of affirming one's special place in the universe, and myth, song, and ceremony are ways of affirming vision's place in the life of all people. Thus it renews all: the visionary and his relatives and friends, even the generations long dead and those yet unborn.<sup>20</sup> Ronin is not a force for renewal but an agent who corrects the deceptive exercise of institutional authority in the service of national narratives of innocent victimhood.

Having read the screenplay several times but never having seen the film, Ronin renames the peace museum the Hiroshima Mon Amour Museum by hanging a noisy paper banner at the entrance.<sup>21</sup> Ronin renames the museum tee shirts. He assumes the role of museum tour guide. As part of his tour, Ronin pauses in front of the diorama of aesthetic victimry and plays two roles in a performance of a 'Hiroshima Mon Amour' scene between the architect and his lover :

*Hiroshima Mon Amour* is my bugi movie tonight, because the war on simulated peace starts right here in the museum. The nuclear nights never end in a diorama of victimry. The tourists backed away. I never lived by lies, but there is so little time to overturn the persuasive dioramas and fakers of peace.

The mythopoetical vision of Ronin has momentum and is productive: his iconoclastic destruction of the peace letters inside the museum 'should be in my new version of *Hiroshima Mon Amour*.'<sup>22</sup> From the indigenous perspective, the aspect of renewal comes from the rejection of dominant narrative claims for native absence: 'Natives are created in stories, and natives have always been on the road to revitalization.'<sup>23</sup>

## **Author as performance: collective and present, individual and absent**

After Miko is impressed by the forged signature of Lafcadio Hearn in Ronin's copy of *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan*,<sup>24</sup> the notion of authorship is subject to further ridicule by two performances. Ronin writes that visitors to the Lafcadio Hearn museum would be told that the mounds of Ronin story notes are in fact original Hearn manuscripts. Leveraging the fiction of Ronin as a relative of Hearn, the manager of the Hearn residence tells Ronin to 'pose for the tourists as a literary scholar.'<sup>25</sup>

Ronin is indebted to Miko, the water colour artist who paints Peace Park scenes of children while working as a hostess in the Tea and Cocktail Lounge of the Ana Hotel Hiroshima, for her steady pushes towards the circumstances of publication. Miko, 'Shaman of the ruins ... the artist of visions ... our shaman of liberty',<sup>26</sup> places these stacks of thematically organized material in three cardboard boxes which she mails to Manidoo Envoy.<sup>27</sup> Manidoo Envoy tells us that the undated and disorganized writings of Ronin are filed by paper size; the imposition of thematic order and chronological coherence was a source of pleasure for older residents:

The Hotel Manidoo became the center that deciphered his scenes, teases, and descriptions into an elaborate catchword guide and chronicle. Night after night the native veterans unraveled with great respect and humor the scraps of stories written by the incredible son of Nightbreaker.

Ronin is clearly the literary artist, author, and inspiration of the ultimate assembly of his stories, but the native ghost decoders made it possible for me to connect the scenes and narratives of *Hiroshima Bugi*.<sup>28</sup>

These are the pragmatics of the construction of the narrative of *Hiroshima Bugi*, and they tally with the orphan life of ainoko hafu Ronin.<sup>29</sup> Okichi never told Nightbreaker that she was pregnant with his child and Ronin has not seen the final form of *Hiroshima Bugi*. Miko was an insistent pre-publication presence, determined that Ronin should have his writings in print. This labour of her love was then brought to term by Manidoo Envoy:

Ronin instructed me to complete the stories from his notes and papers and provide an envoy with information about the scenes in his stories. The actual, final draft of this manuscript, as you read it now, was created by the favor and scrutiny of many veteran residents at the Hotel Manidoo.<sup>30</sup>

Nightbreaker knew as much of his son as Ronin knows of his *Hiroshima Bugi* publication. Manidoo Envoy reports that Miko had to travel to the White Earth Reservation in Minnesota which had adopted the fifteen year old Ronin as Mifune Browne,<sup>31</sup> intending to ‘share the grievous stories of his death and the great stories of his manuscript’<sup>32</sup> before she could learn that Ronin death stories would not be accepted by any members of his *anishinaabe* community.

In the Manidoo Envoy account, Ronin appears to Miko in a dream. Invisible mongrel tattoos appear on his cheeks, Ronin circles her, and when he almost disappears, Miko ‘shouted his names, *atomu hafu*, *hafu*, and the invisible tattoos turned to bears.’<sup>33</sup> This is the end of *Hiroshima Bugi* and perhaps at this point Miko has grasped the immortal wisdom of Almost Browne from the 1997 novel *Hotline Healers: An Almost Browne Novel*: ‘We live forever in stories, not manners, so, tease the chance of conception, tease your mother.’<sup>34</sup> At the end of the novel we have read a Manidoo Envoy representation of the dream of Miko.

This secondhand account of the disappearance of Ronin is the *postindian* smirk of *Hiroshima Bugi*, the mercurial narrative from the author who has rallied against the simulations of absent indigeneity: up until the time of his final departure from the Lafcadio Hearn museum, Ronin penned an account of his engagement with the less-palatable aspects of Japanese nationalism. His own story includes the tang of the Rashōmon effect and acknowledges that he is not the omniscient narrator who is incapable of error.<sup>35</sup> The postmortem delivery of any Ronin tale after his tricky ascent into the Matsue sky begs this question: how reliable are accounts of a trickster narrative that deliberately teases the *postindian* continuum of presence-absence?

An additional tickle to the once almost-holy status of the author is administered at the Lafcadio Hearn museum. Having gained access to the hospitality of the Hearn residence by pretending to be a relation of Hearn, having presented his work-in-progress as Hearn manuscripts, having entertained tourists with his pose of being a literary scholar, Ronin justifies this trickery by redrawing the relationship between author and readership:

Hearn is my hafu muse. ... The Hearn house was mine by right of hafu association and memory. ... This is my house by virtue of imagination and association with the stories of Lafcadio Hearn. He owes me this moment to envision his words by the garden, to create his presence by turn of shadows, to honor his animal poses and tease the snow spirits that haunt his absence in Matsue. I have carried his stories, and now he owes me a spirited comeback at his residence.<sup>36</sup>

For the then unpublished author Ronin, life and literature assume the form of being mutually constituted. Having given life to the stories that have sustained him, Ronin argues that he is entitled to more than board and lodging at the

Hearn museum for enlivening the writings of Hearn. The status of Ronin as an engaged reader of Hearn more than covers the price of admission to the former Hearn residence.

When Ronin visits Matsue, his manuscript has not been prepared for publication by Envoy Manidoo. The narrative of *Hiroshima Bugi* has multiple narrators: the accounts of the leper Oshima intermingle with the adventures of Ronin, before all being collated and edited by the team led by Envoy Manidoo. As Ronin tells us of the textual innovations of Miko, a mischievous intertextuality of a famous kabuki play involving mass seppuku accompanies the Rashōmon effect of different versions:

Miko distracted the roamers with stories about mongrels. She selected several scenes about a production of *Chushingura Inu*, *The Loyal Dog Retainers*. Lafcadio Hearn is an inu player in her version of my notes, but he is not part of that episode in my story.<sup>37</sup>

The trace of Ronin is the shadow of his presence across this narrative. Ronin is adept at performing the role of author and yet he is absent, excluded from the circumstances of the production of his novel and ignorant of its existence. The failure of Miko to locate Ronin on the White Earth Reservation is another episode in the ongoing theoretical jests around the sanctity of the author.

His teasing sense of immediacy during his appearance in the final dream is subject to narrational distance: *the account of Envoy Manidoo* conveys the details of Miko's frustrations and unexpected cameraderie on the White Earth Reservation. Ronin does not have the final word, and there are other stories polished by perfect memories in his absence. Ever distant, Ronin the orphan, subject to authorial exclusion, begets an orphaned publication.

The trope of the absent author is intensified during the visit of Ronin to

Matsue. Miko lets Lafcadio Hearn run as a dog in *Chushingura Inu, The Loyal Dog Retainers*: ‘Lafcadio, one eyed hafu cocker, terrier, is a guard.’<sup>38</sup> Against this background of shape-shifting by his hafu muse who died in 1904, Ronin accounts for the presence of the deceased author:

Lafcadio Hearn was there by visual memories, an ecstatic presence, a meditation and natural surprise. Later, he might have turned to metaphors, or singular words of sight and sound, to create a presence in the garden. The author touched the azaleas, oblivious to the sounds of heavy breathing in his study.<sup>39</sup>

Snoring roamers in the Hearn museum dream on, oblivious to the challenging invitation Ronin issued in the faint morning light: ‘you readers who want to know more about me must search in the clouds.’<sup>40</sup>

The cumulative effect of this masquerade around the figure of the author is to deny the stability due to the thirteen Ronins. Given the relentless spinning of chance in the episodic performances as Ronin of Rashomon, Ronin of the Imperial Moat, and the list goes on, it may be naive to accept at face value his final assertion that ‘My time has come to vanish.’<sup>41</sup> Perhaps the trickery of Ronin is all too obvious because of the need to conceal the fact of his absence from his own narrative. The surprising presence of Lafcadio Hearn hints at the absence of Ronin. Like the invention of the invisible Ainu tattoos by Vizenor,<sup>42</sup> Ronin is a presence conjured by the visible hand and a concealed imagination.

## **Who killed Ronin?**

The true trickster of *Hiroshima Bugi* is the earthy steadiness of Envoy Manidoo who imagines the fluid and flighty adventures of Ronin from the well-informed comfort of his reference library. The steady stream of Ronin death



stories is Envoy Manidoo diving into the preferred form of indigenous immortality, those told tales that unite the storyteller and the audience through the device of natural reason spoken into narrative. That smokescreen performance of Envoy Manidoo as Ronin is worthy of the *postindian* and the postmodern: ‘This voice gives me a chance to tease the trickster and the reader.’<sup>43</sup>

Ronin of the Inu Shrine informs us that Osaka staged the *Chushingura Inu, The Loyal Dog Retainers* for the first time in the dream of Ronin. Ronin appears as a shadow on the stage, a stage in a dream, a dream in his story. These are the levels of narrative protection that coat this clue about the illusion of authorial presence:

My pose was an absence. No one could see my moves in the dream.

I was there in perfect memories, by my interior sound, sense, and motion, but lost in a shadow that existed outside of time, and with no obvious source of natural light. The motion of my hands was a shadow gesture, a tricky pose, and my sense of presence was the actual absence of my body.

I am a hafu ronin, dead once again.<sup>44</sup>

To the compassionate Master Trickster, let me say ‘*Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57* is my Rashomon.’ Let Ronin rest. The reader is teased.

## Japan as dangerous : nature

Certain literary representations of Japan address the creation of a lethal national identity: ‘The history of modern Japan is nothing more but a history in which a national community was formed as the community of unnatural death.’<sup>45</sup> Literary forms, including haiku, a form that Vizenor deploys as *haiku* and adapts that poetic economy for the sparse dialogues of Ronin, were part of

the cultural arsenal seductively unleashed on Japanese citizens. This invention of the eternal nation demanding individual and collective sacrifice occurred in three stages. The biopolitics of Japanese colonialism (1895–1914) established the necessary economic framework for the neuropolitics of Japanese capitalism (1920–32), culminating in the wartime tragedy of necropolitics (1935–45).<sup>46</sup> As we will see in a later section, the persistence of the oppressive tang of harmful forms of national identification, merely induces Ronin is to be more sacrilegious.

