

## Grave Matters: Emergent Networks and Summation in Remembering and Reconciliation

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**Abstract** We examine British war veterans' involvement in practices of remembering and reconciliation. These veterans were prisoners of war (POWs) in the Far East in World War II, building the Thai–Burma Railway before transfer to a copper mine in Japan. Some 50 years later, they participated in a “reconciliation visit” to Japan. We discuss how and in what ways their postwar lives and wartime experiences are gathered up in the processes of remembering and reconciliation. In particular, we focus on how memories are transformed through processes of circulating reference in networks associating people, places, and things. We then examine how accounts of redemption involving claims to the consequences of experience as being other than expected, create the basis for emergent forms of remembering and reconciliation. [remembering, reconciliation, network, POWs, World War II]

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### Introduction

Our concern is with practices of remembering and reconciliation. We examine these in the context of the war and postwar experience of British ex-servicemen (veterans) who were prisoners of war (POWs) in Japan during World War II and address three main issues elucidating the interplay of social practices of remembering and reconciliation. We ask first, how and in what ways are the postwar lives and wartime experiences of these veterans gathered up in networks of persons, places, and things? We ask second, how do such practices of remembering and reconciliation emerge and sustain themselves through

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these networks? We ask finally, how do accounts of redemption, involving recognition that the consequences of experience may be other than expected, create the basis for emergent forms of summation in expanding networks of remembering and reconciliation?

### Point of Departure

This work developed out of our discussions concerning the following event. In late May of 1998, the Japanese emperor and empress made a state visit to the United Kingdom. On May 27, former British POWs who had been held captive in the Far East during World War II protested as the Japanese entourage made their way up the Mall to the official reception at Buckingham Palace in London. They opposed a state visit from a nation that, in their view, had not provided a satisfactory level of apology and compensation in relation to the Japanese military's treatment of Far Eastern POWs (FEPOWs) during World War II. The protesters' anti-Japanese sentiment was widely reported in the news media during the period of this state visit. One former POW burned the Japanese flag as the state parade passed by. A group of ex-POWs and family members turned their backs and whistled "Colonel Bogey" (the theme tune from David Lean's celebrated film *The Bridge on the River Kwai* [1957] and emblematic of former prisoners' resistance to Japanese military authority). The photographed images of the flag burning and other acts of protest were prominently featured on the front pages of the following day's national newspapers, coupled with headlined eye-witness accounts and testimonies of the suffering and postwar trauma of the former POWs and their family members. In contrast, there was also extensive coverage of both national and local events organized to welcome these Japanese dignitaries.

This media coverage reignited a nationwide debate concerning the hostile and distressed voices of representatives of Far Eastern veterans' organizations and family members of deceased former POWs. Personal accounts and opinions were expressed on the memories of the privations of life and arbitrary violence suffered by prisoners in Japanese POW camps and the consequences of such experiences on their postwar lives. Alongside such harrowing accounts were media presentations concerning the promotion of cultural understanding and the benefit of nurturing amicable relations in connection with current Anglo-Japanese investments in the British economy.

## Unfinished Business

World War II ended over half a century ago. Since then, Japan has built a high profile in the global economy and plays a significant role in promoting peace in international politics and diplomacy. However, the protests we have described demonstrate that the World War II experiences of veterans remain a live issue. Clearly there is unfinished business that has implications for the nature of remembering and reconciliation. “Reconciliation” is a fraught issue here. The severe experiences of POWs in Southeast Asia during World War II are well known and have been dramatized in popular Western films, such as *Bridge on the River Kwai* (Lean 1957) and *Merry Christmas Mr. Lawrence* (Oshima 1982). As has already been indicated, many surviving former POWs still hold the view that inadequate reparation has been made by Japan, as a nation, for their treatment. In more recent years, this has turned on the question of whether or not a formal apology can be identified in statements made by figures such as the Japanese prime minister and Emperor Akihito. This contentious past gave us, as authors and researchers, an entry point into a study of the interplay of remembering and reconciliation. How and in what ways are the postwar lives and wartime experiences of these veterans gathered up in the emergent practices of remembering and reconciliation? How do these practices emerge and sustain themselves? In what ways does reconciliation turn on the emergent forms of summation for those POWs who participate in reconciliation activities?

