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OdysseyTN#: **1617725**Call #: **DS889.15 .D69 2012**Location: **ald 4mn jw**

Book/Journal Title: **Ways of
forgetting, ways of
remembering : Japan in
the modern world /**

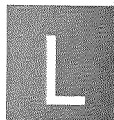
Book Author:

Other Info:Year **2012**Pages: **161-75**

Article Author: **Dower, John W.
John Dower**

Article Title: **A Doctor's Diary of
Hiroshima, Fifty Years Later**

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in Asia, towering above all other acts of war just as the mushroom clouds had towered over Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945.

Belatedly reencountering China changed this. Here, again, memory was reconstructed after an abnormal interlude of silence, during which defeat followed by Cold War politics isolated Japan from China and essentially smothered recollections of Japan's aggression and atrocious war behavior there.³⁹ The struggle to reshape memory of the war has become more intense since then—increasingly so as other Japanese atrocities have been exposed, such as the murderous medical experiments carried out by Unit 731 in Manchuria and the forced recruitment of Asian women to serve as prostitutes (*ianfu*, or “comfort women”) for the emperor's loyal troops. To the extent that popular consciousness of victimization and atrocity has changed in contemporary Japan, this has entailed greater general acknowledgment of Japan's own war crimes vis-à-vis fellow Asians.⁴⁰

Even this remains contested, of course, as the May 1994 resignation of the newly appointed minister of Justice, Nagano Shigeto, attests. Nagano was forced to step down after calling the Nanking massacre a “fabrication,” characterizing the *ianfu* as “public prostitutes,” and referring to the war in Asia by the patriotic old name “Great East Asia War” (*Dai Tōa Sensō*)⁴¹ In all this, he was repudiated by his government, which formally acknowledged that the war against Asia had been a war of aggression. That same month, however, in the face of considerable domestic pressure, the same conservative coalition government also canceled plans for the emperor, Hirohito's son, to visit Pearl Harbor while on a state visit to Hawaii. This, it was argued, was too great a concession—for, after all, no American head of state ever had visited Hiroshima or Nagasaki, or even expressed regrets for those terrible deaths.⁴²

For most Japanese, the war against other Asians was different and more regrettable in a moral sense than that against the Americans, and Hiroshima and Nagasaki account for much of this difference.⁴³

6

A DOCTOR'S DIARY OF HIROSHIMA,
FIFTY YEARS LATER

For several decades after World War II, doing “proper” history in the American academic milieu generally was understood to involve working with official documents and pronouncements; with formal decisions and developments; with “hard,” quantitative data; with the writings, including memoirs, letters, and diaries, of prominent individuals. Attentiveness to “lesser names”—the aspect of E.H. Norman's pioneer scholarship that Japanese scholars admired—was seldom regarded as worthwhile. The vast numbers who left no names at all to history remained ignored and invisible. “People's history” had yet to become a respectable professional preoccupation.

There were, of course, ways to rectify and counterbalance this academic elitism; and where the intimate human experience of the atomic bombs was concerned, the most accessible gateway to lesser names and hitherto invisible people was through journalism and trade publications. By far the most influential English-language portal of this nature was John Hersey's Hiroshima, based on interviews with six survivors and originally published in an August 1946 issue of the New Yorker. (U.S. occupation authorities blocked publication of a Japanese translation of this for several years.) In 1955, an engrossing survivor's account was published in English and a score or more European languages under the title Hiroshima Diary. The author, Hachiya Michihiko, was a medical

doctor whose hospital was shattered by the bomb and who was himself seriously injured. His diary, focusing on the surviving staff and patients in the ruined hospital, covered the weeks between August 8 and the end of September and had been serialized in a Japanese medical journal between 1950 and 1952.

The essay that follows was written as an introduction to the reissue of Hiroshima Diary in 1995, on the fiftieth anniversary of the bombing.

* * *

A half century has passed since Dr. Michihiko Hachiya wrote his diary in the ruins of Hiroshima. Forty years have gone by since his observations became available to English-language readers through the devoted translating and editing of an American doctor, Warner Wells. The translation was hailed as an extraordinary literary event when it first appeared in the United States in 1955, and it retains its capacity to move us today.