What makes this community of unnatural death possible is a politicizing of Japanese nature that embedded a lethal transience in the idea of national duty. The ideology of Japanese uniqueness justifies and preserves power inequalities.<sup>47</sup> Although the imperial frenzy of early modern Japan meant there was no easy decision to oppose or simply not participate in objectionable practices imposed upon the citizenry, Ronin Browne repeatedly mocks the sacred icons of Japanese-ness and subverts the earnest intentions of their official representatives. The sacrosanct spirits of those young pilots who were pressured into flying kamikaze missions, those students who achieved immortality with their patriotic self-immolation are undercut by the flashy repetition of the ‘eternal samurai suicides’ of Ronin where he continually dodges the bullet of mortality by becoming a presence more animated by stories.<sup>48</sup> However, even today, consciously recognizing what is distasteful in the ideological subconscious of various ‘Japanese’ cultural practices is rarely a real time option for most mortals. This is particularly the case when shopping for authentic commodities at Japanese sacred sites. What are the discursive positions that would allow one to resist the wartime logic of scattered cherry blossoms, the lethal symbol of transience that Ronin engages when he buys four ‘I Am a Glorious Cherry Blossom’ t-shirts?

som' tee shirts at Yasukuni Shrine?

Ronin swoops across planes of totem affiliation as he flits through multiple mortalities. Nature provides the gift of liberation from the closure of death in his narrative, but cherry blossoms were a delicately oppressive demand inflicted on Japanese citizens. The ultra-right Sakura Kai (Cherry Blossom Group) was established in October 1930 to reconstruct the nation (*kokka*), and this group openly advocated the violent use of force.<sup>49</sup> From 1933 to 1940, elementary school textbooks began with 'saita, saita, sakura ga saita' (it has blossomed, it has blossomed, the cherry tree has blossomed) and was followed by 'susume, susume, hetai susume' (advance, advance, soldier advance) and 'hinomaru hata, banzai banzai' (long live the Japanese flag).<sup>50</sup> The *sakura* motif also appears in the *seppuku*-related activities of the Shinō Dan (Let's Die Group). *Seppuku* was used as a protest against government oppression of Nichiren Kai which was established in 1928. One prominent member, a thirty-two-year-old with the family name Eigawa, changed his given name to include the sakura character. Certain members of Shinō Dan formed a specialist group, literally translatable as Blood Allies Sakura Group, and took up the cry 'Waga sokoku no tame ni shinō! Waga shugi no tame ni shinō! Waga shōkyō no tame ni shinō! Waga dōshi no tame ni shinō!' (Let's die for our country! Let's die for our policy! Let's die for our religion! Let's die for our colleagues!)<sup>51</sup> Sakura was used as part of the name for some special attack squads.<sup>52</sup> The aircraft designed for these kamikaze squads included 'the Ooka ("cherry blossom") manned flying bomb (best known to history by its American nickname, the "Baka [stupid] bomb")'.<sup>53</sup> Sakura featured in some of the death poems composed by special attack unit group members. Consider how Captain Asakawa, who was twenty-three years old when he died on 6 April 1945, expresses his

pleasure at dying for Japan. He alludes to being immortalized at Yasukuni Shrine on Kudan Hill after dive-bombing an enemy warship: ‘Dreaming that I will scatter like cherry blossoms and return to Kudan, I conquer the steel bridge.’<sup>54</sup>

### **Never trust a hippy trickster**

‘No one is innocent.’ In the air-conditioned comfort of the first class Green Car carriage, a Japanese punk rocker appears perfect, that slogan T-shirt delivered intact from the poverty-driven rage of Thatcher’s England of the late eighties. When our knees bump as the punk sits down opposite me, there is no snarl, sneer or gob. Just an apology as the bullet train glides out of the station, then a history lesson when she spots *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57*.

Bomb, or be bombed.

Japan had an atomic bomb?

Stalled at the laboratory.

Uranium in Japan?

U-boat, April 1944, German yellowcake, 550 kg.

Stale yellow cake, dirty bombs.

Troublesome weapon of mass disruption.

Not enough electricity or copper.

Not enough anything in wartime Japan for the real deal.

Isotope separation impossible?

Not enough energy, not enough time.

Heavy water?

Made in our Korea.

Not enough for any action.

Tokyo fire bombing.

Great Tokyo Air Raid, March 10 1945.

Ashes of Nishina Laboratory, April 13 1945.

Nishina, as in Klein–Nishina formula of Compton effects, 1928?

Nishina Yoshio busy after Hiroshima, researching bomb effects.

Busy until prohibited by GHQ on September 19 1945.

Thank you. Tricky GHQ: no freedom of speech as US democracy in action.

But four years after Hiroshima and Nagasaki, a Nobel Prize in Physics for Japan!

Yukawa Hideki: The Imperial Prize in 1940 from the Japan Academy.

Decoration of Cultural Merit in 1943.

Every year from early August, our media start whining about Hiroshima. No one mentions our atomic bomb program. We were not peaceful. Hang around Kudan Hill and see for yourself. Watch the right wing extremists attack the pacifists each August 15<sup>th</sup> outside Yasukuni Shrine. Have we changed?<sup>25</sup>

## **Life during wartime: Japan as peaceful**

Yasukuni Shrine continues to be a sacred site for those nationalist ideologies that demanded the ultimate wartime sacrifice from Japanese citizens. In the heady optimism of the early interwar years, the rhetoric of the day invoked harmony as a synonym for the expansion of Japanese influence throughout Asia. When the struggle between the Japanese spirit and Allied military superiority was being dominated by Western hardware, harmony became a coercive silence inside Japan. Even in the face of obvious defeat before Hiroshima and Nagasaki, surrender was inconceivable if it did not protect the divinity of the Emperor. It is against this background that we should consider the mischief-

vous purchase by Ronin of four ‘We Shall Win’ tee shirts at Yasukuni Shrine.

The cardinal principles of the national entity of Japan are presented in *Kokutai no hongî*, published in March 1937 by the Ministry of Education. At that time, the Ministry of Education was responsible for overseeing thought control activities: ‘both punitive action against persons with thoughts considered officially undesirable, and the creation and dissemination of propaganda for the control of student thought. The *Kokutai no hongî* is a product of the Bureau of Educational Reform, which was charged with thought control.’<sup>56</sup> This was education in the age of necropolitics: with the official definition of authentic Japanese-ness any deviation from that narrow norm aimed at supporting the war effort could be labeled *hi-kokumin teki*, not citizen-like or unpatriotic.

After Bush War II,<sup>57</sup> this interwar obsession with narrowly defined forms of legitimate Japanese citizenship operating as censorship sounds all too familiar. Although Vizenor gives an account of the Ainu presence in modern Japan and the bonds of trans-Pacific indigeneity, certain aspects of *Hiroshoma Bugi* also resonate with the North American experience of being colonized by violent European invaders. In the interests of telling a good story about dominance, the imperial histories of Japan and America are thematically and chronological linked. However Manidoo Envoy initially cites the wrong date: ‘The Shinto Yasukuni Jinja, or shrine, was founded in 1868, the same year that the United States government established the White Earth Reservation in Minnesota.’<sup>58</sup>

What is equally interesting in this novel is the appropriation of Japanese literary forms as an ironic criticism of the lethal patriotism of transience: ‘The imagic moments and intuition of haiku scenes create the experiences, memories, and aesthetic survivance of nature.’<sup>59</sup> Although nature provides Ronin with a script for survivance, a means of resisting the dominant manners that seek to

silence and stabilize indigenous identity, literary representations of Japanese nature become arguments for the individual citizens to sacrifice themselves for the benefit of the national and imperial body. The cherry blossom cult of Yasukuni Shrine is one mode for shaping patriotic feelings.

When Ronin is taking care of business inside Yasukuni Shrine, he does more than merely challenge those institutionalized forms of Japanese-ness that would silence an acknowledgement of the social costs of embracing a national identity that politicized nature. Ronin has sex with a miko shrine maiden who is selling nationalist artifacts at a stall within the Yasukuni Shrine precinct. Although the enthusiastic purveyor of war memorabilia is already naked inside her safely locked shrine stall, Ronin initially cannot get an erection: ‘my penis was shied by the loud music, the constant broadcast of “Kimigayo,” the Japanese national anthem.’<sup>60</sup> The outrageousness of the scene lies in the transgressive combination of elements at this sacramental location of national significance. The commodification of war memorial souvenirs as national memories rubbed up as foreplay for interracial sex sounds racy enough for most cross-cultural voyeurs, but the real money shot provided by Vizenor is the annual layering of private loss with national sacrifice during the cherry blossom season, topped off with imperial endorsement of this sacred site.

Representations of nature and idealized presentations of self are elements of this creation of the existential harmony of Japanese national identity. Japan has a documented history of earthquakes, floods and famines, and *Kokutai no hongu* records how the Emperor ‘poured out his great august heart in giving relief in times of natural calamities’.<sup>61</sup> However, the ideology of Japanese concord apparently demands that Japanese citizens forget their powerlessness in the face of furious natural forces, despite the fact that tsunami is no longer merely

a Japanese word: ‘Clashes with nature such as are found in Western mythologies do not appear in our legends ... It is not by mere chance that Yamato [a synonym for Japan] has been written in Chinese characters, “Great Harmony”’.<sup>62</sup>

*Kokutai no hongî* informs citizens that the nation is administered by an imperial love for the people. The ‘Way of the Subjects’ is defined as loyalty, patriotism and filial piety: ‘loyalty and filial piety as one is the flower of our national entity’.<sup>63</sup> *Kokutai no hongî* uses this natural metaphor of transience to argue that loyalty to the Emperor and respect for one’s parents are one and the same thing, the highest expression of Japanese-ness. Harmony between god and man, harmony between man and nature, and the practice of unique cultural practices that sustain mutual harmony among Japanese citizens are the foundation of an eternal relationship between harmony and truth.

According to *Kokutai no hongî*, the martial spirit is an integral part of this Japanese harmony, and the sovereign and his subjects are united in one somewhat vaguely defined truth. Structured inside this ambiguous space of identification as the inevitable destination of biopolitics, neuropolitics and necropolitics, the notion of a divine war becomes justifiable as the sacred martial spirit of Japan is invoked to protect the homeland as Urayasu no Kuni (Land of Peace), Yamato (Great Harmony) and Yasukuni (Peaceful Land).<sup>64</sup>

It is the sacramental unity of Japanese ethnicity, language and culture that is flouted by Ronin as he playfully desecrates the supposedly peaceful spiritual landscape of postwar Nippon. When Ronin took the form of a crane and departed from Matsue on another mortal journey after leaving a totemic crane feather at the left foot of the statue of Lafcadio Hearn, Manidoo Envoy reports that ‘the catchwords “I am a glorious *hafu* cherry blossom,” became the head-



line of a story about the death of a tourist in the canal.<sup>65</sup>

Ronin uses nature to escape mortality and the teleological trap of stories but behind the contemporary platitude that ‘Japan has four seasons’ lingers the resonance of the cultural construction of Japanese-ness as a patriotic weapon inflicted on wartime citizens. The elusive manoeuvres of Ronin across the totems of raven, bear and anishinaabe sandhill crane outperform the lethal conscription of Japanese nature into a national narrative. Manidoo Envoy reports that Ronin takes issue with that historical interpretation which renders the status of atomic victim as sacrament: ‘Dominance, he declared, honors victimry.’<sup>66</sup>

### **Pausing for orientation: fictocriticism, critical media literacy**

Allow me to slip into the explanatory mode of Manidoo Envoy to outline certain manoeuvres being performed here. My methodological agenda here is not to simply privilege the category of literature. Firstly, I am attempting to read *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57* as fictocriticism. Vizenor reminds us that ‘Tribal narratives are heard and remembered in *pictofiction* and *pictomyths* without closure.’<sup>67</sup> In this spirit, fictocritical writing is an open-ended adventure that goes beyond interpretation and explanation: ‘Fictocriticism might be most usefully defined as hybridised writing that moves between the poles of fiction (‘invention’/‘speculation’) and criticism (‘deduction’/‘explication’), of subjectivity (‘interiority’) and objectivity (‘exteriority’).’<sup>68</sup> The parallel narratives of Ronin and Manidoo Envoy occasionally span both of these binaries. However, the accounts of Ronin tend towards subjective tales as he maximizes ‘My chance of perfect memories.’<sup>69</sup> On the other hand, Manidoo is generally more like a reference librarian moonlighting as an earnest tour guide, busy interpreting for the reader the soaring saga of Ronin by referring to expert commentaries gleaned

from literature about Japan: *Letters from the End of the World*, Toyofumi Ogura; *Dogs and Demons*, Alex Kerr; *The Man Who Saved Kabuki*, Shiro Okamoto; *Public People, Private People*, Donald Richie. And my favourite, *Kamikaze, Cherry Blossoms, and Nationalisms*, Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney. Etc.