## Points of Contact with Anglo-Japanese Reconciliation Events

We first came into contact with former POWs when one of the authors (Kyoko Murakami) attended a seminar in October 1998, several months after the staged protests against the Japanese emperor. The seminar was organized under the heading: “Toward Greater Cross Cultural Understandings” hosted by the School of Oriental and African Studies at the University of London. The seminar was open to the general public and included talks by invited speakers from the media, academia, and representatives from veteran and civilian internee associations in Britain. In the audience were Japanese expatriates who had been involved in organizing in 1992 a reconciliation visit to Japan for a group of British veterans who had been held prisoner in Thailand and Japan. These veterans termed themselves and were consequently known as the “Iruka Boys” after the place where they were held captive in Japan. Following this seminar, one of the Japanese

expatriate participants, who had been involved in the Iruka Boys' reconciliation visit, agreed to help us with the research. Through informal meetings and interviews with her, we obtained general background information about the reconciliation trip: how it came into being, who took part in it, and what sort of impact had resulted through participation. On the basis of these initial enquiries, it became apparent that this first reconciliation visit of the Iruka Boys to Japan had had considerable impact on the lives of those involved. We made arrangements to trace and discuss with the former POWs the significance for them and their families of their experience of captivity in the Far East and their views on the consequences of having participated in their first Iruka Boys' visit to Japan. We proceeded to make arrangements for conducting interviews with them—developing the interview schedule and working out logistics of the interviews. Who exactly were the Iruka Boys? Why did it take nearly half a century to embark on such a reconciliation process? How did the reconciliation trip come about? These investigations revealed a complex web of activity, place, and circumstance leading to the Iruka Boys' engagement in their first visit to Japan, which we now outline in more detail (see also Murakami 2001a; 2001b; in press).

### **Anglo-Japanese Reconciliation: A Case of British FEPOWs**

During World War II in the summer of 1942, three hundred FEPOWs were sent to work in a copper mine in a place then known as Iruka (now known as Kiwa-cho, Mie Prefecture), situated deep in the mountains of central Japan. Initially, they were captured in 1941 and had been working as POWs on the now-infamous Thai-Burma Railway, known as “the death railway.” On transfer to Japan the FEPOWs labored alongside Japanese mine workers and students deployed as part of the Japanese war effort to mine copper in Iruka. The interviewees reported that Iruka “was a much better camp” than the camps in Thailand. Notwithstanding these reported comparatively better conditions at Iruka, 16 prisoners did not survive. At the end of hostilities, before returning to Britain, the surviving prisoners set up a small wooden cross and a commemorative plaque at the gravesite of their fellow prisoners at the edge of the village. Sometime after the war, local Japanese villagers moved this grave to a new location, about 100 meters away from its original site. Along with the relocation process, the grave was refurbished and a memorial was erected. What used to be a small gravesite was transformed into a cemetery with a large copper cross in the center and a marble slab with the names of the 16 soldiers engraved in English.

Out of respect for the war dead, a service of dedication was held to celebrate the completion of the villagewide project of building the new cemetery. This was attended by local dignitaries, village elders and residents, along with former students who worked in the copper mine with the British POWs.

The building of this cemetery dramatically changed many people's lives. After the war the prison camp operation discontinued, and the government-owned copper mine and its refinery were privatized. The only sign of the British presence during the war was the refurbished memorial at the new gravesite. In the late 1980s, this cemetery came to the attention of a Japanese woman named Keiko Holmes during one of her "homecoming visits." She was born in the village a few years after the war, and left after graduating from high school to work in Tokyo. She later married a British national and moved to live in London. As we discuss in further detail, Keiko Holmes (1992) reported her discovery as a significant event in her life.

Around the same time, the cemetery had also come to the attention of Father Bede Cleary, who was a Catholic priest at a city in the area. He and a colleague from England, Father Murphy, happened to drive by this village and noticed the cemetery, which revealed to them what was an unknown detail of World War II and the area's association with British veterans. Father Murphy wrote, in a Catholic newspaper published in United Kingdom, about how he was intrigued and impressed with a cemetery built by the Japanese for British POWs. A former Iruka Boy read Father Murphy's article and contacted him. Until then, the existence of the cemetery was virtually unknown to the Japanese outside the village, let alone in Britain. With the help of the villagers, Father Murphy and Keiko Holmes were put in touch with one another, and correspondence between the British and the Japanese began. Keiko Holmes was soon in touch with the surviving former Iruka POWs and began visiting them in their homes in England as part of the initial arrangements for organizing a reconciliation visit back to Japan. The memorial site and the circumstances of its creation and maintenance became the focus of efforts to organize a reconciliation visit for the surviving Iruka POWs. The first reconciliation trip took place in October 1992 with 28 former British POWs and their family members taking part. Keiko Holmes and Kayoko Mori, Keiko's assistant and interpreter, accompanied the group. The trip was initiated and supported by those who were concerned with the importance of reconciliation, not by the Japanese or U.K. government or any other official organizations.<sup>1</sup>

## Practices of Remembering and Reconciliation

There are initially two approaches that we might be tempted to make to understand reconciliation as a social practice. One is to begin from historical givens and then explore how individuals contextualize their own memories in relation to some grand narrative of events, such that they can construct plausible personal identities and biographies (e.g., “Past Times,” *Birth* this issue; see also Brown et al. 1986; Neisser 1982). This requires the study of how the patterning of history can be taken as some global benchmark and context for an individual’s memory and identity. Such work explores how autobiographical memory and identity are patterned in relation to significant events, such as declarations of war, assassinations, centenaries, national commemorations and celebrations, and so on (see “Past Times,” *Birth* this issue; Conway 1997).

