

Facets of Hiroshima

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People approach Hiroshima either as residents, visitors or historical acquaintances. It is one of the few cities in the world that represents more than just a place to live. Its history has transformed it into a concept, as in the phrase: “No More Hiroshimas!” Even before the dropping of the atomic bomb made it a household word, Hiroshima had a long and distinguished history as a castle town of a local daimyo, an important mainland seaport to the Inland Sea and the departure point for the navies of the Sino-Japanese and Russo-Japanese Wars. Its pre-war history, however, pales in significance to what it later became. From the very beginning of the post-war era, Hiroshima has consciously and successfully transformed itself from the site of the worst devastation in human history to a “City of Peace.” Every year millions of visitors come to Hiroshima—school children, Japanese group tours and foreign visitors—to witness and learn. Through the years, Hiroshima has acquired many different meanings and focuses, so that now there are many ways to look at it, perceive it, experience it. These are the “facets” of Hiroshima, which this paper will briefly describe.

1. Writing Hiroshima

There are five different ways to write Hiroshima, and each one carries a specific meaning. First is the old kanji, (*kyu-kanji*)—廣島—which was used up until the end of the war. Therefore, any reference to pre-war Hiroshima, for example during the Sino-Japanese War, when the

Emperor made Hiroshima his temporary residence, would find a different spelling than is used today. After the war, the Ministry of Education simplified Japanese kanji (*joyo-kanji*), resulting in the letters—広島—most commonly used to designate the city today. This is the spelling you will see on maps, train stations and most references to the official and secular city.

Sometimes hiragana—ひろしま—is used by companies and organizations, including the Hiroshima Prefectural Tourist Federation, the Hiroshima Museum of Art, the Hiroshima Kokusai Hotel and the Hiroshima Yume Plaza. One reason given is that it is easier to read and gives a softer image than the harder-looking kanji.

Katakana Hiroshima—ヒロシマ—is the designation of the A-bombed Hiroshima. Although it is sometimes used in other contexts, the distinction is there to be recognized. Some residents, however, object to this specific use, not wanting to call undue attention to just that aspect of the city, preferring to see their residence identified more generally.

Finally, the Romanized “Hiroshima” is the spelling that foreigners use to designate the city for all purposes. In *romaji*, there isn’t the same distinction as among the four Japanese versions, which, from the outset, creates limited possibilities in the way foreigners can view the city.

2. August 6th

Most people living outside of Hiroshima, if they think about it at all, probably only think about it once a year, on August 6th, the anniversary of the dropping of the atomic bomb. On that day around the world, people hold special events to remember what happened at Hiroshima, often linked to some related issue in their communities. In Hiroshima, from the beginning, there was a concerted effort to make August 6th a day of

remembrance.

After the war, the City's Restoration Bureau needed to form the character of the new city. According to former mayor Shinso Hamai, many ideas were suggested, including tourism, business and education. Discussions "yielded consensus on no idea except one: reconstruction as a 'peace city'" (Hamai 61).

In May 1946, less than a year after the bomb, a Peace Tower was erected on the grounds of Jisenji Temple, in Nakajima-cho, the neighborhood nearest the epicenter of the bomb, as a memorial to the dead. To commemorate the first anniversary of the dropping of the A-bomb, the business community wanted to promote an upbeat festival atmosphere on August 5, to change the people's mood from the previous year. The Peace Restoration Festival involved community music, dancing, parades and street food. The following day, at exactly 8:15, streetcars, buses and people all stopped moving. Those in offices stood, leaving their pens and abacuses on the desks, and paid silent tribute to the victims of the bomb for one minute.

In review, the City decided that there was too much of a carnival atmosphere during the Festival and planned for a more somber commemoration for 1947. There were two main events—a more tightly controlled Peace Festival and a somber Memorial Ceremony. The city declared August 6 an official holiday, and at 8:15, Mayor Hamai rang a Peace Bell brought specially for the occasion from the Naval Academy at Etajima. Sirens sounded all over the city. At the open space in Nakajima-cho, in front of 2,500 people, Mayor Hamai read the first Peace Declaration, a tradition that continues today. He ended with these words:

Let us join to sweep away from this earth the horror of war, and to

build a true peace.

Let us join in renouncing war eternally, and building a plan for world peace on this earth.

Here, under this peace tower, we thus make a declaration of peace.

(ibid 97)

Although he did not attend the ceremony, General Douglas MacArthur, Supreme Commander of the Occupation's General Headquarters, sent this message:

The atomic bomb has given a new meaning to war. The suffering of Hiroshima serves as a warning to all people everywhere. That is to say, a warning that the ability to harness the power of nature for war will quickly develop until we have the power to annihilate humankind and destroy all its structures. Please God, do not let us ignore this warning"

(ibid 98)

A few months later, in December 1947, the Emperor Showa came to Hiroshima and addressed the people of Hiroshima from the site of the Peace Memorial. In 1948, on the third anniversary, Mayor Hamai implored that "there never be another Hiroshima in any part of the world," echoing the English banner, "No More Hiroshimas!" that was placed near the Peace Tower in large letters.