Secondly, having read *Hiroshima Bugi* as fictocriticism, I am also trying to respond to the multiple narratives, slippery pronouns and trickster flights from Ronin mortality in a voice that is more appropriate than the impermeable discourse of our profession. I confess. It is indulgent and weak mimicry that limps behind the irreverent trajectory of Ronin. However, it may also be a deeper way of engaging with the vision of Vizenor and its ongoing critical reception.

Certainty and its expression as incremental hedging constitute the dominant grammar of much interpretative, evaluative and critical writing about literature and its place in the world. The episodic adventures of Ronin at the margins of postwar Japanese history that were initially recorded on whatever was close at hand invite the exploration of alternative modes of writing. In the context of the hidden histories of post-contact relations of Australia, Katrina Schlunke demonstrates how the authorial voice can be modulated across a range of genres:

But an important part of creating this historical production is the confrontation with narrative itself. To avoid the threat of 'resolution' that narrative has, I have chosen excess. Narratives of narratives, narratives on narratives and narrator and narrative co-mingling so that there is no single home for the writing self. The book employs official historical records, family histories, tourist leaflets, gossip, field notes and other texts to show the multiple ways in which an event both becomes and exceeds its invention.<sup>70</sup>

Authoritative explications of the narrative densities of *Hiroshima Bugi* are masterful performances and are a thought-provoking delight to consume. However, the disciplinary demand for the over-determined closure of these disembodied accounts is the antithesis of the chance creations of trickster sensibilities: 'To deny finality is the first trick of survivance according to the theory of Perfect Memory'.<sup>71</sup>

Thirdly, given that the text of *Hiroshima Bugi* was compiled by Manidoo Envoy at the insistence of Miko,<sup>72</sup> I would like to take advantage of the questions posed by critical media literacy. This includes being ready to imagine alternatives to the sequence ordered by Manidoo Envoy as he followed the guidance of native veterans and native ghost decoders.<sup>73</sup> Unleashing the imagination problematifies the author-critic binary and probably makes publishers, editors and learned committees a little nervous. The initial hint for this impulse comes from a challenging invitation written by Jeanne Sokolowski: 'the Hiroshima Bugis performed in Atomu 56 and yet to be performed in Atomu 58 possess their own forms and structures.'<sup>74</sup> Following from the possibilities of those yet to be defined Bugis, another set of narratives emerge from stepping outside the historical parameters of Vizenor that are outlined in the literature survey aspects of the Manidoo Envoy explanations. Although Manidoo Envoy prides himself on his extensive research library and the inspiration it provides Ronin,<sup>75</sup> his collection is flawed by a significant limitation. *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57* proceeds on the assumption that the Japanese were innocent of any nuclear intentions. What mischief might a trickster unleash in Atomu 59 and Atomu 60 when armed with the knowledge of the Japanese wartime intention to build an atomic bomb? How would Ronin respond to the duping of Japanese residents by the nuclear power industry and the national government in the wake of the

tsunami-related atomic meltdown in Fukushima Prefecture in *Atomu* 67?<sup>76</sup>

Finally, adapting an anthropological approach advocated by Michael Tausig that foregrounds positionality feeds into the preceding two gestures.<sup>77</sup> While the section ‘Reading Vizenor in Japan: which Japan?’ proceeds by outlining the various permutations of *Rashōmon*, it also gives a sense of how I inhabit the Japanese paradox of ancient and modern: the tea of Nambō Ryu, Hōshō Ryu noh and Yamakasa are the cultural practices that I perform which grasp at the local spirits of Hakata and national divinities.<sup>78</sup> A total of more than three decades of communal participation in these embodied traditions is my social, chronological and financial investment in the *shinji* premise of sacred Japanese-ness. These sustained performances of cultural shape-shifting are my attempts to explore the possibility that culture, while conventionally conjuring the category of nation, actually cares little for nationalized citizenship: ‘Could it be that a post-modern subject for nation may be emerging for whom nation as independent nation-state matters somewhat less than nation as culture?’<sup>79</sup> With a ‘double’ (not ‘hafu’, thank you) son of my own, I am optimistically invested in the hope that Japan can accept ‘a more dynamic construction of identity in a postnational, racially hybridized and hybridizing world.’<sup>80</sup>

post-tsunami summer dawn  
crow past my window  
whiff of mongrel subtext:  
r e f u s e d i s c i p l i n a r i t y

## Indigeneity and fictocritical writing

The work of Julia Yonetani illuminates several thematic concerns of *Hiro-*

*shima Bugi* by comparing the colonial histories of Australia and Japan. Struggles around the representation and critique of orthodox interpretations of national narratives, tensions around the definitions of invasion and settlement, and assumptions of indigenous presence or absence are the obvious points of comparison between these former enemy states who now have a vigorous trade relationship.<sup>81</sup> Against this background which explains the relevance of the experience of indigenous Aborigines to the Ronin narrative, this section briefly surveys how fictocritical writing and documentary film have been deployed in an Australian context as a response to the same sort of manifest manners that sought to eradicate First Nation presence from the northern hemisphere.

The 'Slight Anthropologies' article consists of twelve numbered-but-untitled sections that address the history of how Aborigines have been represented by the dominant manners of white Australian historians. Gabrielle Lorraine Fletcher, a *gungungurra* woman from the Blue Mountains country of eastern Australia, contrasts an ironically detached history with more personal accounts. Three dialogues between She, Creation and Elders counterpoint one conversation between two rather prejudiced, archetypical (white) women, One and Two. Other genres, including legend, poetry, a written rendering of an orally transmitted recipe and a letter from a Christian missionary pining not for his absent sweetheart but the comforts of life in the Old Country, bring the multiple perspectives of these particular pasts into a matrix that suggests to readers how these histories have shaped one critical incident about identity. This Fletcher article explores the hafu territory mapped out by Ronin. 'Slight Anthropologies' critiques the received narrative of contact relations between Aborigines and Europeans by addressing one important paradox of identity politics in contemporary Australia: how does it feel to look white and have an aboriginal heart?

In a historical sequence of critical incidents in the European experience of Australia from 1614 until the eighteenth century, there is a wry subversion of the stereotypical representation of Aborigines as being somehow inadequate. Ronin would approve of the tales of Dutch and British shortcomings, linked by their repetition of ‘unable to’ communicate: the irony of being unable to ring home (in 1614!), unable to write, and so on. Reinforcing this impression of European incompetence is evidence presented in the nineteenth century missionary letter and the mid-twentieth century recipe sections: although Aborigines were observant enough to be able to watch and learn the white Australian codes, Europeans found the cultural world of Aborigines annoyingly opaque.

The documentary film ‘Kanyini’ speaks to the historical ignorance of Anglo-Australia. Pitjantjatjara elder and registered Traditional Owner of Uluru Bob Randall explains indigenous philosophy and the recent modern experience of various forms of social deprivation. ‘Kanyini’ opens with the comfortable sense that indigenous presence was one part of natural perfection which was governed by the principle of not taking more than necessary. This balance is then contrasted with the systematic destruction of indigenous languages, cultures and practices by white discourses of social evolution.<sup>82</sup>

Uncle Bob quietly explains how indigenous connections to country, spirituality, religious beliefs and community were broken, including his own experience of being a member of the so-called Stolen Generations. The legislative bodies and law enforcement agencies of federal and state governments, religious groups and welfare agencies co-operated in a scheme to remove so-called half-caste children from their families. Although the white imperialist rhetoric of the day invoked the best Christian intentions of ‘smoothing the pillow of the dying race’, the scheme was an attempt at cultural genocide that broke the oral

transmission of traditional songs, dances and stories. The experience of Australian Aborigines is similar to that of indigenous cultures of north America:

“Manifest Destiny” is an ideological tool used to justify the unlawful acquisition of indigenous or foreign lands and to insist (often by force) that the natives adapt to Euro-American culture. In order to “kill the Indian” but “save the man,” Indian children were torn from their families and sent to boarding schools where they were forbidden to speak their language or practice their customs; thus, education became the primary means by which the U.S. government tried to eradicate indigenous cultures. While ultimately the U.S. government did not succeed, much damage was done trying.<sup>84</sup>

In the case of the Ainu of Japan, the late nineteenth century pressure for Japan to modernize and consolidate its northern frontier were shocks that threatened Ainu cultural integrity: ‘At exactly the same moment in its history, Hokkaido served as an entrance for the arrival of western technologies for Japan and an exit for the Ainu’s traditional ways of life. ... The Ainu were the “other” that had to be destroyed in order to justify the emergence of a new and modern Japanese self.’<sup>84</sup>

Directed by Melanie Hogan, this 2006 film reminds Anglo-Australia that the facts of indigenous socio-economic disadvantage have their roots in white ways and institutions. ‘Kanyini’ works through a range of emotions, including the ironic bemusement of Uncle Bob who has learnt to read ‘Thou shalt not kill’ as he outlines the challenges for indigenous people that need to be considered by all Australians.

‘Slight Anthropologies’ shows an indigenous history of experience that must be acknowledged in a manner that accommodates difference as some-

thing other than the less-than-one of being a hafu. The Fletcher article begins at the beginning, at the beginning of time with a creation myth:

Inside the metaphor of nothing, something struggles to get out.

The Dreaming made it so.<sup>85</sup>

The Dreaming refers to the Aboriginal cosmology that links the sacred landscape of Australia and all living entities into an eternity. Thematically, this section introduces the central tension of identity politics for indigenous Australians, the conflict between being nothing and the struggle to become something. Two centuries of white prejudice have endeavoured to demote the achievements of indigenous Australians as they work towards rebuilding communities, telling their stories that sustain kin relations and bringing new forms of Aboriginality into being.

Inside the diversity of Indigenous Australia this tension between being something and being nothing also exists as part of mourning customs. While the story is a widely preferred form of immortality, the 'sorry business' rules practiced after death prevent the name of the deceased from being spoken. The intention is not to disturb the spirit by calling it back to this world. In this communal silence, such an individual absence from storytelling functions as presence.

This space between two conditions is comfortably inhabited by Ronin: he uses his mastery of totemic planes to maintain the momentum of his transpacific narrative. As the stability of being one something attracts the stale waft of mortality, the figure of Lafcadio Hearn provides an important opportunity for Ronin.