In this sense, history would serve as a reference point around which individual lives, might be organized. However, as Halbwachs (1980) discusses, the formal accounts of history are rarely stable enough to serve as clear grounds. History is refracted by the collective frameworks that define membership in such a way that it is not clear what a given event means, or even that it has significance as an “event” for everyone. For example, the death of Princess Diana in Paris in 1997 is a classic instance of what might be seen as a global benchmark, defined as an event that individuals are able to spontaneously and vividly recollect. However, barely seven years later at the time of writing, this event seems curiously dated, to have lost some of its holding power, overtaken perhaps in Western Europe by the complexities of September 11, 2001, and the subsequent conflicts and controversies in Afghanistan and Iraq. Maybe this is an instance of a memory crisis in modernity (or postmodernity)—events decline at a far greater rate than they previously did in European and North American historical consciousness. It is more likely, though, that the global political framework in which something like the Kennedy assassination or the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II made sense is now far more complex, or the representation of such events in social scientific research assumed a misplaced homogeneity (see, e.g., Michael Schudson’s analysis [1990] of a similar process at work in the Washington press corps’ recollection of the popularity of Ronald Reagan).

In any case, we cannot assume that a global benchmark or a grand narrative is as singular and coherent as it may appear at first glance. The alternative is to

begin from the other direction, by localizing experience within lived interaction and examining how the past—as both an individual and collective concern—is made relevant within the local pragmatics of communicative action (see, e.g., Billig 1999; Edwards and Potter 1992; Middleton and Edwards 1990). However, the risk is that, in approaching events such as Bill Clinton’s grand jury testimony (Locke and Edwards 2003) or the media coverage of Princess Diana’s death (MacMillan and Edwards 1999) as specific, local interactional accomplishments, the broader forms of experience that are involved in such interactions are rendered invisible. We are tempted to see our relationship to the past as worked out, moment by moment, via the pragmatics of communicative action.

If we apply these two approaches to reconciliation, their mutual inadequacies become apparent. Beginning with the global, we necessarily turn away from the actual experiences of former POWs and toward the range of grand narratives to be found in various historical records and popular films. However, these narratives do not always sit easily alongside one another. For example, the narrative of the atonement of the Japanese people, and the return of Japan to the “high table” of nations following demilitarization, is precisely one that former POWs would seek to dispute. We cannot, then, use historical time as a clear benchmark for individual lives. Also, working from the other direction, we find rapidly that if we stay with the narration of experiences and the reconstruction of the past to fit the interactional demands of the present moment, something of the very essence of reconciliation appears to elude us. This is because it is surely in the nature of reconciliation that there is some greater substantive matter in place, always already as the grounds on which interaction occurs—that is, a relationship to the broader experience always precedes the locally occasioned pragmatics of its telling.

### **Connecting the Local and the Global**

How, then, are we to understand the relationship between personal experience and the broader historical narratives that inform such experience? Is it possible to reconcile this oscillation between the local and the global, between, on the one hand, the immediacy of local interaction and personal settings of action and, on the other hand, the more global context of historically anchored remembering? One way forward is to define a position in which there is “no principal separation of what traditionally is viewed as individual or personal

memory from what traditionally is viewed as social, collective, or historical memory,” as suggested by Brockmeier (2002a:9). If we start from such a position, we can focus empirical concern to examine what mediates between the local and the global; for example, as in Wertsch’s (2002) recent work on collective remembering as the study of the dialectical relationship between active agents and cultural tools. We share the concern of both Brockmeier and Wertsch to explore the dynamic of collective remembering without attendant dualisms in which “it is neither individual nor collective, local nor global, an interiority or exteriority, but a dynamic process of movement that combines and associates the self and the other, the now and the then, the here and the there” (Brockmeier 2002a:9). Brockmeier points out that scholars often give priority to “mind as one element in this movement” (2002b:21). This approach, however, results in “a decontextualized mind, a mind taken out of its discursive and cultural environment, [and creates] an abstraction that isolates just one moment in a continuous flow” (Brockmeier 2002b:21–22). However, there is a sense in which such abstraction takes as given the contexts within which a singular notion of mind is accomplished. We should also seek to explore how such contexts are produced and emerge as local and global concerns (cf. Latour 1999).<sup>2</sup> This is the primary concern of this article: to investigate mediational action that extends and folds the local and the global into each other. We wish to examine how the local and the global intersect in ways that continually reconfigure the matter (as topic and substance) of remembering and reconciliation.