This is a remarkable accomplishment, for what we encounter here is an account of the end of a ferocious war that is intimately Japanese and simultaneously transcends national, cultural, and racial boundaries. The diary speaks to the human heart and human condition, and does so without artifice, for it was not intended to be published. Dr. Hachiya himself was severely injured by the blast effects of the atomic bombing. At one point he notes in passing that his face and body still showed around 150 scars. By August 8, 1945, however—two days after Hiroshima was devastated—he was well enough to begin keeping a record of his convalescence in the hospital he himself administered. That record is what we have here, and there is nothing comparable to it.

As a rule, Westerners, and Americans in particular, have been reluctant to look closely at the world in which Dr. Hachiya lived between August 6 and the last day of September, when his diary ends. In the heroic American narrative of the war, the destruction of Hiroshima commonly ends with the mushroom cloud, followed by a quick fast-forward to Japan's surrender nine days later. The

Soviet declaration of war against Japan on August 8 receives little mention in this narrative. The dropping of a second atomic bomb on Nagasaki on August 9 is similarly neglected. The power of the Hiroshima bomb receives lavish, even loving, attention. By contrast, commentary about the human consequences of the bombs on the largely civilian populations of Hiroshima and Nagasaki generally is shunned, for this undermines the heroic narrative and raises troubling questions about "the good war."

Episodically, almost in a cyclical manner, it is true that the American public has shown interest and sensitivity concerning what took place beneath the mushroom cloud. John Hersey's *Hiroshima*, a terse collection of portraits of atomic bomb victims, deeply affected many readers in 1946. Dr. Hachiya's *Hiroshima Diary* was seriously received in the mid-1950s, and over a decade later the translation of the greatest Japanese account of death from radiation sickness, Masuji Ibuse's *Black Rain*, was hailed as a classic in the United States and Britain. In the early 1980s, the apocalyptic spectacle of nuclear death and devastation witnessed in Hiroshima and Nagasaki was transposed to the global level in an extraordinarily successful futuristic best-seller by Jonathan Schell entitled *The Fate of the Earth*.

The averted gaze has been the easier, more persistent response to Hiroshima and Nagasaki, however, and in mainstream U.S. circles commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the end of World War II in Asia has strengthened this tendency. For understandable reasons, Americans wish to celebrate victory over an aggressive, fanatic, atrocious enemy. Most choose to see the atomic bombs as weapons that *saved* countless lives. In this heroic rendering, Hiroshima and Nagasaki simply hastened the end of a terrible global conflagration.

These sentiments emerged strongly in the closing months of 1994 and opening months of 1995, when the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., was forced to drop plans for a major exhibition on the atomic bombs that would have included photographs and artifacts from ground zero. These were, critics

declared, "emotionally loaded." Intimate depiction of civilian Japanese victims (in the parlance of the heroic American narrative they are "casualties"), it was argued, distorted the reality of a war in which the Japanese over and over again had victimized others atrociously. The chief historian of the U.S. Air Force publicly asked how the Smithsonian could have blundered so badly on such a "morally unambiguous" subject. The U.S. Senate unanimously approved a resolution condemning the institution for failing to celebrate the manner in which the atomic bombs had brought the war to a "merciful" end.

In this highly charged emotional and ideological climate, the reissue of Dr. Hachiya's diary is a salutary event. His simple account tells us, as no one but the Japanese who experienced the bombs can, about the human consequences of nuclear weapons. It reminds us of the larger tragic narrative of World War II, in which heroism coexisted with moral ambiguity, and the same act could seem simultaneously merciful and merciless.

From the Japanese perspective, Hiroshima and Nagasaki were not only an end but also a beginning: the beginning of grotesque lingering deaths, lifelong bereavement, unprecedented physical harm from radiation, and ceaseless psychological trauma, of course—but also the beginning of a new sense of the preciousness of life. Shuffling through the filth and debris of his ruined, overcrowded hospital; watching patients and acquaintances die, often mysteriously; assailed by the stench of bodies being cremated wafting through the hospital's shattered windows—through all this Dr. Hachiya moved with composure, compassion, and keen appreciation of the smallest pleasures of so-called normal life.