Today, the Peace Memorial Ceremony on August 6th is a very solemn affair, choreographed to the minute by the City, including dramatic music leading up to the call for a silent moment of *mokuto*, as the Peace Bell rings in the distance. The Mayor of Hiroshima gives his annual Peace Declaration, and the prime minister, governor and other officials offer condolences. Dignitaries place wreaths at the cenotaph, and two

elementary school children give a spirited and impassioned speech. Local television coverage usually begins at 8:00 and breaks away between 8:30–8:40, often mid-speech or commentary.

On August 5th and August 6th, a stage is set up on the Motoyasu River across from the A-bomb Dome, where performers sing and dance, dedicating their performances to peace. Various religious, educational and performing groups take over corners of the park, creating a cacophony of sounds (beating drums, singing, chanting) and smells (incense). On the night of August 6th, the focus shifts to the river and the launching of floating lanterns, or *tourou nagashi*, where names of A-bomb victims as well as messages of peace are floated. This lasts well into the night and is attended by thousands of visitors.

Basically, August 6th in Hiroshima is a death anniversary for those families who lost members in the A-bombing. For others, it is a time of remembering and collective support for the surviving *hibakusha*. Beyond that, it is a gathering of visitors who feel drawn to be here at that time. Outside of Hiroshima, within Japan, it is seen as a local event, important enough, however, for national coverage in the media.

3. Hiroshima as a “City of Peace”

From the beginning, post-bomb Hiroshima committed itself to being the legitimate voice calling for world peace. However, what sealed Hiroshima’s identity as a “City of Peace” was actually a practical consideration. Despite the city and prefecture’s attempts to get reconstruction money from the central government, Tokyo’s response was that there were 120 other cities needing aid, and despite its almost total obliteration, Hiroshima’s A-bomb destruction did not give it priority for funding. However in 1947, after years of intense effort, legislators from

Hiroshima were finally able to persuade the National government to approve the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Construction Law, as a special law under Article 95 of the Constitution.

Clearly stated, the law “aims at the construction of Hiroshima as a Peace Memorial City, a symbol of the ideal of making lasting peace a reality.” In reality, that meant that all reconstruction projects could be a part of the Law, and property formerly owned by the military could be given to the city. In 1949, Hiroshima was proclaimed a “City of Peace” by the Japanese parliament, commemorated by a special “Hiroshima Peace Memorial City Construction” 8-yen stamp.

With the enactment of the Construction Law, it was decided that the entire Nakajima-cho area would be devoted to peace memorial facilities, paving the way for the construction of more permanent structures to commemorate the atomic bombing. Designed by Kenzo Tange in 1952, Peace Memorial Park included a Centotaph containing the names of the bomb victims and an eternal burning flame, lined up with the A-bomb Dome. The Law also provided funding for Peace Boulevard (*Heiwa Odori*), comprising four traffic lanes with two green belts on both sides, stretching for about four kilometers between the east and west mountains enclosing the downtown area, forming the southern boundary of Peace Park.

It is not clear what role the General Headquarters played in transforming Hiroshima from the site of the worst catastrophe in modern warfare to a “City of Peace.” However, GHQ must have been pleased with the transformation, refocusing attention away from negative blame or guilt to something so wholesomely positive. Kenzaburo Ōe makes this point in his *Hiroshima Notes*:

... the people who survived in Hiroshima made no particular effort to

impress on those who dropped the bomb what a dreadful thing they had done. Even though the city was utterly devastated and had become a vast, ugly death chamber, the Hiroshima survivors first began struggling to recover and rebuild. They did so, of course, for their own sakes; but doing so served also to lessen the burden on the consciences of those who had dropped the atomic bomb.

(Ōe 1996, 117)

In Hiroshima, the surviving city officials also sincerely pushed all thoughts of the devastation behind them and saw the rebuilding as a chance to become a beacon to the world, shining the message of peace. Given the city's history, only Hiroshima could claim this moral prerogative.

From as early as 1947, the sign, "No More Hiroshimas!" was prominently displayed by the memorial tower, establishing the city as an anti-nuclear concept. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, Hiroshima led the worldwide protests against the proliferation of nuclear testing. In 1953, Peace Boulevard (*Heiwa Odori*) was completed and the Peace Bridges (*Heiwa Ohashi* and *Nishi Heiwa Ohashi*), designed by Japanese-American architect Isamu Noguchi, were built. In 1954, Hiroshima's *hibakusha* named Hiroshima as a World Federalist City, committed to the three principles of world brotherhood, world peace and nuclear disarmament. In 1955, the Peace Memorial Hall and Peace Memorial Museum were opened. And in 1958, the Children's Peace Monument was constructed, featuring a statue of Sadako Sasaki with outstretched arms, holding a large paper crane (*origami*) above her head.