## Hearn and identity politics

Manidoo Envoy makes no comment on the nuanced complexities of Ronin identifying with Lafcadio Hearn (嘉永 Kaei 3–明治 Meiji 37, 1850–1904, Atomu Minus 95–Minus 41). The point of comparison with ainoko hafu Ronin is obvious: Hearn was a prototypical global citizen, ‘a Greek–Anglo–Irish American deeply acquainted with French and Creole culture who ended up as an honored citizen of Japan.’<sup>86</sup> Despite the cosmopolitan sensibilities of Hearn, his 1904 *Japan: An Attempt at Interpretation* contains within the Appendix a warning to Japan from Herbert Spencer (1820–1903) about the dangers to Japan of international marriages. The polymath philosopher and advocate of social Darwinism was convinced that any child resulting from such a mixed race marriage was likely to be ‘a bad hybrid.’<sup>87</sup>

The experience of living in Japan caused Hearn to shift from a concern with cultural extinction, becoming a written exponent of Japanese cultural nationalism before he finally embraced the more patriotic mode of state nationalism: prior to coming to Japan the regionalist writings of Hearn exhibited ‘a nostalgic attachment to “dying” folk cultures such as those of the American and Caribbean Creoles. But his encounter with Meiji Japan turned him into an aggressive modern state nationalist, to the extent even that he adopted the Japanese cause against China and Russia.’<sup>88</sup> Given the depth that Vizenor has critiqued deliberately–faked representations of internal others, the identification of Ronin with Hearn is interesting: ‘Narratives of survivance not only make a claim for the active presence of indigenous peoples (in opposition to the stereotypical notion of “vanishing peoples”), but also function as an act of resistance to dominant cultural narratives.’<sup>89</sup>

The tension between Hearn as an internationalist with a Japanese wife and

child who were legally bound to forgo their Japanese citizenship as a consequence of his foreign status and Hearn as a nationalist supporter of Japanese aggression is territory that is not unfamiliar to Ronin.<sup>90</sup> As a member of the Anishinaabe nation, Ronin knows the difficulties that are imposed on the invaded by the victor. Ronin also shows that these moments of contact can become acts of resistance and re-assertion, tricky acts recorded in perfect memories.

When Ronin marches into Yasukuni Shrine wearing the military uniform of his father, complete with the ribbons that honour the service of his father, he is weaving his story into the weft of the absence of his father. Performing the command to present arms while armed with a wooden sword in the uniform of the former enemy in the shrine dedicated to those Japanese citizens and colonial subjects who died in imperial warfare is more than expressing filial respect for the imagined form of his father. Although Ronin delights in teasing the limits of trickery by making soldiering look silly, there are slippery ironies at play here that subvert any uncomplicated identification with those patriotic feelings that demand neat and clear boundaries between citizens and their external others. What appears to be the pose of the victorious American occupying forces is actually a member of the colonized Anishinaabe nation masquerading in the uniform of the invaders of tribal homelands. This 'passing' for orthodox American military presence is a dangerous performance that would probably incite an aggressive reaction from certain right wing elements that place Yasukuni Shrine at the centre of their patriotic spirituality. Despite the shared experience of Anishinaabe and Japanese of being dominated by American occupations, any misplaced attack on the hafu Ronin by Yasukuni extremists would suggest that the age of tidy identities that are neatly contained by national borders has ended.

In the flow of his narrative, the hybrid figure of Hearn is strategically useful to Ronin. The presence of this accomplished author and competent shape-shifter provides some clue to Ronin. After Ronin has exhausted the possibilities for teasing in the old samurai house of Hearn, the dead Hearn silently leads Ronin to the gate: ‘Death is my vision in the faint light of morning, and this is my chance to run again with a death story.’<sup>91</sup> The dead Hearn is halfway into the stone of his statue and the totem feather of the crane gives flight to both authors: ‘Lafcadio Hearn is a crane on my wing. Many authors fly this way.’<sup>92</sup>

### **Reading Hiroshima Bugi as graphic novel: typology and narrative**

In the compact font of a typewriter set flush-left/ragged right, Manidoo Envoy *tells* us that ‘Ronin is a dreamer, a mind roamer, a teaser of peace, and a master of irony.’<sup>93</sup> The complexities of Ronin *showing* that all this is the case are rendered in more complex typesetting across three indented measures in sans serif font. The narratives of Ronin are rendered in a larger font than the Manidoo Envoy accounts and are set flush-left. The blocks are set flush-right across the same measure, mirroring the hierarchy of indentation on the left hand side of the page. The one exception to this typesetting are the sparse dialogues rich with tease. These staccato exchanges consist of lines of less than six words that are set flush-left to the deepest indentation.

An extract from the chapter ‘Ronin of the Peace Park’ shows how the three levels of the Ronin narrative are used to avoid the need for inverted commas for direct speech. After setting fire to the Pond of Peace at the Peace Memorial Museum, Ronin is interrogated at a nearby police station. Ronin offers much trickery to the police and their interpreter, including the assertion that

Ronin returned to Japan by Ainu shaman. When the police interpreter claims that the Ainu are all gone, Ronin retorts that the bears are still there. The kabuki leper Oshima and several roamers waited in the Atomic bomb Dome ruins for Ronin.

Tosuto, shied by the envy of the other roamer mongrels, was a savage over a photograph of Hirohito.

Why the emperor?

Poetic justice.

By photographs?

Savaged in the ruins.

By a mongrel?

Yes, Tosuto.

Mongrel justice.

Tosuto, for some obscure reason barked, pounced, and stomped the picture of the emperor every time he crossed the circle. Maybe he lost relatives in the war, eaten by soldiers or abused by empire pedigrees. Hirohito was dismembered in the ruins by a ferocious mongrel.

Kitsutsuki once devoured the beaten, photographic remains of the emperor. Hirohito and the militarists aroused the lower pick of officers to abuse their soldiers. The emperor, by his divine, remote manner, deserted the hibakusha of Hiroshima. The empire was a wicked curse that haunted my mother.

Samurai traditions were obscure, the old masters were muted, and the emperor incited the cruelties of the war in his name. Rightly, you see, the emperor on his white horse is always underfoot in the

ruins of the Atomic Bomb Dome.<sup>94</sup>

There are three levels to the Ronin narrative. The first level of indentation carries the main thread of the external narrative, the second level of indentation tends to be the private speculation and commentary of Ronin, and here the third level is reserved for shorthand dialogue.

This treatment of an image of the Emperor is a sacrilegious adaptation of the *fumi-e* practice: ‘In 1629, as a measure in the suppression of Christianity, the Shogunate ordered the *fumi-e* (picture-trampling) ceremony to be enforced. A picture of Christ or the Madonna was placed on the ground and the people were made to trample one by one on it, those refusing or hesitating to do so being persecuted as believers in the forbidden faith.’<sup>95</sup> For postwar non-Japanese, the level of interwar respect demanded by portraits of their Majesties and the *Kyoiku ni kan suru Chokugo*, a transcription of an imperial proclamation about education widely known as the Rescript on Education, is almost incomprehensible.

The divinity of the Emperor meant that these representations of his presence had to be protected at all costs:

many tragic events occurred in which teachers lost their lives trying to save these objects from fire that special fireproof repositories (*hōanden*) were built either inside the school buildings or in the school yards. Even so they were guarded day and night by an “honor guard,” that is, a member of the staff or faculty who was expected to risk his or her life in order to prevent any harm whatsoever to the portraits or the rescript. The students were required on their arrival and their departure to always face in the direction of the repositories and pay obeisance. ... The customary manner of displaying the portraits (in boys’ schools only the

Emperor's portrait was displayed) was to have them hung on the wall at the back of the school platform behind heavy, velvet drapes which were ceremoniously drawn open at the proper moment for the very limited period during which obeisance was offered. (In some cases schools built special cabinets for their display which were placed on the auditorium platform for the ceremony with the portraits behind heavy drapes until time for their display.)<sup>96</sup>

The Emperor read from a prepared manuscript, and that proclamation was transcribed as the written Chokugo. Mass-produced copies of this written document were indistinguishable from the actual physical form of the Emperor. With such adhesive power, the imperial essence bound ideas, values and objects into a neat ideological configuration. Even at a disembodied distance, that cult of sacred Japanese-ness had enough power to temporarily constrain the licentious actions of Ronin inside the war booty stall of Yasukuni Shrine. With social practices of this intensity protecting imperial representations, clearly the Emperor was more than merely divine. The Emperor should have been the designated First Trickster. He migrated across the totems of Japanese material culture, before finally coming to rest as the mortal leader of the defeated nation, ready to take sole responsibility for the war effort.

The national education system transmitted and enforced the official standards of wartime Japanese-ness that were defined in *Kokutai no hongî* and these attitudes and values are still visible in certain segments of Japanese society. Vizenor has the purity of the imperial presence being desecrated by a dog of questionable origins. It would be hard to accept this canine attack on wartime Japanese sensibilities as light-hearted tease without the clarifying assistance of Manidoo Envoy.

Manidoo Envoy tells us that the surly war veteran Kitsutsuki is one of the roamers residing in Peace Park. Although the police consider the roamers to be street people who should disappear from the park when the peace tourists are present, 'Ronin celebrates the roamers as storiers. They are the actual natives of the peace park, the last *ronin* of a great samurai tradition.'<sup>97</sup> When Kitsutsuki performs in the kabuki *Rashōmon*, the death tally and war stories resemble a Japanese massacre near Sumatra:

Kitsutsuki was a lieutenant in the same division station on the island, but he was never indicted as a war criminal. Ronin learned that he was aware of many details of the massacre. But there were few survivors and no direct evidence that Kitsutsuki was involved in any atrocity. ... Ronin was not aware that the wounded lieutenant had been a suspected war criminal. Kitsutsuki could have been present when the nurses and soldiers, unarmed prisoners, were assassinated at Banka Island.<sup>98</sup>

There are two insults to photographic images of the Emperor in 'Ronin of the Peace Park.' These next two sentences following the wartime conventions for handling representations of the divine emperor: there is no distinction between the actual imperial body and its the symbolic investment in a disembodied object. The mongrel Tosuto dismembers Hirohito. Lieutenant Kitsutsuki, having presumably been bastardized by his superiors in addition to probably being traumatized by his presence at the Banka Island massacre, devours the beaten leftovers of the Emperor.

The violent consumption of these once-sacred images of imperial presence is a confronting challenge to the postwar self-presentation of Japanese harmony. What tempers this shock is the status of Lieutenant Kitsutsuki. As a consequence of being a loyal member of the imperial forces, he is aggressor and

victim. He stepped on a land mine and lost his right leg and an eye the day his wife and son perished in Hiroshima. His residential presence in the Peace Park as a returned soldier afflicted with PTSD invites individual sympathy. At the same time, his psychological condition can be interpreted as bearing the historical judgement of defeat. His imitation blue eye turns inwards as he slashes Hirohito.<sup>99</sup> A wooden-legged soldier who detests the absolute authority of the supreme leader of a divine nation, Kitsutsuki at least holds the courage of his convictions. The conscience of Kitsutsuki was the price paid by a nation vanquished: ‘He never mentioned the emperor in his stories, but he frowned, cracked his teeth, and turned his boot many times on the decapitated picture of Hirohito.’<sup>100</sup> Kitsutsuki stores his seven wooden legs, carved with the faces of Hiroshima victims, in the sacred ruins of the Atomic Bomb Dome. Such victims, along with Nagasaki residents, would have been spared their nuclear suffering by a speedier surrender.

### ***Hiroshima Bugi* as critique of Japan**

Identifying how *Hiroshima Bugi* critiques state Japanese-ness highlights the mischievous conduct of Ronin and offers an explanation for why he selects those specific locations targets. The very existence of Ronin as *ainoko-hafu*, a so-called love child who is half-Japanese, confuses the bureaucratic desire for neat identity and stable loyalty. Not white, not yellow, Ronin Browne was the product of the union of a Japanese boogie dancer and Nightbreaker, an Anishinaabe man. According to Manidoo Envoy, Nightbreaker as US Sergeant Orion Browne ‘worked with Major Fabion Bowers, the interpreter and assistant military secretary to General Douglas MacArthur, Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers.’<sup>101</sup> When she fell pregnant, Okichi disappeared without telling



Nightbreaker that he was going to be a father.