To turn a chronicle of nuclear horror into an affirmation of life in this manner is no small accomplishment, and the triumph of Dr. Hachiya's *Hiroshima Diary* lies in his ability to do this so naturally—without preaching, usually without philosophizing, just by being himself and setting down his daily thoughts and activities. That his thoughts and feelings are entirely accessible to non-Japanese, despite numerous small references to things peculiar to

everyday Japanese culture, is the ultimate measure of his triumph. Somehow, in August 1945, when the rhetoric of war hate and race hate was at fever pitch and the most devastating weapon in history had just shattered his life, this modest and conspicuously patriotic physician managed to express himself almost entirely in the language of a common humanity.

These matters bear spelling out a bit, for as the cyclical nature of American memory suggests, they are easily forgotten. Of course, the images of nuclear hell that Dr. Hachiya depicts may in the end remain most indelibly etched in many readers' minds. In this regard his chronicle is typical of other *hibakusha*, or survivor, accounts, where the same haunting images of nuclear destruction appear. The stunning flash (*pika*) of the bomb, followed by a colossal blast (*don*) that shattered buildings kilometers away. Nakedness or seminakedness, from the blast stripping clothing away. Eerie silence. People walking in lines with their hands outstretched and skin peeling off—like automatons, dream-walkers, scarecrows, a line of ants. Corpses "frozen by death while in the full action of flight." A dead man on a bicycle. A burned and blinded horse. Youngsters huddled together awaiting death. Mothers with dead children. Infants with dying mothers. Corpses without faces. Water everywhere—in firefighting cisterns, swimming pools, the rivers that fed the city—clogged with dead bodies. Fires like the infernos of hell. A man holding his eyeball in his hand. Survivors in crowded ruined buildings, lying in vomit, urine, and feces. Everywhere flies and maggots.

This is the familiar iconography of the immediate aftermath of the atomic bombing, although at this early date Dr. Hachiya, largely cut off from the outside world, was simply recording what he saw or others told him. Some of his descriptions are unusually vivid. A visitor comments about how roasted corpses become smaller. Burned people smell like drying squid or look like boiled octopuses. The odor of bodies being cremated is likened to that of

burning sardines. In perhaps the most haunting of all the diary's images, as Dr. Hachiya makes his daily rounds we frequently encounter a nameless beautiful girl—she is always identified simply as “the beautiful girl”—who has been severely burned everywhere except her face. In early entries, she lies in a puddle of old blood and pus, soiled with urine and excrement. As time passes, she is able to smile when the doctor visits. By the end of the diary she can stand and go to the toilet by herself. What became of her? We will never know.

Because he is a physician, Dr. Hachiya quickly moves, and the reader with him, to the next level of the nuclear trauma: the emergence of inexplicable symptoms and unanticipated deaths. Patients who seemed to be improving suddenly worsen and die. People who appeared to have escaped harm entirely are stricken: they become speckled with subcutaneous bleeding, their hair falls out, and they have bloody diarrhea, vomit blood, pass blood from their genitals and rectum. Autopsies reveal massive internal hemorrhages that are erratic but seem to affect every organ. Belated acquisition of a microscope shows alarmingly low white blood cell counts, as well as the destruction of platelets in the blood. Could this have something to do with the bomb changing atmospheric pressure? Could it be a poison gas? In the course of these weeks Dr. Hachiya himself helps identify the mysterious scourge as radiation sickness and determines that all of the patients dying in this manner were within one kilometer of the bomb's hypocenter.