### **Setting for the Study of Reconciliation and Remembering**

As we have already described, we focus on the postwar consequences of being a POW, drawing on material from a study of one group of World War II British veterans known as the Iruka Boys, who were FEPOWs (Murakami 2001a). This study engaged the 11 surviving veterans of this group of POWs with their families in interviews. In April 1999, research visits were arranged to interview surviving ex-POWs and their family members who took part in a reconciliation trip. The key interview question concerned why they decided to go on the reconciliation trip. This question was designed to elicit their accounts of wartime captivity and postwar experiences of living and coping with difficult times—war-related illnesses and diseases, trauma, and presumably any other medical or interpersonal problems. Furthermore, the interview



invited the veterans to share their views on reconciliation with the troubling past. In addition, other materials including pictures, books, newspaper articles, and mementoes were examined. Murakami also visited the memorial sites associated with reconciliation activities that were part of the veterans' postwar experience. The research is, therefore, concerned to understand the relationships between the social practices of remembering and reconciliation. Furthermore, the participation of the veterans in the work reported here is also part of the continuing emergence of networks of people and material organized in terms of issues pertinent to specific experiences remembered and the potential for reconciliation. For example, the conduct of interviews by Murakami, a Japanese national, in the homes of the 11 respondents made this study one further point of passage through which the flow of people and material (reminiscences, souvenirs, diaries, and camp artifacts) are brought together. The mores of social conduct in entertaining and offering hospitality to someone whose ethnicity is directly associated with their war and postwar experiences contextualize and configure the ways in which such experiences are made relevant and accounted for (see Murakami 2001b, for a discussion of ethnicity in context of these interviews). Such bringing together of camp and postwar life in Britain collects the contingencies, contrasts, and consequences of war and postwar dealings with Japanese people and makes them available for dispersion in a further network of practices of remembering and reconciliation.

### **Remembering and Reconciliation in Networks of Association**

Our analysis of networks in this article is grounded in the work of Actor Network Theory (see, e.g., Callon 1986; Latour 1987). Strathern (1996:521) notes that “[actor] network imagery offers a vision of social analysis that will treat social and technological items alike; any entity or material can qualify for attention.” The concept of “actor-networks” made up of a tracery of heterogeneous elements (human and nonhuman, culture and nature, and technology and society) challenges reductive approaches to social and psychological analysis (Law 1992). Social structure is not treated as some bedrock of roles, norms, rules, and procedures that determine or affect the order and diversity of human behavior, but as an emergent effect of ongoing processes of ordering. Such analysis contrasts with the idea that the “social” holds subjects together. It proposes

instead that it is by virtue of mediation through material artifacts that sociality is formed: “If human beings form a social network it is not because they interact with other human beings, it is because they interact with human beings and endless other materials too” (Law 1992:2).

Networks are therefore hybrids whose critical force, as Strathern argues, challenges the notion of pure form that separates out for analytical convenience “technology and society, culture from nature and human from non human” (1996:520). One of the key analytic moves in actor-network analysis is to examine translations, inscriptions, and points of passage in the flow and topology of heterogeneous networks. We argue that remembering and reconciliation might usefully be approached from just such an analytical perspective.

One of the main themes in the collection of articles in this special issue is that remembering is shaped by the contexts in which it occurs. If that is the case, then we not only need to grasp the substance of memories and the structural parameters of such contexts, we need to understand the ways in which contexts are linked and communicate with one another. In other words, we need to focus on how such contexts are built and connected. Latour (1999) argues that to do this we need to move away from analysis indexed to scale (local–global) and focus instead on the circulation and displacement of objects. If we apply this to our concerns here, we need to examine what makes remembering possible, not what expresses what already exists either as some internal process or externally located expression or inscription of the past. Remembering and reconciliation become analyzable as emergent effects generated by networks of interacting and interconnecting elements. What counts as memory, reconciliation, and identity as POW or civilian, emerges in the way sets of elements come together and then stretch out over and in heterogeneous networks of people, places, and things.

### **Circulating Reference and Emergent Networks of Reconciliation and Remembering**

Our initial aim, then, is to examine how reconciliation is accomplished both locally and globally in multiple networks involving diverse elements (human, intersubjective practices, and material). We discuss this with reference to Figure 1. This is a photograph of the commemorative gravesite at Iruka in central Japan that became a point of passage in the veterans’ participation in

their postwar reconciliation visit back to Japan. We use this photographic image to extend our discussion of the dynamic processes of remembering and reconciliation. We argue that emergent networks of reconciliation are a property of circulating reference (Latour 1999). By this, we mean that this memorial site is both a point of collection in a heterogeneous network of elements (human, material inscriptions, and points of passage) that draws together local and global components of remembering and reconciliation, and something that is dispersed and circulates in numerous, related networks of remembering and reconciliation.