Samurai who were dismissed or had left their lords were called *ronin*. The nuance of *ronin* as masterless samurai is well-known in the west and is invoked by Ronin as he glides across the pronouns of first person and third person:

Ronin is my name, as you know, and he has no parents to hear his stories, no memorable contours, creases, or manner of silence at night. My name is wild, a nuclear orphan, a samurai warrior without a master to exact my loyalty. ...

My royal conception.

Ronin must be my name, an orphan of the ruins outside the imperial moat.<sup>102</sup>

The state of being without a master is conventionally regarded as being less than honourable, and hard versions of samurai code that suggested ritual disembowelment was preferable to the shame of being masterless. The ironic claim made by Ronin for his royal conception on the grassy moat that surrounds the Imperial Palace suggests no embarrassment, and Ronin reminds Japanese that their national capital was all but destroyed by fire-bombing.<sup>103</sup>

The playful mockeries of Ronin at the sacred sites of troublesome forms of Japanese identity are sometimes preceded by his pronouncement of some bald exposition that might anger more patriotic Japanese sensibilities: ‘The Yasukuni Jinja is dedicated to the more than two million warriors who died in domestic and foreign wars over the past century. The shrine was misused by the emperors and then by the militarists to unite the nation in colonial wars.’<sup>104</sup> From fact to judgement, Ronin moves from being informative to critical. Although being critical of such edifices of Japanese-ness is risky territory, hafu

Ronin is sacrilegious as he transgresses the sacred trinity of Japanese ethnicity, language and culture. As a trickster he deliberately manipulates the insider-outsider distinction to escape sanction, creating perfect memories from the opportunities provided by chance encounters.

The Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum is one venue for the postwar critique of Japanese-ness by a masterless fighter for truth, gunned up with fake sincerity and irony. Consider the response of students who trail Ronin, having witnessed him pouring corrosive chemicals over the peace letters that have been etched into metal:

Suddenly, the students surrounded the bench and pointed at my clothes, goggles and rubber gloves. The police listened to their stories, and then laughed at me. I was recognized as a nuisance, a park roamer, and a police maniac, but not a criminal. The students were unnerved by the humorous response to their accusation. They were meekly apologetic.

I was a warrior, a hafu ronin of the atomic ruins, and my pose as a buffoon was a perfect disguise.<sup>105</sup>

Ronin does have a political agenda as he sets fire to the Pond of Peace that extends beyond his parodic renaming of periods of Japanese history. In softer versions of sacred Japanese chronology, it is conventional to align time with the current imperial ruler. The document authorizing the delegation of the authority to the sign the Instrument of Surrender is dated as the twentieth year of Shōwa. A shriller dating invokes the unbroken imperial lineage by rendering the same year as the two thousand six hundred and fifth year from the Accession of the Emperor Zinmu.

Ronin resets the periodization of Japanese history by making the ground zero of Hiroshima the start of a new era of Japanese-ness:

Atomu 57 on my calendar of fake peace. This is my promissory time, eight fifteen, my gate of giveaway souls. And my rites of passage in the ruins of the Atomic Bomb Dome. Remember the abundant reign of the emperor in the era of nuclear peace. The ghost parade is my tricky empire of Rashomon Gate.<sup>106</sup>

Ronin links the illusory harmony of nuclear peace with imperial chronology. After the Empire of Japan was consumed by the wartime austerity of ‘Luxury is the enemy’, it was reborn through the postwar prosperity of the Shōwa era, as the State of Japan. The Emperor of the age of the so-called enlightened harmony saw the rise and fall of a totalitarian relationship between the politically powerful who govern and those underneath them who are governed. The same man relinquished his status as a living god at the end of the Fifteen Year War as his country experienced the material benefits of becoming part of an American empire of commerce and global military presence.

The architecture of the Peace Memorial Park shares this same trajectory from ultranationalist excess to enshrining atomic victimry that was experienced by the Shōwa emperor. The architect Tange Kenzō won the public competition held in Occupation Japan, 1949.

According to Inoue [Shōichi], the park’s stylistic origin can be traced back to a nearly identical ground plan that had been adopted three years before Japan’s surrender as part of a grand imperial vision, the Commemorative Building Project for the Construction of Greater East Asia (*daitō kensetsu kinen eizō keikaku*). ... For the 1942 competition that took place while Japan was in the midst of war, Tange proposed a grandiose Shintoist memorial zone to be built on an open plain at the foot of Mount Fuji. ... With the collapse of Japan’s empire that followed defeat

by the Allied Forces and, more important, by anti-imperial resistance against Japan in Asia and the Pacific, Tange's 1942 plan was forever aborted. Yet the majestic space that he envisioned as monumentalizing the concept of the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity appears to have been revived in his 1949 postwar design; it was subsequently realized in 1954, albeit at much-reduced scale, with the completion of Hiroshima's Peace Memorial Park. ... Whether within mainstream national historiography, which remembers Hiroshima's atomic bombing at victimization experienced by the Japanese collectivity, or in the equally pervasive, more universalistic narrative on the bombing that records it as having been an unprecedented event in the history of humanity, Hiroshima memories have been predicated on the grave obfuscation of the prewar Japanese Empire, its colonial practices, and their consequences.<sup>107</sup>

The historical vision of Ronin is not seduced by claims for Japanese particularity or expressions of global humanism. Every morning at 8:15, the time the 'Little Boy' bomb was detonated above Hiroshima, the shadow of Ronin is cast under the gate of atomic destruction. Instead of the annual ritual of August 6 organised by the municipal government of Hiroshima for the global media, Ronin attends a daily commemoration of the thousands of children sacrificed at Hiroshima. In this circle in the ruins where the ghosts of the innocent appear with the shadows of empire, Ronin rattles the closet of history, resurrecting victims and aggressors: 'The children of incineration, and the white bones of an empire war, arise in a nuclear kabuki theater'.<sup>108</sup>

The atomic dust is blown off the shamed colonial skeleton as it is brought into unprotected public view. Ronin asserts 'Memory is our gate.'<sup>109</sup> This shared point of entry is the Atomic Bomb Dome as the Rashōmon of Ronin. Japan as

nuclear victim, and imperial Japan as a once-aspiring nuclear aggressor, both tales deserve equal air-time.

But what would Ronin do in *Atomu 67*, when confronted by the tsunami chaos and meltdown dangers of post-Fukushima Japan?<sup>110</sup> Perhaps the initial shock of grief would be tempered by the discovery of a deeper sense of the Japanese-Native American connection. Instead of *Atomu 57* Ronin hinting that his mother Okichi might have been an Ainu woman, the *Bugi 67* would reveal that Nightbreaker was related to the Zumi tribe whose heritage included the arrival of late thirteenth century travelers from Japan.<sup>111</sup> Guided by perfect memories that existed outside of time, Zumi ancestors move towards Minnesota homelands, the White Earth Reservation, and Hotel Manidoo. Against this background of the circular pulse of indigeneity, Ronin would also engage the outcomes of explicitly contemporary events.

Recent re-assessments of interwar history would change the angle of attack Ronin would might employ at institutions such as Yasukuni Shrine, assuming that Manidoo Envoy had been updating his library collection. Instead of the notion that the war criminals deceptively led an innocent population towards the colonial excesses and tragedies of the Fifteen Year War, if armed with the knowledge that Japanese citizens willingly participated in the systematic improvement of jingoistic propaganda,<sup>112</sup> Ronin might create opportunities for the creation of perfect memories closer to the everyday experience of Japanese by avoiding the high shrines of nationalist fervour. Early postwar interpretations of the Japanese Constitution emphasise the imposition of American assumptions on the defeated nation.<sup>113</sup> A single viewing of 'Eiga Nippon Koku Kenpō' would reveal to Ronin that the angry response of nationalists to the mention of the Constitution in *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57* are ill-informed acts of self-decep-

tion, fueled by the need to absolve complicit citizens from collective war guilt by assuming the pose of defeated victim.<sup>114</sup>

Japan, the former atomic bomb victim, angered neighbouring countries by releasing contaminated water into the ocean without prior consultation in April 2011. The level of material destruction, the history of taxpayer-funded deception of Japanese residents by the nuclear power industry, and the emotional scars worn as invisible tattoos by survivors, all this turpitude calls for on-the-ground activists who can go the narrative distance. The preferred model would be the sustained work of Gerald Vizenor in his communities, not the fly-jin flits of Ronin which recall the simulations served up by kitschyman Dennis Banks.<sup>115</sup>

Manidoo Envoy, your time has come.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> The mockumentary film *The Great Rock 'n' Roll Swindle* (1980) was directed by Julien Temple.

<sup>2</sup> Karl G. Heider, 'The Rashomon Effect: When Ethnographers Disagree', *American Anthropologist* New Series, vol. 90, no. 1 (March, 1988), pp. 73–81.

See also Allan Mazur, *A hazardous inquiry: the Rashomon effect at Love Canal* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998), p. 4: 'Which version is correct? Each participant tells the incident in a way that justifies his or her own behavior while casting blame on the others. This occurs so often in real life that sociologists speak of the *Rashomon* effect when people give inconsistent accounts of the same situation, and each person's account suits that person's interests and the position he or she wants to defend.'

For 'The Ogre of Rashomon', see Yei Theodora Ozaki, *The Japanese Fairy Book* (Whitefish: Kessinger Publishing, 2004), pp. 262–272.

<sup>3</sup> Keiko I. McDonald, *From book to screen: modern Japanese literature in film* (Armonk: M. E. Sharpe, 2000), p. 47.

<sup>4</sup> Akutagawa Ryūnosuke (Jay Rubin, trans. & ed.), *Rashōmon and seventeen other stories: Ryūnosuke Akutagawa* (London: Penguin, 2006), p. 237.