The intellectual satisfaction of understanding these deaths is part of Dr. Hachiya's own coming alive again, and he does not disguise the pleasure he takes in helping clarify this dreadful riddle. As early as August 9 he records the delight he feels in finding that his scientific curiosity is returning. Scientific understanding does not eliminate the horror, he indicates throughout, but it can mitigate the terror of the unknown and help dampen irrational fears—help dispel, for example, the rumor that Hiroshima would be uninhabitable for seventy-five years. Those dying of radiation sickness, he takes pains to explain publicly, were exposed to the *pika*. (What the

diary does not reveal, for it stops too soon, is the appalling fact that from late 1945 until 1952 Japanese medical researchers were prohibited by U.S. occupation authorities from publishing scientific articles on the effects of the atomic bombs.)

Even in these earliest grim days after the bomb was dropped, Dr. Hachiya emerges as remarkably frank. Within two days, he regretfully observes how quickly he and his colleagues had come to accept massive death and cease to respect its awfulness. In time, the smell of cremations outside the window does not even disturb people's appetites. In one of his most stunning entries, he dryly records (on August 11) how the rumor spread within his miserably crowded hospital that Japan possessed the same weapon that had devastated Hiroshima and Nagasaki and had retaliated against the west coast of the United States. The whole atmosphere in the ward changed, and those patients who were most severely hurt were happiest. People sang songs of victory. They were convinced the tide of the war had changed. In all the literature about the bombs there are few scenes more Dickensian than this.

To historians of these days and weeks, Dr. Hachiya's response to the emperor's surrender broadcast on August 15 also is of considerable interest. Like many of his countryfolk, he had expected to be urged to fight to the end and was stunned to hear that Japan had capitulated. The shock of surrender, he writes, was even greater than the shock of the atomic bombing. He was overwhelmed with despair. Here and frequently afterward, in language redolent of the emperor worship under which the Japanese were marshaled for war, he reiterates his veneration of the throne and deep concern about the emperor's personal well-being. If there is a second Dickensian vignette in the diary, it is surely the scene in which Dr. Hachiya admiringly records how acquaintances of his stumbled through the dead and dying to bring the emperor's sacred photograph from the hospital to a safer place.

Such a response to the surrender was commonplace but not ubiquitous in Japan at this time. Many other Japanese greeted the capitulation with tears of relief; some even celebrated. But

the obverse side of Dr. Hachiya's emperor worship was indeed widespread: namely, contempt for Japan's military leaders. With characteristic frankness, Dr. Hachiya acknowledges that hitherto he had been sympathetic toward the military. Now he despises them, for they had betrayed the emperor and deceived the people.

This was a widespread sentiment in Japan in the months and years following the defeat. While Emperor Hirohito by and large was exonerated from responsibility for war and defeat, his generals and admirals were widely condemned as having been ruthless, duplicitous, and stupid. With but one exception, Dr. Hachiya never openly expresses hatred in the diary. The exception is not, as might be expected, toward the Americans who dropped the atomic bombs, but rather toward General Hideki Tōjō and the Imperial Army, whose arrogant and unbounded stupidity brought disgrace and disaster upon their country.

Obliquely, too, the diary conveys these same sentiments. When Dr. Hachiya writes about digging in the rubble left by the atomic bomb and finding wooden bullets and broken bamboo spears, he knows full well what an absurd juxtaposition he is recording. And when, early in September, he prepares a report on the bomb effects for a newspaper and declares that the Japanese "were defeated in a scientific war," once again he is offering an observation that was widespread at the time and implicitly critical of Japan's irrational wartime leaders.

The ramifications of such attitudes were far-reaching. Although Dr. Hachiya and his little community were cut off from newspapers and radio for many weeks, their observations resonated strongly with what Japanese throughout the defeated country were saying. The angry exclamation that Tōjō deserved to die for his transgressions, for example, was reified in the form of widespread popular indifference to the fate of Japanese leaders in the Tokyo war crimes trials in subsequent years. More generally, this immediate contempt for the folly of the military leadership that led Japan to disastrous defeat survived in the postwar political culture in the form of deep antimilitary and even pacifist sentiments.

On the other hand, unbeknownst to Dr. Hachiya, the profound respect for science that emerges in his diary also was being widely trumpeted throughout Japan in these very same days as a force to be developed in reconstructing a peaceful Japan.