As we have already described, the commemorative site is situated in the locality where 300 British POWs labored in a copper mine from 1944 until the end of the war in August 1945. However, as we have also noted, the site pictured in this photograph is not the original location of the memorial. The current memorial site was created by local Japanese people. It results from a transformation of a small gravesite memorial initially erected by the British POWs for their colleagues who did not survive the war. We enquired into the history of the site's relocation and transformation to learn how the



**Figure 1.** Commemorative Gravesite. Photograph by Kyoko Murakami, July 15, 1999.

current memorial emerged from a local initiative. We also identified how it was “discovered” and appropriated into a wider range of commemorative and conciliatory activities. This circulating reference is a key to understanding the dynamic of remembering and reconciliation as emergent collective phenomena.

By *circulating reference*, we mean that the memorial is inscribed in stories of discovery, mobilized in reconciliation activities and civic and international ceremonial, and incorporated into research on the dynamic of collective remembering. Its substance is continually transformed and extended into networks of circulating reference. For example, as has already been described, it was initially a small grave with a wooden cross and a commemorative plaque recording 16 soldiers who had lost their lives. This site was built by the surviving British POWs before they left for Britain in 1945. Since the POWs left, the site, known as *gaijin-bochi* (a graveyard for foreigners) has been maintained as part of the activities of a local senior citizen’s group. The group provided voluntary routine care of the grave including weeding and the maintenance of floral tributes. In 1990, former student workers, who labored with British POWs in the mine, held *Irei-sai* (a memorial service) as part of their high school reunion. This was to commemorate the relocation and refurbishment of the grave and memorial to a new site some hundred yards away. The whole memorial was redesigned and refurbished with the replacement of a new copper cross and stone memorial plaques to the left and right of the cross. To the right of the grave a replica of the original roll of honor of the names of those soldiers who had died was reinstated (see Figure 1). Also of significance, to the left of the cross, a further plaque was installed—“*Gaijin-bochi*” inscribed in Japanese and giving a brief history of the grave—marking the wartime presence of the British soldiers who worked at the copper mine: the soldiers who became known amongst themselves, and to others, as the Iruka Boys.

This grave was virtually unknown to the outside community, let alone to the British, until two people (Keiko Holmes and Father Murphy) who had associations with Britain came to “rediscover” it. Such discovery led to another network of relations linking people to material mediated by further discursive and communicative acts. For example, Keiko Holmes published an article in *Nihon Keizai Shinbun* (Japan Economic Journal) in August 1992 just prior to the first Iruka reconciliation visit. In that article, she recalls her discovery of the gravesite and initiating contacts with the British veterans:

I was totally surprised to see the newly refurbished gravesite. The grave-stone was new, so was the cross. I could not stop clicking the shutter of my camera. I just wanted to tell those ex-POWs about this and to show how much the villagers cared and felt for them. [Holmes 1992]

In like terms, Father Murphy wrote about his visit for a religious newspaper. The article was reprinted in *A Little Britain* (Former FEPOWs and Keiko Holmes 2001). The following is an extract detailing his visit and the history of the grave:

Recently, when visiting [my colleague] in his parish . . . some 350 miles south-west of Tokyo, I had an experience which I found touching. At the outskirts of the village [my colleague] stopped the car and there, in front of my eyes, was a Memorial to sixteen British soldiers who had died, just before the end of the World War II, at a prisoners of war camp here. Two things immediately came to my attention; one was the Roll of Honour with the soldiers' names displayed in bold print; the other was the fresh flowers that had been placed in the receptacles on either side of the monument. . . . To the left of the monument was an explanation of why the Memorial was in this place. It read: "Burial ground for Foreigners. On the 18th June 1944, three hundred prisoners of war were transferred from Malay by the Japanese army, and under the direction of the army a P.O.W. camp was erected near the present site. More than half of the prisoners were put to work in a nearby ore mine. The rest worked in the ore processing plant or on land reclamation. These men being English were cultured and had a high sense of pride. Their work was efficient and they themselves were gentlemanly. Moreover, some had contracted sickness before the end of the war, 16 died. The surviving 284 returned to their own country." On the copper plaque the following words are inscribed: "To the greater glory of God and in memory of men of the British Forces who died at or near Itaya during the war of 1941–1945." [Murphy 1991:13]

Through these sorts of translations of the site into text and experiential accounts of the postwar veneration of the site and through its significance to the local Japanese population, this memorial came to the attention of Iruka veterans back in the United Kingdom.

The site, therefore, became a point of passage, not just as a place to visit but a node in a whole network of heterogeneous relations and transformations. For example, surviving Iruka Boys and their family members, accompanied by Japanese nationals residing in the United Kingdom, went to Japan for a joint

memorial service to commemorate the dead POWs (Former FEPOWs and Keiko Holmes 1991). Before and during the trip, there was a significant amount of publicity in Japan about this visit. The general public made monetary contributions and wrote letters of support to the reconciliation trip committees. One of the former POWs had already written a personal memoir of camp life in Burma and Japan. The memoir was written initially as a recollection of camp life, but was enlarged to include a chapter detailing reconciliation visits of 1992 and 1994. This was later published as a book (Walker 1997).