- <sup>5</sup> Rubin, *Rashōmon*, pp. xliii, pp. 237 – 238.
- <sup>6</sup> Gerald Vizenor, *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2003), p. 15.
- <sup>7</sup> Gerald Vizenor, *Native Liberty: Natural Reason and Cultural Survivance* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009), p. 269.
- <sup>8</sup> Gerald Vizenor, 'The ruins of representation: shadow survivance and the literature of dominance', *American Indian Quarterly*, vol. 17, no. 1 (1993), pp. 7, 8 – 9.
- <sup>9</sup> Vizenor, *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57*, p. 105.
- <sup>10</sup> Glosses and accounts of the etymological history of survivance are featured in this edited collection: Gerald Vizenor (ed.), *Survivance: Narratives of Native Presence* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2008).
- <sup>11</sup> Vizenor, *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57*, p. 118.
- <sup>12</sup> Vizenor, *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57*, p. 187.
- <sup>13</sup> Vizenor, *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57*, p. 105. Ota Yuko (1906 – 1963) finally published *Shikabane no machi* in 1948 after passages critical of America were censored: 'Soon after the Allied occupation forces entered Japan, however, a press code was imposed by the General Headquarters of the Allied Power (GHQ) on September 19, 1945. The press code was putatively intended to promote "public tranquility" and to prevent "mistrust or resentment" of Allied troops, but it was, in fact, specifically used to prohibit publication and dissemination of all reports, commentaries, and treatises on atomic-bomb damages, including even those on medical treatment of bomb-related injuries and illnesses. Thus the Japanese people were denied access to details of the atomic disasters until the signing of the San Francisco Peace Treaty in September 1951 brought an end to press censorship.' Toyoda Toshiyuki, 'Japan's Policies since 1945', *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, August 1985, p. 57.
- <sup>14</sup> Jacques Derrida, *Writing and Difference*, trans. Alan Bass. (London: Taylor and Francis e-Library, 2005), p. 360.
- <sup>15</sup> Interview comments made by Vizenor are cited to support the argument for an active and engaged reader. Kimberly M. Blaeser, *Gerald Vizenor: Writing in the Oral Tradition* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996), p. 37.
- <sup>16</sup> Manidoo Envoy explains the trope of the blue cravat: 'Ronin told us, as his father had years earlier, that their ancestors in the fur trade wore blue to entice women, a practice learned from stories about the wise bower birds who decorate their elaborate nests with something blue. The color is an avian aphrodisiac. Fur traders sold blue cravats to the natives, and the myth endures.' Vizenor, *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57*, p. 8.
- <sup>17</sup> Kelley E. Rowley (Blackfoot Nation), 'Re-inscribing mythopoetic vision in Native American Studies', *American Indian Quarterly*, vol. 26, no. 3 (2002), p. 499.
- <sup>18</sup> For example, the crudely formal but pretentious chairman of a literature department

- has his lack of irony tested by the Ronin demonstration of absolutely pure blood: 'I faced the chairman, crouched right over his rice bowl, and shouted at him to inspect my pure hafu body for any inauthentic tattoos or racial tags of weakness. I allowed adequate time for his review, and then turned around, my pure ass directly over the remains of his meal, and presented my back for a tattoo inspection. The room was cold, and, of course, my tattoos were invisible.' Vizenor, *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57*, p. 130.
- <sup>19</sup> 'I assured the roamers that we were evermore secure in the nuclear ruins, and more so because the police named me a maniac. The police would never believe my confessions, stories, or perfect memories in the ruins.' Vizenor, *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57*, p. 46. As Ronin predicted, the police later reject the account of student witnesses who testify about the Ronin the vandal (p. 84).
- <sup>20</sup> Paula Gunn Allen, *The Sacred Hoop: Recovering the Feminine in American Indian Traditions* (Boston: Beacon, 1992), 116.
- <sup>21</sup> Manidoo Envoy reports that there was critical sensibility at work here: 'the obscure, erotic touch of two lovers was more memorable than the abstract and deceptive notions of peace.' Vizenor, *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57*, p. 133.
- <sup>22</sup> Vizenor, *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57*, p. 121.
- <sup>23</sup> Gerald Vizenor and A. Robert Lee, *Postindian conversations* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1999), p. 98.
- <sup>24</sup> 'Actually, she knew his signature was faked. The author was dead more than two generations before my edition was published, but she appreciated my connection to the author and my imagination of his stories.' Vizenor, *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57*, p. 179.
- <sup>25</sup> Vizenor, *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57*, p. 187.
- <sup>26</sup> Vizenor, *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57*, pp. 76, 202.
- <sup>27</sup> 'Miko mailed the three boxes of notes, scenes, and seven ledger books to me at the Hotel Manidoo.' Vizenor, *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57*, p. 206.
- <sup>28</sup> Vizenor, *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57*, p. 118.
- <sup>29</sup> 'Chrysanthemums tease my mother, wears print dress, giant showy flowers, conceives me near imperial moat, she was obedient to emperor. She honored chrysanthemum crown and abandoned me for racist war criminal, emperor. Tattoos, empire ironies, hafu native fugitive.' Vizenor, *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57*, p. 199. See also p. 109.
- <sup>30</sup> Vizenor, *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57*, p. 194.
- <sup>31</sup> Vizenor, *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57*, p. 24.
- <sup>32</sup> Vizenor, *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57*, p. 206.
- <sup>33</sup> Vizenor, *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57*, p. 208.
- <sup>34</sup> Vizenor and Lee, *Postindian conversations*, p. 145. The way he tells it, from the beginning, Almost Browne was never short of a tease.  
'Almost the whole truth:



Almost is my name, my real name, believe that or not, because my father ran out of money and then out of gas on the way back. I was almost born in the back seat of a beatup reservation car, almost white, almost on the reservation, and almost a real person.' Gerald Vizenor, *Shadow Distance: A Gerald Vizenor Reader* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 1994), p. 111.

<sup>35</sup> Ronin includes a correction to his account by Gingko who denies being where Ronin said she was: 'Ronin, that was some other woman.' Vizenor, *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57*, p. 198.

<sup>36</sup> Vizenor, *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57*, pp. 179, 184, 187.

<sup>37</sup> Vizenor, *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57*, p. 200. Although *Kanadehon Chūshingura* is a dramatization of the historical revenge of the death of their master Asano Naganori (1667–1701) by forty-seven ronin, by transforming the masterless samurai into mongrel dogs, Vizenor unleashes sly mischief into the history of recent Japanese literature: 'Mishima licks his crotch on stage.' Vizenor, *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57*, p. 201.

<sup>38</sup> Vizenor, *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57*, p. 201.

<sup>39</sup> Vizenor, *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57*, p. 202.

<sup>40</sup> Vizenor, *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57*, p. 203.

<sup>41</sup> Vizenor, *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57*, p. 202.

<sup>42</sup> 'The Ainu do have a history of tattooing, but the "invisible tattoos" that Ronin learns how to create are Vizenor's own fiction.' Jeanne Sokolowski, 'Between dangerous extremes: victimization, ultranationalism, and identity performance in Gerald Vizenor's *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57*', *American Quarterly*, vol. 62, no. 3, (2010), p. 737. 'The Ainu warriors taught me how to create invisible tattoos, and they gave me a small container of their invisible tattoo infusion, a secret concoction of pollen, beeswax, and pumice.' Vizenor, *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57*, p. 101. Although purists might pause at this intervention in indigenous knowledge of Hokkaido by a former member of the Occupation, the invention of this tradition by an Ainu outsider can be read as further evidence of the indigenous brotherhood that spanned the Pacific. Given the disastrous effect of manifest manners on indigenous traditions, the invention of tradition is a more dynamic option than nostalgic attempts to reclaim lost pasts.

<sup>43</sup> Gerald Vizenor, in Vizenor and Lee, *Postindian conversations*, p. 145.

<sup>44</sup> Vizenor, *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57*, p. 62.

<sup>45</sup> Naoki Sakai, *Translation and Subjectivity: On 'Japan' and Cultural Nationalism* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), p. 99.

<sup>46</sup> Mark Driscoll, *Absolute Erotic, Absolute Grotesque: The Living, Dead, and Undead in Japan's Imperialism, 1895–1945* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010). Given that the Japanese referred to the Fifteen Year War, the beginning of the third element of this lethal chronology could be interpreted with some latitude.

<sup>47</sup> Peter N. Dale, *The Myth of Japanese Uniqueness* (New York: St Martin, 1991).

<sup>48</sup> Vizenor, *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57*, p. 113.

On the question of ‘volunteering’, see Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney, *Kamikaze, Cherry Blossoms, and Nationalisms: The Militarization of Aesthetics in Japanese History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006). For details of the cosmopolitan reading habits of these student conscripts during a time of national chauvinism, see Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney, *Kamikaze Diaries: Reflections of Japanese Student Soldiers* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006).

<sup>49</sup> Gyōsei, *Jitsuroku Shōwa shi: Gekidō no kiseki*, [Actual Records of Shōwa History: Locus of Violent Shaking], vol. 1 (Tōkyō: Gyōsei, 1987), pp. 70–71.

<sup>50</sup> Gyōsei, *Jitsuroku Shōwa shi: Gekidō no kiseki*, p. 110.

<sup>51</sup> Gyōsei, *Jitsuroku Shōwa shi: Gekidō no kiseki*, vol. 2, pp. 39, 47–49. The contemporary character for sakura is 桜. Blood Allies Sakura Group is a literal translation of 血盟桜花団. The ‘Let’s die!’ leader of 死のう団 was 江川忠治, a public employee working at the office of Tokyo Municipal Electricity. He changed his name from 忠治 to 桜堂.

<sup>52</sup> Inoguchi Rikihei and Nakajima Tadashi, *Kamikaze Tokubetsu Kōgekitai*, [Kamikaze Special Attack Units], (Tōkyō: Nippon Shuppan Kyōdō Kabushiki Kaisha, 1951), pp. 272–276.

<sup>53</sup> Arthur J. Marder, Mark Jacobsen and John Horsfield, *Old Friends, New Enemies: The Royal Navy and the Imperial Japanese Navy, 1942–1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), p. 398.

<sup>54</sup> Muranaga Kaoru, *Chiran Tokubetsu Kōgekitai*, [Special Attack Units of Chiran], (Kagoshima: Japlan Books, 1989), p. 46 [my translation]. On the relationship between the genre of kamikaze film and the politics of the collective, see the second chapter of Isolde Standish, *Myth and Masculinity in the Japanese Cinema: Towards a Political Reading of the ‘Tragic Hero’* (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press, 2000).

<sup>55</sup> Although debates around the Japanese atomic bomb program require cautious assessment, the wartime documentary evidence does suggest that Japan was funding the development of nuclear devices. Robert K. Wilcox, *Japan’s Secret War: Japan’s race against time to build its own atomic bomb* (New York: Marlowe, 1995).

For a more recent overview of the Allied project at Los Alamos and network of espionage that underpinned the British-Canadian-US program and the German, Japanese and Soviet races to build atomic weapons, see Jim Baggott, *Atomic: the first war of physics and the secret history of the atom bomb 1939–49* (London: Icon, 2009).

For German-Japanese cooperation, see Barry R. Schneider, *Future war and counterproliferation: U.S. Military responses to NBC proliferation threats* (Westport: Praeger, 1999), pp. 150–151.

Joseph Mark Scalia, *Germany’s last mission to Japan: the sinister voyage of U-234*

(Barnsley: Chatham, 2000).

For details of Japan's atomic program and chemical and biological weapons tested on Chinese people, see David C. Earhart, *Certain victory: images of World War II in the Japanese media* (Armonk: M. E. Sharpe, 2008), pp. 475, 490 ff.

For Yukawa Hideki, see Nobel Foundation, *Nobel Lectures, Physics 1942–1962* (Singapore: World Scientific Publishing, 1998), pp. 123–135.

For a discussion of the reservations and resistance of Japanese scientists, see Andrew Jon Rotter, *Hiroshima: the world's bomb* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 65–69.

For the idea that military defeat did nothing to change Japan, see Murakami Haruki's comment from the September 1994 issue of *Marco Polo*, p. 48: 'Peel back a layer of skin, and what do we find breathing and pulsating there but the same old sealed national system or ideology.' Quoted in Jay Rubin, *Haruki Murakami and the Music of Words* (London: Harvill, 2002), p. 224. For scenes of Yasukuni Shrines as a battleground between right wing ultra-nationalists and pacifist survivors of war-dead see the 2001 documentary directed by Matsui Minoru 'Japanese Devils', aka 'Ribben Guizi' or 「日本鬼子」.

<sup>56</sup> Robert King Hall, 'Editor's Introduction', in John Owen Gauntlett (trans.), *Kokutai no Hongi: Cardinal Principles of the National Entity of Japan* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1949), p. 36.

<sup>57</sup> The expression Bush War II is taken from 'We don't stop' from the Michael Franti album *Everyone Deserves Music* (2003): 'World war one, two, three and four/ Chemical weapons, biological war/ Bush war one and Bush war two/ They gotta a war for me, they gotta a war for you'. The 1990 Persian Gulf War (aka Operation Desert Storm) was Bush War One: George Bush (senior). The 2003 Iraq War (aka the second Gulf War) was Bush War Two: George Bush (junior). In the aftermath of 9/11, the word 'patriot' entered conservative political discourse in north America. Being regarded as unpatriotic recalls the House Committee on Un-American Activities (1938–1975), and is an obvious parallel with the dangers of being tagged by the *hi-kokumin teki* label in interwar Japan.