The contempt for the military that emerges so strongly in *Hiroshima Diary* did not extend to the victorious Americans. This seems astonishing given the direct suffering all the figures who appear in the diary had experienced from the Hiroshima bombing. In fact, this too was a fairly common response to the defeat throughout Japan. Initially, there was widespread apprehension about how the conquerors would behave when they occupied the country. Soon, however, this gave way to awkward but remarkably amicable relations. In the cataclysmic moment of staggering defeat, the "evil" enemy for most Japanese became Japan's own military. Throughout Japan, even ordinary demobilized servicemen often were treated with contempt or plain derision.

When word of the impending arrival of occupation forces in Hiroshima reached Dr. Hachiya's hospital, the initial response was typical. Many local women, including even some patients, fled out of fear that they might be raped. Dr. Hachiya's personal response, however, was remarkably composed. "I felt we had nothing to worry about," he recorded on September 13, "because westerners were a cultured people, not given to pilfering and marauding." His initial encounter with an American officer soon after he made this comment was strained but was quickly followed by a conspicuously positive evaluation of the young Americans who came to his hospital. They were, in his estimation, warm, friendly, kind, and amusing. They were gentlemen. They impressed him "as citizens of a great country."

This ability of antagonists on both sides of the atrocious Japanese-American war to move so abruptly from bitter hostility to cordial relationships has often been commented on and puzzled over. Dr. Hachiya's journal offers a subtle perspective on this turn from enmity to amity in which, once again, Japanese behavior is contrasted unfavorably to that of the victorious Anglo-Americans.

When one of his medical colleagues rushes to the hospital to urge him to evacuate the women because Americans were coming, for example, Dr. Hachiya jots down a telling aside. His colleague was so agitated, he observes, because of his awareness of how Japan's own soldiers had conducted themselves in China. Such initial fears about American rapacity by many Japanese, especially males, that is, in considerable part was a projection based on painful knowledge of how badly the Japanese themselves had behaved in alien and occupied lands. It is rare in Japanese writings from this time to see this submerged line of thinking exposed so incisively. And when the arriving Allied conquerors did in fact generally behave with restraint and even generosity toward the local population, the favorable impression of the visitors was strengthened.

Where the contemporary scene in defeated Japan is concerned, the diary offers vivid testimony to two particularly debilitating aspects of the postsurrender scene that similarly were not peculiar to Hiroshima or Nagasaki but rather persisted throughout the country. One was the condition widely known as *kyodatsu*, an overall state of demoralization and psychological prostration. The despair and confusion that Dr. Hachiya witnessed on his brief forays outside the hospital certainly reflected the staggering trauma of the nuclear devastation. They were, however, scenes repeated to greater or lesser degrees everywhere. Thus the "panorama" around Hiroshima station that Dr. Hachiya describes on September 15, exactly a month after the emperor's surrender broadcast, is a scene that could have been duplicated in countless other Japanese towns and cities: "tired war victims, demobilized soldiers, old people leaning against the burnt pillars, people walking aimlessly, heedless of all around them, and beggars." These, Dr. Hachiya comments, "were the *real* conquerors!" His stunning image on the same day of a poor woman walking through the rubble wearing her wedding kimono and carrying a sack of sweet potatoes could stand as an emblematic symbol of the *kyodatsu* condition that shrouded the entire country in these days.

In this milieu of exhaustion and despair, venality and corruption flourished like rank weeds. On this matter too, the diary

is a valuable intimate source, for time and again as the days pass Dr. Hachiya records his mounting dismay at Japanese behavior in the wake of catastrophic defeat. Drunken ex-soldiers ride the trolley. Looting and burglary are widespread. Local officials are mostly inept and corrupt, and massive pillaging of military supplies is taking place. Inflation has made money almost meaningless. "People with evil faces and foul tongues" suddenly appear on the scene, profiting from others' misery. Disreputable men fondle uncouth girls. Greed rules the day. "Evil influences" are everywhere. The country appears to have fallen into "the clutches of the mean and unintelligent." Hiroshima, the doctor notes when supplies are even stolen from his hospital, was "becoming a wicked town."