The site continued to be transformed in the networks of association concerning remembering and reconciliation. For example, it was further embellished shortly after the first reconciliation trip in October 1992, to mark the original Iruka Boys return to Japan, with the placing of another stone plaque by the local Committee of "Iruka Boys Pilgrimage." Formally known as a burial ground for foreigners, it was a key site associated with Anglo-Japanese reconciliation, to which groups of the other British veterans and family members were taken as part of further pilgrimages organized by Keiko Holmes.

The history of this grave and its multiple positions in the dynamic process of remembering and reconciliation illustrates Latour's (1999) notion of circulating reference. He points out that it is a mistake to treat phenomena (e.g., remembering) as "the meeting point between things in themselves and categories of human understanding. (. . .) Phenomena are what circulates all along the reversible chain of transformation" (Latour 1999:71). The gravesite circulates in a whole variety of transformations, or translations. It is transformed in the social practices and mediated actions of organizing and taking part in reconciliation trips, doing research on the experience of reconciliation, and talking about the memorial service and the veterans wartime experience. It is translated into textual resources of discursive remembrance (e.g., reunion and reminiscence, visual images, newspaper articles, personal memories and letters, and website materials). The network of remembering and reconciliation is an emergent effect of materials and humans held together in the networks of circulating reference transforming the memorial gravesite into different forms. Even the gravesite literally moved in one of the transformations that formed part of the network of reconciliation and remembering. Furthermore, it became incorporated as part of the heritage of the area in local government projects working toward regeneration and

development of what was formerly a place with a long-standing reputation as a mining center (cf. Ferry this issue).

However, in claiming that the site is both an accumulation point and an item of dispersion in the dynamic of circulating reference, just what sort of subject or object is it? What is the Iruka memorial gravesite? It is not just an assemblage of objects at a particular site. Rather, it is an object defined by the kinds of passages it undergoes, the effects it produces in the subjects and objects that surround it, and the investments subjects make in it. It is the medium against which fragile relations of reconciliation are cast and a pre-supposition of significance constructed that makes the very process of reconciliation possible. It is a kind of third party, a space beyond any immediate context of communication—a common medium to which all parties can appeal. It is both the object (the entity that circulates and is dispersed), and the subject (the recipient of attention) as the point of passage that collects together the heterogeneity of reconciliation and remembering. As the memorial site of our research circulates in a chain of transformations it appropriates further relations transforming and reordering relations between past and present, generations, communities, and localities (e.g., England, Thailand, and Japan). Each transformation opens up new trajectories and recollections.

### Cutting the Net

However, there is a potential problem with the view we are taking. What form of logic governs the extension of a network or provides a network with resources to halt its seemingly inexorable advance? In other words, are there moments or places of summation in which we might argue that a form of reconciliation is accomplished? This problem directly flows from the analytical position that mixes up humans and things. Strathern argues:

The power of such analytical networks is also their problem: theoretically, they can be without limit. If diverse elements make up their description, they seem as extensible or involuted as the analysis is extensible or involuted. . . . Yet analysis, like interpretation, must have a point, it must be enacted as a stopping place. [1996:523]

For Strathern, the operation of making visible heterogeneous relations between people and things brings with it a “fractal logic” where more elements



may continuously be revealed—"one can always discover networks within networks" (1996:523). Drawing on anthropological studies of Melanesian kinship relations, Strathern argues that what is lacking from such analysis is some principle wherein the network might be "summed up" or "enumerated" in such a way that it can be seen to come to a stop, however provisional. "In coming to rest, the network would be 'cut' at a point, 'stopped' from further extension" (1996:523). For Melanesians, this kind of summing up is done when the properties and obligations, which are the networks of relations, of a deceased ancestor are transferred into shell money during funeral rights. How can we locate such a principle in Euro-American networks? Strathern notes that the image of a "hybrid"—generally taken as the metaphor that expresses the mixture of heterogeneous elements in the work of both Latour (1992) and others such as Haraway (1991, 1997)—is itself a kind of summation, a gathering together at a stopping point. Strathern offers the example of patent rights to laboratory derived cell lines in which ownership is granted by the successful demonstration of the mixing up of technology (i.e., laboratory technique) with culture (i.e., scientific expertise) and nature (i.e., the original tissue material). In other words, for Euro-Americans, the demonstration of hybridity in an object or phenomenon may come to act as a stop on the potentially limitless expansion of the network.

We can see the need for some sort of summative dynamic in relation to Gaijin-bochi, the memorial. More things are continually being added—is there a sense in which we can claim that reconciliation is accomplished in these networks of translation of the site? The gravesite circulates and recruits but in what ways does it sum things up or make available some form of settlement? Does the continual attachment to it provide for some alignment of interests between the ex-POWs and their Japanese hosts—guards and guests—interviewer?