<sup>58</sup> Vizenor, *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57*, p. 117. He later corrects himself by supplying the accurate date on page 158.

According to the homepage of Yasukuni Shrine: 'The origin of Yasukuni Shrine is Shokonsha established at Kudan in Tokyo in the second year of the Meiji era (1869) by the will of the Emperor Meiji. In 1879, it was renamed Yasukuni Shrine. When the Emperor Meiji visited Tokyo Shokonsha for the first time on January 27 in 1874, he composed a poem; "I assure those of you who fought and died for your country that your names will live forever at this shrine in Musashino". As can be seen in this poem,

Yasukuni Shrine was established to commemorate and honor the achievement of those who dedicated their precious lives for their country. The name “Yasukuni,” given by the Emperor Meiji represents wishes for preserving peace of the nation.’ <http://www.yasukuni.or.jp/english/about/index.html>

<sup>59</sup> Vizenor, *Native Liberty*, p. 270.

<sup>60</sup> Vizenor, *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57*, p. 153. The previous page catalogues the kitsch wares the shrine maiden is selling: ‘The counter was stacked with simulated war trinkets, plastic samurai swords, books, tee shirts, photographs of the emperor, kamikaze pilots, war criminals, kokka hata, or national flags, propaganda, and other museum memorabilia. The most popular book sold at the booth was The Alleged “Nanking Massacre.” ’

<sup>61</sup> John Owen Gauntlett (trans.), *Kokutai no Hongi: Cardinal Principles of the National Entity of Japan* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1949), p. 78.

<sup>62</sup> Gauntlett, *Kokutai no Hongi*, p. 129.

<sup>63</sup> Gauntlett, *Kokutai no Hongi*, p. 91.

<sup>64</sup> These synonyms for Japan and their renditions into English come from the second of seven appendixes. Gauntlett, *Kokutai no Hongi*, p. 189.

<sup>65</sup> Vizenor, *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57*, p. 206.

<sup>66</sup> Vizenor, *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57*, p. 36.

<sup>67</sup> Vizenor, ‘The ruins of representation’, p. 25.

<sup>68</sup> Amanda Nettelbeck, ‘Notes towards an Introduction’, in Heather Kerr and Amanda Nettelbeck (eds), *The space between: Australian women writing fictocriticism*, Nedlands: University of Western Australia Press, 1998, pp. 3–4. The definition continues: ‘It is writing that brings the ‘creative’ and the ‘critical’ together—not simply in the sense of placing them side by side, but in the sense of mutating both, of bringing a spotlight to bear upon the known forms in order to make them ‘say’ something else. ... The effect of the fictocritical (or, in Krauss’s terms, the paraliterary) text is twofold: it creates the critical text as something other than a hermeneutical exercise (spilling as it does continually into the features of fiction), and it suggests that the critical text can be used to *do* something other than explication (since, rather than being the filter through which the ‘primary’ text is read, both become part of a single device for the generation of a new kind of text).’

Caroline Small recalls that ‘In 1980, the ground-breaking art critic Rosalind Krauss was invited by the *Partisan Review* to respond to a panel called “The Effects of Critical Theories on Practical Criticism, Cultural Journalism, and Reviewing.” In her response, Krauss posited that criticism is a species of the paraliterary, a species described as a ‘space of debate, quotation, partisanship, betrayal, reconciliation, but not the space of unity, coherence, or resolution that we think of as constituting the work of literature.’

Caroline Small, 'Best American Comics Criticism Roundtable: Won't the Real Lit-Comics Critics Please Stand Up?', <http://www.tcj.com/>, accessed Oct. 23 2010.

For her own explanation of the paraliterary, see Rosalind Krauss, 'Poststructuralism and the "Paraliterary"', *October*, vol. 13, (1980), pp. 36–40.

<sup>69</sup> Vizenor, *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57*, p. 83.

<sup>70</sup> Katrina Schlunke, *Bluff Rock: Autobiography of a Massacre* (Fremantle: Fremantle Arts Centre Press, 2005), p. 16. When Schlunke later asks about the utility of bad tourism (Does it make good history?), she comments on notes made by Col Newsome after his 1981 poem, 'Massacre of Aborigines at Bluff Rock 1844'. She comments:

I read it like a long-titled, overrun haiku:

*American districts don't hide their history  
of aboriginal massacres*

They exaggerate them.  
And the tourists love them.  
Particularly  
the children.

Schlunke, *Bluff Rock*, p. 131. The notion of narrative excess proposed by Schlunke is particularly relevant to *Hiroshima Bugi*. For example, pp. 55–62. There is a story about a play. The storyteller appears in the play as a shadow. The play written by someone other than the author. The play is performed in the dream of the storyteller. This story of the play then resonates as part of a larger story, teasing us with the spectacle of absence as presence.

<sup>71</sup> Linda Lizut Helstern, 'Theories of Survivance in *From Sand Creek and Hiroshima Bugi*', in Gerald Vizenor (ed.) *Survivance: Narratives of Native Presence* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2008), p. 180. Although Helstern develops a distinction between Deep Memory and Perfect Memory on pages 164–166, the following page 166 gloss is most relevant to *Hiroshima Bugi*: 'The very name Perfect Memory, like any trickster story, is ironic and underscores the fact that memories change in light of subsequent experiences, personal and cultural. "Facts" are displaced again and again in our memories through the very process of living, and Perfect Memory reflects this displacement, although when viewed according to the common misconception that the facts of history are unalterable, it appears closer kin to imagination than memory.'

<sup>72</sup> 'Miko mailed these original literary shards and ledger notebooks to me in several tattered cardboard boxes. Nothing was organized, dated, or in any obvious order, except that the remnants were in layers by paper size, but the notes and scenes were not directly related one to the other.' Vizenor, *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57*, p. 118.

<sup>73</sup> One version of critical media literacy asserts that students should be able to answer four questions about any media text:

‘1. How is the text designed, why is it designed this way, and how else could it have been designed?

2. How are texts of this sort produced, and in what ways are they likely to be interpreted and used?

3. What does this text indicate about the media order of discourse?

4. What wider sociocultural processes is this text a part of, what are its wider social conditions, and what are its likely effects? ... We might add to the four questions so far a fifth question suggested in Luke et al. (1994) :

5. *What can be done about this text?*’

Norman Fairclough, *Media Discourse* (London: Edward Arnold, 1995), pp. 202–203 [emphasis in original].

Certain forms of literary scholarship confine themselves to the first two sections of Fairclough’s Question 1. The justification for this additional move of imagining an alternative *Hiroshima Bugi* comes from the 2010 invitation of Jeanne Sokolowski. As authors who have been criticized by reviewers for not reading a certain book or developing one particular line of argument rather than another know only too well, this gesture of responding to what has not been written is hardly new. Given the antics of the trickster trope, making this additional move creates an imaginary but deeper dialog with *Hiroshima Bugi* than might be possible with our voices from the academy.

<sup>74</sup> Sokolowski, ‘Between dangerous extremes’, p. 732.

<sup>75</sup> ‘My personal library, a considerable collection of books about the history, literature and theater of Japan, aroused his interest in me as trustee, and he wanted his stories to be associated with his father and the perfect memories of our survivance at the Hotel Manidoo.’ Vizenor, *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57*, p. 9.

<sup>76</sup> See, for example, James M. Acton, Mark Hibbs, ‘Why Fukushima Was Preventable’, Carnegie Paper, March 2012.

<http://carnegieendowment.org/2012/03/06/why-fukushima-was-preventable/a0i7>

<sup>77</sup> The work of Michael Taussig is important for clarifying the nature of a fictocritical reflexivity that drives these new writing strategies to do more than make learned pronouncements on possible interpretations of literary texts. In some versions of fictocritical writing, the reflexive turn continues to be regarded as a gesture that folds back on the subjectivity of the researcher-critic: ‘Fictocriticism is a style of writing that explores and presents positionality. That is, it is a style of writing that is about the self, but it problematises the self as a subject at the same time as it speaks the self.’ Jenny Weight, ‘The future of meaning’, <http://mmp.adc.rmit.edu.au/?cat=29>

However, Taussig extends the politics of textual representation to offer another possi-

bility beyond the contested turf of position: ‘I had wanted to write from within instead of standing outside pointing. This is not such autobiography or what is sometimes called “self-reflexiveness,” though there is plenty of that and necessarily so because the anthropologist is inevitably a part of the reality analyzed. It is more like having the reality depicted turn back on the writing, rather than on the writer, and ask for a fair shake. “What have you learned?” the reality asks of the writing. “What remains as an excess than can’t be assimilated and what are you going to do with the gift I bestow, I who am such strange stuff?” ’

Michael Taussig, *Walter Benjamin's Grave* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), pp. vii–viii.

<sup>78</sup> Tim Cross, ‘Rikyū has left the tearoom: national cinema interrogates the anecdotal legend’, in Morgan Pitelka, (ed.) *Japanese Tea Culture: Art, History and Practice* (New York: Routledge Curzon, 2003), pp. 151–183.

Tim Cross, ‘Performing Hakata: Yamakasa and Sōsaku Noh’, *Fukuoka University Review of Literature and Humanities*, vol. 39, no. 2 (2007), pp. 367–407. Available online [http://www.adm.fukuoka-u.ac.jp/fu844/home2/Ronso/Jinbun/L39-2/L3902\\_0367.pdf](http://www.adm.fukuoka-u.ac.jp/fu844/home2/Ronso/Jinbun/L39-2/L3902_0367.pdf)

Tim Cross, ‘Fictocritical Hakata: Yamakasa Ethos as Corporeal Tradition’, *Fukuoka University Review of Literature and Humanities*, vol. 39, no. 3 (2007), pp. 581–629. Available online

[http://www.adm.fukuoka-u.ac.jp/fu844/home2/Ronso/Jinbun/L39-3/L3903\\_0581.pdf](http://www.adm.fukuoka-u.ac.jp/fu844/home2/Ronso/Jinbun/L39-3/L3903_0581.pdf)

Tim Cross, *The Ideologies of Japanese Tea: Subjectivity, Transience and National Identity* (Folkestone: Global Oriental, 2009).

In the following sentence, the relevant character for *shinji* is 神事.

<sup>79</sup> Anthony Easthope, *Englishness and National Culture* (London: Routledge, 1999), p. 228.

<sup>80</sup> Sokolowski, ‘Between dangerous extremes’, p. 718.

<sup>81</sup> Julia Yonetani, ‘The ‘History Wars’ in Comparative Perspective: Australia and Japan’, *Cultural Studies Review*, vol. 10, no. 2 (2004), pp. 33–50.

<sup>82</sup> The Japanese premier of ‘Kanyini’ was funded by the Japan Foundation. ‘Kanyini’ was screened twice at Nokonoshima Kōminkan on Saturday November 3 2007 by Noko Eiga Circle. Bob Randall spoke between the two screenings of the film. The following day Dorothea Randall led a dance workshop, after which one of the Japanese participants expressed her gratitude by saying ‘Thank you for bringing the spirits down to our island.’ Director Melanie Hogan led a film-making workshop at Across Fukuoka on Friday November 2 2007. I continue to be a member of the organizing committee of Noko Eiga Circle.