This too was a widespread phenomenon in immediate post-surrender Japan, particularly in the weeks that elapsed between the surrender and the actual arrival of Allied occupation authorities and their belated consolidation of authority. Indeed, in the country at large during the eight weeks covered by *Hiroshima Diary*, military authorities as well as politicians and businessmen at both the national and local levels spent a major portion of their time destroying records and looting the massive storehouses of military matériel that had been stockpiled in anticipation of prolonged war and a last-ditch defense of the home islands. Like his striking vignettes of the *kyodatsu* condition of exhaustion and despair, Dr. Hachiya's terse observations of corruption and venality open a window not simply on the local scene in Hiroshima after the bomb, but—really unknown to him at the time—on Japan as a whole.

It is in this broader milieu of *internal* degradation coupled with staggering defeat that the conquering Americans emerge as unexpectedly positive figures. Even old Mrs. Saeki, a quiet figure of strength and comfort throughout the diary, whose daughter-in-law and three sons all had been killed, concludes after friendly young American officers visit the hospital that "Amerika-san is kind. I think they are very nice." This is an astonishing comment, and yet in the extraordinary environment that Dr. Hachiya portrays, it does not really surprise us.

* * *

In various ways, Dr. Hachiya's deceptively simple account of the Hiroshima bombing and its aftermath thus reveals a world of many layers of complexity. His diary is not merely an unusually intimate record of nuclear death and destruction. It is now clearer in retrospect that it also provides an unusually broad window on the psychology and social pathology of defeat. Beyond all this, however—and this is what ultimately gives *Hiroshima Diary* its enduring quality—it is a chronicle about coming alive, about cherishing life after tasting the bitterest kinds of death.

On several occasions Dr. Hachiya makes clear that he was as passionate a patriot as anyone, ready to throw down his life and die for the country if and when the emperor called on him to do so. At one point he quotes with understanding and even approval a fanatic fight-to-the-bitter-end entry from the diary of a close friend whose young son has just been killed in the bombing. But the destruction of Hiroshima, the loss of all his possessions, the near loss of his own life, the daily spectacle of war-wrought misery and death in the hospital all lead Dr. Hachiya, and many around him, to repudiate ultranationalism and war and linger instead on the preciousness of personal relationships and private blessings.

Tucked away in the diary, sometimes almost as passing thoughts, are lines that speak more or less directly to this. "How hard for a man to die," Dr. Hachiya muses while lying in bed eight days after the bomb, "whose life has once before been miraculously spared. On the day of the *pika* I gave no thought to my life, but today I wanted to live and death became a spectacle of terror." Three weeks later, he reflects again on "how precious" small things are—thoughts sparked, in this instance, by the destruction of an old plaque with calligraphy quoting words of wisdom from the Chinese classics. "When I was filled with faith in the certainty of victory and when I was working with thoughts only for the emperor," he confides on this occasion, "nothing was precious." It seemed entirely appropriate to sacrifice everything for the coun-

try. Now, however, "things had changed. Since the *pika* we had all become desperate and our fight was the fight of defeat even if we had to fight on stones. Our homes and our precious family possessions were no longer meaningless, but now they were gone. . . . I felt lonesome and alone because I no longer had even a home."

Old Mrs. Saeki, widowed and bereft of all her children, expresses similar sentiments when recounting where she was when the bomb fell. All was darkness, she recalls, and she thought she had died. What a joy to find she was still alive! This is the sentiment that keeps Dr. Hachiya's small group in the hospital going; and it is, indeed, the sentiment that ennobles the greatest Japanese writings on the atomic bomb experience, such as Ibuse's *Black Rain*. The overwhelming horror of man-made death is countered, placed in perspective, and ultimately transcended by evocation of the simplest activities of human intercourse and normal daily life (or, as in Ibuse's chronologically longer account, by the nurturing, cyclical rhythms of nature).