So far in our analysis there appears to be no point of summation. Can we finally identify resources or practices that accomplish summation, no matter how temporary, in the flow of veterans' postwar lives? In the interviews with these veterans, they produced accounts that were configured in ways that demonstrated the form of hybridity discussed by Strathern (1996). These accounts made visible the issue of redemption as a concern for participants in the interviews. Such accounts report, display, and evaluate the consequences of actions as being otherwise than what might be warranted from wartime events and



experience and reported feelings of postwar animosity toward Japanese people. They constitute a hybrid form that transcends fixed connections with persons, social practices, materials, and evaluations.

### **Redemption Accounts as Summation**

We argue that these redemption accounts provide a way of accomplishing a summation in the network of reconciliation and remembering. We have argued that reconciliation emerges in networks of association and clearly not just some “within person” process. Nevertheless, such networks of association in the process of reconciliation and remembering clearly involve the individual being able to articulate a changing relationship to his or her own past. We might describe this as being able to “open up” that past in a different way, to refuse or suspend the existing ordering of the past. We illustrate these points with reference to the following interview extract. This interview was conducted in the home of one of the Iruka veterans in Essex, England, in 1999. Also present were another veteran and his wife, and another Japanese person associated with the Iruka visits, who had assisted in arranging contact between the interviewer and the veterans.

The interview was informal and conversational although guided by a few sets of prepared questions involving wartime captivity and postwar reconciliation. The key question was why the Iruka veterans decided to take part in the reconciliation trip. The interviewer was Kyoko Murakami. The two veterans, Freddie and Bill (pseudonyms) and Bill’s wife were in their late seventies. The extract is a story told by Freddie halfway through the interview. This particular story follows from the speaker’s recollection, an episode of a “little reunion” with his old mates at Heathrow Airport on the day of departing for Japan. He said that the reunion put him on the road to reconciliation after having experienced old camaraderie at the airport. Here one may be tempted to interpret this statement as Freddie’s suggestion that reconciliation became an issue in the unfolding social context. It might be the reunion with his old mates after all those years that marks the beginning of reconciliation, but he did not simply end with his recollection of his thoughts at Heathrow Airport. As with other interviewees, he went on to produce a whole range of accounts illustrating the consequences of having participated in the reconciliation trip. The following account is typical of these sorts of accounts.

**Interview Extract** (conducted in 1999; see Appendix for transcription conventions)

F: ex-POW, M: Japanese contact, Int.: Interviewer (Kyoko Murakami)

F: I was in Battersea Park some years ago, after the war, ten years after the war and I'm sitting out in the open air with a cup of tea at the table and two little children running around in front of me and I said to myself, "oh my god, is that Japanese." Because they could be Chinese or Thai,

Int: Hum

F: You know what I mean, but to me they were Japanese I thought. I didn't have to wonder very long, because just behind me (there's) somebody calling out "*Oi, koi*." Right? "come here" Or

Int: Hum

F: yes?, I thought I know that. That means "come here", or means "come back." I half reluctantly turned around and (at) the next table behind me was a Japanese man and woman. They all got up and they went down, stood by the lake. And this is the story. He took a picture of his wife and two children. She came and took a picture of him and the two children. And me being, I don't use the camera and all that, but what I would normally do in a case like that, and I have done it many times (.) I would go out and say and "Excuse me, do you mind if, would you like me to take a photograph of all of you?"

Int: Yes

F: I half got up and I thought "No why should I." And I regretted that. I regretted it. But some years later, when I was over at Keiko's place in Croydon, a Japanese man, lady, doctor?

M: Hiro?

F: and the two children they came and they stood on the stairs by Keiko's room there and I took a photograph with my camera then. I thought perhaps I've been redeemed at last. (ha ha ha) You know that's a little thing.

Int: Yes.

This account is a point of summation not only about the postwar visit to Japan but also about life as POWs. It gathers up a series of events that are crafted together as "redeemed at last." This is a kind of a settlement, in terms of establishing a shared sense of the past and the significance and upshot of the current interaction. We can see that there is symmetry of action between the speaker's photo-taking experiences on the two different occasions—before and after the reconciliation

trip. This story invokes a notion of change and presents a basis for evaluating that change. It sums up the way in which the speaker, Freddie, has changed. The account marks the speaker's change in attitude toward the Japanese and delineates the new perspective that Freddie now possesses. This change is presented by him as a possible redemption: "I thought perhaps I've been redeemed at last", even though "you know that's a little thing." As a two-part storied account, the first "story" does not stand alone. Immediately, the speaker produces the second story as a way of establishing his entitlement to being a changed person (see also Sacks 1992). There is a sense, then, in the discursive organization of these accounts, of the ways in which local (e.g., subjective dispositions) and historical issues (such as collective identities—the Japanese) are made to intersect.