<sup>83</sup> Benjamin D. Carson, ‘Ainu and Anishinaabe Stories of Survivance: Shigeru Kayano, Katsuichi Honda, and Gerald Vizenor’, *Journal of East Asian Cultural Interaction Stud-*

ies, no. 2 (2009), p. 444. See also Brett L. Walker, *The Conquest of Ainu Lands: Ecology and Culture in Japanese Expansion, 1590–1800* (Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 2001).

Shigeru Kayano, *Our Land was a forest: An Ainu Memoir* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1994).

<sup>84</sup> Sidney C. H. Cheung, 'Photographing the Ainu and the Emperor: Modernity in Meiji Japan', *CUHK Journal of Humanities*, no. 1 (1997), pp. 254–255, 266.

<sup>85</sup> Gabrielle Lorraine Fletcher, 'Slight Anthropologies', *Cultural Studies Review*, vol. 13, no. 2 (2007), p. 11.

For a close reading of 'Slight Anthropologies' as fictocritical writing, see Tim Cross, 'Introducing Fictocriticism: Writing Reflexivities of History, Culture and Subjectivity', *Fukuoka University Review of Literature & Humanities*, vol. 39, no. 4 (2011), pp. 1061–1113.

[http://www.adm.fukuoka-u.ac.jp/fu844/home2/Ronso/Jinbun/L42-4/L4204\\_01061.pdf](http://www.adm.fukuoka-u.ac.jp/fu844/home2/Ronso/Jinbun/L42-4/L4204_01061.pdf)

<sup>86</sup> Roy Starrs, 'Lafcadio Hearn as Japanese Nationalist', *Japan Review*, no. 18 (2006), p. 183.

<sup>87</sup> Lafcadio Hearn, *Japan: An Attempt at Interpretation* (New York: ICG Muse, 2001 [1904]), p. 416. For an account of the marriage from the perspective of Koizumi Setsu, see Yoji Hasegawa, *A Walk in Kumamoto: The Life and Times of Setsu Koizumi, Lafcadio Hearn's Japanese Wife* (Folkestone: Global Oriental, 1997).

<sup>88</sup> Starrs, 'Lafcadio Hearn as Japanese Nationalist', p. 181.

<sup>89</sup> Carson, 'Ainu and Anishinaabe Stories of Survivance', p. 443.

<sup>90</sup> 'We should probably not make too much of the fact that Hearn became a Japanese citizen in 1895, as apparently he did it more for practical than for patriotic reasons: namely, to ensure that his Japanese wife and children would inherit his property after his death. (Had he remained a British citizen, his property could have been claimed by his British relatives or by his former American wife—another legacy of the unequal treaties that had been imposed on Japan by the Western powers.) Nonetheless, the fact that Hearn was a Japanese citizen and adopted a Japanese name must certainly have had some psychological effect on him over the years, enabling him all the more to feel like an insider.' Starrs, 'Lafcadio Hearn as Japanese Nationalist', p. 206.

<sup>91</sup> Vizenor, *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu* 57, p. 202.

<sup>92</sup> Vizenor, *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu* 57, p. 203.

<sup>93</sup> Vizenor, *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu* 57, p. 69.

<sup>94</sup> Vizenor, *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu* 57, pp. 45–46.

<sup>95</sup> John Henry Wigmore, *Law and justice in Tokugawa Japan: materials for the history of Japanese law and justice under the Tokugawa Shogunate 1603–1867*, Volume 7 (To-



kyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1969), p. 13.

<sup>96</sup> William P. Woodard, *The Allied Occupation of Japan 1945–1952 and Japanese Religions* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1972), pp. 166–167.

<sup>97</sup> Vizenor, *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57*, p. 50.

<sup>98</sup> Vizenor, *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57*, p. 52.

<sup>99</sup> Vizenor, *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57*, p. 56.

<sup>100</sup> Vizenor, *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57*, p. 57.

<sup>101</sup> Vizenor, *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57*, p. 22. The genealogy of the Browne family extends beyond the limit of this paper, and includes the novel *Hotline healers: an Almost Browne novel*: ‘Almost Browne ... was almost born on a reservation. He is the son of Eternal Flame Browne, a native nun who renounced the convent and established a scapahouse on the barony. The narrator is the son of Father Mother Browne, a native priest who was once invested as a member of the Flat Earth Society in North Dakota. He returned to the reservation, renounced the priesthood, and opened a tavern named the Last Lecture. So the first person voice in *Hotline Healers* is Almost Browne’s cousin, and he is almost a brother.’ Gerald Vizenor, in Vizenor and Lee, *Postindian conversations*, p. 145.

<sup>102</sup> Vizenor, *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57*, p. 15.

<sup>103</sup> Professor Magdi Ragheb of the University of Illinois Nuclear, Plasma and Radiological Engineering (NPRES) Department makes some rough calculations to compare the impact of nuclear and conventional bombing on Hiroshima, Nagasaki and Tokyo. The atomic bombing of Hiroshima resulted in 70,000 immediate deaths and persons whose whereabouts was unknown, and 70,000 injured people. In Nagasaki the respective figures were 36,000 people dead and missing and 40,000 injured people. The firebombing of Tokyo and the deployment of 1,667 tons of TNT resulted in 83,000 people being killed or regarded as missing, and 102,000 people were injured. Magdi Ragheb, ‘First human made reactor and birth of nuclear age’, available <https://netfiles.uiuc.edu/mragheb/>

In reviewing three books addressing the history and future of the Bomb, Johnson provides national casualty figures: ‘In March 1949 Curtis LeMay, the head of Strategic Air Command, drew up his first war plan. LeMay had been responsible for killing some two million civilians in his fire raids of 1945 on 63 Japanese cities: in his view nuclear weapons were another means of doing the same job.’ R. W. Johnson, ‘Living on the edge’, *London Review of Books*, vol. 33, no. 9 (2011), p. 32.

<sup>104</sup> Vizenor, *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57*, p. 143.

<sup>105</sup> Vizenor, *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57*, pp. 83–84.

<sup>106</sup> Vizenor, *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57*, p. 39.

<sup>107</sup> Lisa Yoneyama, *Hiroshima traces: time, space, and the dialectics of memory* (Berkeley:

University of California Press, 1999), pp. 1–3. Manidoo Envoy has not made this link between the colonial excesses and the museum architecture: ‘The Peace Museum was built on pillars so that the view of the park was not obstructed. The building was completed in Atomu 10. Forty years later the museum was expanded to include more displays on nuclear war, peace, and victimry. There were, however, only minimal references to Japanese militarism and the cruelties of the colonial occupation of Asia. The simulated *atomu* dome and pillar of peace letters were located in the new addition to the museum.’ Vizenor, *Hiroshima Bugi*, p. 134. The metamorphosis of such architectural remnants of the Japanese will to colonise Asia and its persistent psychology are thematically explored by Murakami Haruki in his presentation of the social costs of extreme forms of Japanese nationalism. Current work in progress addresses these questions and the return of the repressed in *A Wild Sheep Chase* and *The Wind-up Bird Chronicle*. The Ainu presence in *A Wild Sheep Chase* is also examined in the context of a discussion of essential Japanese identities.

<sup>108</sup> Vizenor, *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57*, p. 2.

<sup>109</sup> Vizenor, *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57*, p. 2.

<sup>110</sup> The Japanese nuclear power industry apparently knows a few trickster moves that have deceived the archipelago population. Noriya Sumihara, ‘Flamboyant representation of nuclear power station visitor centers in Japan: revealing or concealing, or concealing by revealing?’, *Agora: Journal of International Center for Regional Studies*, no. 1 (2003), pp. 11–29.

Available online <http://www.tenri-u.ac.jp/icrs/dv457k000006wgb-att/1-2.pdf>

For an update and overview of how Japanese residents came to accept the propaganda of nuclear facilities, see Norimitsu Onishi, ‘“Safety Myth” Left Japan Ripe for Nuclear Crisis’, *New York Times*, June 24 2011.

Available online <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/25/world/asia/25myth.html>

*Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, vol. 67, no. 5 (2011) addresses the Fukushima tsunami-induced nuclear disaster of 3/11/2011.

<sup>111</sup> Nancy Yaw Davis, *The Zuni Enigma: A Native American People’s Possible Japanese Connection* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2000). Translated into Japanese: Yoshida Teigo, Shirakawa Takuma, *Zuni zoku no nazo* (Tokyo: Chikuma Gakugei Bunko, 2004).

For a comparison of Zuni and Japanese words, see Frank Joseph, *Advanced Civilizations of Prehistoric America: The Lost Kingdoms of the Adena, Hopewell, Mississippians, and Anasazi* (Rochester: Bear & Company, 2010), p. 269.

<sup>112</sup> Barak Kushner argues that from the 1880s to the 1930s the ‘moral suasion’ of Japanese propaganda was effective because Japanese citizens were part of the systematic process to improve the efficiency of ‘the Japanese bureaucracy’s effort to get Japanese to iden-

tify as citizens of a national entity'. Barak Kushner, *The Thought War: Japanese Imperial Propaganda* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2006), p. 22.

A founding member of the Society for the Study of Media Technology shared this belief in the sacred martial spirit of Japanese identity. Arai Seiichirō wrote in the October 1941 issue of *Japanese Propaganda Culture Association* that 'professional advertisers wished to help the government promote the aims of the war and at the same time "cleanse themselves", after having been steeped on the lowly work of commercial advertising ... [They] wished to repackage their material in ways that would *specifically* assist in the government's project of mobilizing society for war.' Kushner, *The Thought War: Japanese Imperial Propaganda*, pp. 70–71 [emphasis in original].

<sup>113</sup> For a nuanced account of the preparation of the Japanese Constitution, see John Junkerman, 「映画 日本国憲法」 ('Japan's Peace Constitution') (Tokyo: Siglo, 2005). 'Director John Junkerman is an American filmmaker, living in Tokyo. His first film, *Hellfire: A Journey from Hiroshima*, was coproduced with John Dower and nominated for an Academy Award. His 2002 film, *Power and Terror: Noam Chomsky in Our Times*, also produced by Siglo, received widespread theatrical distribution in Japan, the US, and Europe.' <http://cine.co.jp/kenpo/english.html>

<sup>114</sup> The racist Professor Shimazaki is baited by Ronin into an outburst: 'The Japanese constitution and the occupation provoked his rage and resentment as a nationalist. He leaned over the table and railed against the capitulation of the emperor.' Vizenor, *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57*, p. 129.

Kushner also comments on the wider question of responsible participation and collective amnesia:

'The agencies that actually drafted, produced and distributed Japanese wartime propaganda consisted of well-intentioned intellectuals, rural women, stage performers, police officers and other average Japanese eagerly participating in a society that wanted to support the war. ... Post-war scholarship incorrectly labelled the wartime Japanese propaganda campaigns as artifacts of the military and government and not as products of collusion between the civilian society and its leaders ... The Tokyo Trial clearly helped establish a Japanese historical amnesia that make it possible to deny the existence of a collusive populace. Post-war education also taught that the military led the population astray; few texts mentioned mass participation in voluntary propaganda activities.' Kushner, *The Thought War: Japanese Imperial Propaganda*, pp. 14, 24.

<sup>115</sup> This fly-jin neologism is a pun on *gaijin*, 外人, foreigner. Rather than rely on the Japanese nuclear power industry for timely and accurate information about dangerous radioactive fallout, some foreigners left promptly left Japan.

Manidoo Envoy blows the whistle on Dennis Banks: 'Dennis Banks is a member of the American Indian Movement. He and other radicals chased racial simpletons and

paranoid separatists from one end of the country to the other. Banks has become a very ambitious capitalist agent in the past two decades, and he has been active in Japan. His romantic autobiography was recently published only in Japanese.' Vizenor, *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57*, p. 166.