This healing process, this transcendence through the seemingly plainest of activities, occurs over and over again in the diary. Dr. Hachiya never moves away from the dead and dying, but he simultaneously creates an alternative, life-affirming world by recognizing the wonder of what in other circumstances would be taken for granted. Fruit and vegetables become treasures—someone brings peaches, and on another day there are tomatoes, or grapes. One day the ragged contingent in the ruined hospital room dines on the river fish *ayu*. Obtaining sugar is a cause for celebration. Cigarettes bring near ecstasy. Baths are recorded, and so is the happy discovery of a clean and intact toilet. Restoration of electricity is a signal event, as is the first arrival of mail and the first newspaper. A good bowel movement is deeply satisfying. This was no small matter when others were passing blood, an ominous sign of the radiation sickness. Still, the small group in the hospital managed to buoy their spirits with seemingly endless repartee involving toilet jokes.

In Japan as a whole, the broader social and cultural literature

of these weeks and months reveals similar preoccupations. There they are linked to what in the Japanese idiom would be called “transcending *kyodatsu*”—that is, moving beyond the immediate trauma of the defeat. Taking heart, regaining hope, recovering a taste for life—this was all a familiar part of becoming psychologically whole again. And what this ultimately involved was a restoration of personal connections and pursuits that the war had all but obliterated. From this perspective—and *Hiroshima Diary* is a representative example of this way of thinking—the atomic bombs were the ultimate symbol of the horror of war itself. In the Japanese context, this meant that they were simultaneously a symbol of the folly of superpatriotism as well as the fatuousness of those who sought to mobilize people for military crusades in the name of the state.

In this sense, Dr. Hachiya’s chronicle can also be read as an account of returning to an essentially private world—a world of intensely human and personal connections. Friendship is cherished. So are family relations. Every individual life is precious. Work—in this instance, scientific and medical work—is redemptive. One works to heal, to construct, and not to harm. One thinks of the former enemy not in terms of past horrors but rather terms of personal acquaintance and, later, professional collaboration.

There is both modesty and dignity here. And, of course, pathos—because now, a half century later, we know things Dr. Hachiya could not anticipate. The richness of his deceptively simple chronicle is such that each reader surely will come away with different lasting impressions, different moments or images that stay in the mind.

I find myself thinking of one such moment: when, on the last day of August, old Mrs. Saeki chides Dr. Hachiya for working so long at his microscope, trying to understand the strange and terrible symptoms that radiation sickness had caused in his patients. He has forgotten to eat lunch, she reminds him, and smoked too much, and is harming his body. This is the passage.

“Baba-san,” I answered softly, “we now understand some of the things which puzzled us before.”

“Is that so,” she retorted. “Will you be able to cure the disease now?”

We know, of course, that the answer was no. What the atomic bomb did could never be undone. Our only hope is to face it squarely and learn from Hiroshima.

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WAYS OF FORGETTING, WAYS OF REMEMBERING

JAPAN IN THE MODERN WORLD

JOHN W. DOWER



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Published in the United States by The New Press, New York, 2012
Distributed by Perseus Distribution

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS CATALOGING-IN-PUBLICATION DATA

Dower, John W.

Ways of forgetting, ways of remembering: Japan in the modern world / John W. Dower.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-1-59558-618-6 (hardcover : alk. paper) 1. Japan--History--1945- 2. Japan--History--1945---Historiography. 3. World War, 1939-1945--Japan. 4. World War, 1939-1945--Japan--Historiography. 5. World War, 1939-1945--Social aspects--Japan. 6. World War, 1939-1945--Influence. 7. Collective memory--Japan--History--20th century. 8. Social change--Japan--History--20th century. 9. Japan--Politics and government--1945- 10. Japan--Social conditions--1945- I. Title.

DS889.15.D69 2012

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This book was set in Janson Text*

Printed in the United States of America

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

CONTENTS

Preface

vii

1. E.H. Norman, Japan, and the Uses of History

1

2. Race, Language, and War in Two Cultures:

World War II in Asia

28

3. Japan's Beautiful Modern War

65

4. "An Aptitude for Being Unloved": War and Memory in Japan

105

5. The Bombed: Hiroshimas and Nagasakis

in Japanese Memory

136

6. A Doctor's Diary of Hiroshima, Fifty Years Later

161