

Aya Fujiwara and David R. Marples (eds.), *Hiroshima-75: Nuclear Issues in Global Contexts*, Ibidem, Stuttgart, 2020, pp.307.

2020 marks the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of the war in the Pacific. Just as Europe, in particular, has been reflecting upon the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversaries of World War I in recent years, so it is timely to reflect upon World War II. Of the events within World War II, the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki are arguably the most pertinent to the world that we live in today. Given the huge range of atrocities that took place during World War II, this is perhaps a bold statement, but with the 'Doomsday Clock' (<https://thebulletin.org/doomsday-clock/current-time/#>) having got to its closest ever point to midnight (100 seconds) on 23 January 2020 and President Putin having made it clear that he would have considered using nuclear weapons in the annexation of Ukraine (Fujiwara & Marples 2000:11), let alone the spectre of the Fukushima nuclear accident in 2011, it is clear that 'No More Hiroshimas', in the broadest sense of what that phrase encapsulates, has significance to many, if not all, of us alive today.

Whatever our particular field(s) of interest, the bombings of Hiroshima of Nagasaki is one that I suspect that all in Japanese Studies not only have studied in some form and one that we have a position on (even if that position has changed over time). My own connections with the subject started before studying Japan as an undergraduate. During the height of the Cold War in the 1980s, I became interested in nuclear weapons thanks to the details about them on the cover of *Two Tribes* by Frankie Goes To Hollywood and then going on to read books such as *Fields of Thunder* (Blakeway and Lloyd-Roberts 1985) about UK testing of nuclear weapon in Australia, and watching movies such as *The Day After* (Meyer 1983), *Threads* (Jackson 1984) and *Special Bulletin* (Zwick 1983). I believed that one day I would probably see a nuclear mushroom cloud. At high school, I took part in a debating competition and spoke on the issue of nuclear deterrence, bringing in a friend from Hiroshima as part of my argument. I visited Hiroshima in 1990 as part of my university studies and still remember to this day the emotional recollections given to us by a *hibakusha*. Although 'Hiroshima' has never been a major part of my research, my research on memorialisation, amongst other reasons, have meant that I have been back to Hiroshima and the Peace Museum many times. The most recent of these was in January 2020 (when I also went to Nagasaki again) in preparation for giving a talk about the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the bombings at Cardiff University in February 2020. The publication of *Hiroshima-75* was particularly timely for me, let alone with the greater context of studies and understanding the significance of 'Hiroshima' today.

The first thing to make clear about *Hiroshima-75* is that it is not merely about the bombing of Hiroshima. Like many studies on 'Hiroshima' it also mentions Nagasaki, though, as with most studies, it is the bombing of Hiroshima that dominates. This is not a point that is worth labouring (after all, the phrase 'No More Hiroshimas' itself seemingly overlooks the bombing of Nagasaki that took place three days later), particularly in relation to *Hiroshima-75*, as the book is so much more than about the bombing of Hiroshima itself. Indeed, there are many times when the word 'Hiroshima' is used in the text when it would be best to think of it as short-hand for 'the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki'.

*Hiroshima-75* has brought together experts on a range of topics and from a spread of disciplines so we find chapters that cover both atomic energy as well atomic weapons;

relevant issues in, but not limited to, France, Japan, Russia/Soviet Union, Ukraine, United Kingdom, and the USA; historical studies of speeches and policies and those which cover cultural issues. Despite having read so much on the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki over the years, I was struck by how there was still new information to me contained within the book on these bombings, let alone on the other subjects that the book addresses. Whilst it would be tempting to say that the only obvious gap is that there is no chapter by a *hibakusha*, this apparent gap is dealt with admirably by the contribution from someone whose family was originally from Hiroshima. The family moved back there when she was 4-years old and she became friends with perhaps one of the most well-known victims of the bomb, Sasaki Sadako, who died at the age of 11 despite the hope that folding 1,000 cranes, for which she became known, would help cure her of leukaemia.

The book is not without its issues. There are a few typographical errors (but, of course, these tend to somehow slip through in most publications) and I may find in time, when I go back to refer to parts of the book, that the lack of an index will be a source of frustration. For some of those coming from a Japanese studies background, the use of 'Clause 9' rather than 'Article 9' and the non-Japanese order of Japanese names may jar, but I would suggest that given that surely the nature of the topic, let alone the breadth of expertise in the book, means that keeping to conventions that are going to be most easily understood by a global readership is wholly appropriate.

Fujiwara and Marples have done a wonderful job to produce a united book on such a diverse range of topics related to 'Hiroshima'. I sincerely hope that they will not see the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary as the end of the work that has been done by them and the contributors, but, rather, will look to expand the team and continue to produce more works in the future. I further hope that those in Japanese Studies will add this book to the list of required reading for their students and that they will read all of the chapters, not just those more closely related to their studies of Japan. *Hiroshima-75* deals with a subject which we must all have knowledge and understanding of. The alternative is that we are ignorant. This not only disrespects those who died in the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and subsequently, but also allows the 'Doomsday Clock' to tick closer to midnight through our ignorance and lack of action.

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