The way this accounting is accomplished precisely illustrates a summation or enumeration (cf. Strathern 1996). In this sense, this account is a hybrid object because it simultaneously condenses the matter of person in terms of position, place, ethnicity, evaluation, and feeling. The second story is both within and beyond the recontextualization of the events described. It varies the scale and extension of the events, pushing them into new networks of relations with people and material. This accounting therefore gathers up and ties together heterogeneity in terms of people, material, places, time, and practices, and it is evaluative in reflecting on its own significance. It enumerates but in ways that make such summation available for use by others and by those who are part of such accounting—a form of collection and dispersion (Cooper 2001; Woodrow 2001). Such hybridity provides the basis for interrupting and reflecting ordered relations in experience back on themselves. Its potency is that it provides the basis for calling into question the ordering of lived experience into which diverse elements are subsumed. The conditions of hybridity allow for reformulations and "contain" the difference that makes the difference.

## Conclusion

Our concern is, therefore, with unfinished business, unfinished business consequent on having lived through and experienced the privations of wartime incarceration and forced labor as POWs. Such experiences and events remain live concerns for firsthand participants, in their relations with others, in the patterning of their lives, and in the ways in which they participate in the flow of the multiple networks of association, of which their finite and memorable lives are a part (Middleton and Brown 2005). We do not treat the dynamic of reconciliation as one of settlement in the sense of resolution, as the "conversion of experience into finished products" (Williams 1977:128). As Holland et al.

(1998:vii) point out identities are live concerns, “they are being lived—are unfinished business and in process.” We aim to present a view of reconciliation and remembering as unfinished business, and necessarily so. In so doing, we argue for reconciliation as unfinished, as an emergent effect within a dynamic of collection and dispersion of circulating reference (Cooper 2001; Woodrow 2001).

We introduced these arguments through a consideration of both the postwar experience of veterans and their postwar contact with Japan and Japanese people. We presented how reconciliation practices emerge through the collection and dispersion of circulating reference within heterogeneous networks (conversations, material inscriptions, and points of passage). However, such a view raises questions concerning whether such networks of association are ever cut in ways that afford some form of reconfiguration, or break, in the expected consequences of wartime experience. In other words, is there opportunity for a form of settlement no matter how temporary to be accomplished? We argue that the way veterans produce accounts of the postwar consequences of their wartime experiences organized in terms of accounts of redemption (redemption narratives) provides one such resource; in other words, reporting and displaying the consequences of actions as being otherwise than what might be warranted from wartime events and experience. Such accounting gathers up and ties together heterogeneity both in terms material (people, places, and practices) and as evaluative significance. These accounts are hybrid forms in the way they simultaneously condense the matter of person in terms of position, place, and ethnicity while also making available evaluation, feeling, and new forms of belonging. This is what makes them newsworthy and tellable. In their telling they fold together, collect up and contrast positions (as bystander), features of events (social mores, language, and ethnicity), images and material circumstance (postwar life) and evaluations (personal and moral, assessment of self and others; for the detailed analysis of positioning, see Murakami in press).

The potency of such (hybrid) forms of accounting is that they provide the basis for interrupting and reflecting ordered relations in experience back on themselves to allow reformulation. In tying together person and circumstance, past and present, and materiality and morality, the future is dealt with in interesting ways. This is not a future built out of the past with its consequences for the veterans’ dispositions toward the Japanese. Rather, this is a future built with the past in mind such that there emerges the possibility of things being otherwise. In other words, history matters in reconciliation and remembering not so much in

terms of what happened in the past but in terms of how futures take account of the past in ways that make for the possibility of things being different.

Overall then, this brings us back to the initial concern of this article. Rather than asking how the local and the global connect, with some presumption that this might imply different and distinguishable levels of discourse and action, we see that such a distinction needs to be unsettled. We do not need to assume that there is some distinction of scale to be bridged in memory experiences. It is not so much that we should look to explain how the local and global connect, but rather, we should ask how the local and global are continually constituted in the dynamic of circulating reference within heterogeneous networks of remembering and reconciliation.

### Appendix: Transcription Notation

The transcript conventions are adapted from those used by Gail Jefferson for the purpose of conversation analysis (see Atkinson and Heritage 1984).

Underlining	signals vocal emphasis
((text))	Additional comments by the transcriber, e.g., gesture, context or intonation comments
(.)	micro pause
°well°	softer utterance
yeh,	“Continuation” marker, speaker has not finished; marked by fall-rise or weak rising intonation, as when enunciating lists.
y’know?	Question marks signal stronger, “questioning” intonation, irrespective of grammar
yeh.	Periods (full stops) mark falling, stopping intonation (“final contour”), irrespective of grammar, and not necessarily followed by a pause
bu- but	Hyphens mark a cut-off of the preceding sound
ha ha	Voiced laughter
um	Fillers between words.
<i>Oi koi</i>	Italicized words are of Japanese origin.

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## Notes

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1. See the URL of Agape (Holmes 2001), an organization set up by Keiko Holmes to promote Anglo–Japanese reconciliation.
2. See also discussions of the Pearl Harbor 50th anniversary by Geoffrey White (1997).

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