In 1976, the City established the Peace Culture Foundation, to broaden the concept of Hiroshima beyond A-bomb related activities. Its Outline of Purpose claims the "dissemination of thought promoting peace

and international understanding/cooperation. The overall goal is to contribute to world peace and human happiness” (Peace Culture Foundation website). It now is in charge of all facilities in Peace Park, including the Museum and the National Peace Memorial Hall for the Atomic Bomb Victims. There is an office in City Hall which manages more than 100 peace projects. Hiroshima City’s Department of Education also promotes “Peace Education,” outlining a course of study and suggested peace-related activities for students from 1st grade through high school.

Hiroshima mayors have always been the voice of Hiroshima, officially protesting against nuclear testing and weapons production. Post-war Mayor Shinso Hamai traveled abroad several times to represent Hiroshima at world assemblies. In 1982, Mayor Takeshi Araki helped found the Mayors for Peace organization, which under the leadership of Mayor Tadatoshi Akiba has become a strong worldwide NGO with more than 5000 member cities in more than 150 countries and regions. Part of their mission is former-Mayor Akiba’s “2020 Vision Campaign,” aiming to establish a nuclear-weapon-free world by the year 2020. On behalf of the city, Hiroshima mayors regularly receive awards from international peace organizations.

Attached to the reality on the ground, there is also a lively academic discussion related to Hiroshima’s status as “City of Peace.” Psychologist Robert Jay Lifton discusses the psychological advantages to the city conflating the concept of “atomic bomb” with “peace.” Kim Mikyoung, Researcher at the Hiroshima Peace Institute, thoroughly recounts the various stages of construction of Hiroshima’s Peace Memorial Hall and the “memory debates” that it involved. This includes the recent revision and addition of several panels, which describe in more detail Japan’s pre-war aggression in neighboring Asian countries. Lisa Yoneyama in her book, *Hiroshima Traces*, describes the role Hiroshima played during the

diplomacy and negotiations of the Cold War era, which sealed its identity as a “Peace Memorial City.”

4. A-bomb Dome

In 1996, 51 years after the dropping of the atomic bomb, the most prominent surviving building, commonly referred to as the A-bomb Dome, was officially registered on the UNESCO World Heritage List. Built in 1915 by the Czech architect, Jan Letzel, it had been a large hall used for industrial products promotion. It comprised three stories of exhibition space and an outdoor garden with fountain and was the center of the Nakajima-cho neighborhood. Because of its European-style reinforced concrete construction, it withstood much of the destruction that most other buildings around the bomb's epicenter experienced. The metal frame of its dome, rising from the rubble of the devastation surrounding it, stands exposed to the sky, providing a striking image of ruin.

In post-war Hiroshima, there was a debate among *hibakusha* as to whether to preserve any traces of the bombing or to deliberately preserve the Dome as a living testament. In 1962, the city decided on preservation and solicited funds from within Japan and abroad. Despite the A-bomb Dome's unassailable right to international recognition as a World Heritage Site, during UNESCO's deliberations, both the United States and China objected to its inclusion, but were overruled. In recommending its inclusion on its list, UNESCO noted:

The authenticity of the Genbaku Dome is not open to challenge: the ruined structure stands exactly as it did after the atomic bomb exploded on 6 August 1945.... There is no comparable building in the world.... The overriding significance of the Dome lies in what it

represents: the building has no aesthetic or architectural significance *per se*. Its mute remains symbolize on the one hand the ultimate in human destruction but on the other hand they communicate a message of hope for a continuation in perpetuity of the worldwide peace that the atomic bomb blasts on August 1945 ushered in.

(UNESCO 15)

The A-bomb Dome has gone through two major renovations to ensure its preservation for future generations. The Dome represents Hiroshima, much like the Eiffel Tower represents Paris or Big Ben represents London. Its surroundings have become landscaped, and the Dome has become photogenic. You can find photographs of the Dome for sale in all angles—front, back, side, close-up and panoramic, nestled on a fabricated hillock of pink and white flowers or lit up by artificially added green lights at night.

In a sense, the Dome has become more than a World Heritage Site; it is a cultural icon, where visitors coming to Hiroshima dutifully take pictures of themselves in front of it. Broderick recounts the awkwardness he encountered when asked to take a photo of two Norwegian tourists in front of the Dome. What was the proper decorum—to smile and flash a peace sign or to lower your head in respectful memory? The situation acknowledges the contradiction of being both a tourist attraction and a witness to tragedy. Robert Jay Lifton, an important interpreter of Hiroshima, raises the question for all of Peace Park:

During a recent, early fall visit to Hiroshima, I walked through the Peace Park and found it to be a very gentle place. Couples strolled leisurely, young mothers and fathers pushed baby carriages, children ran about, and there was much feeding of pigeons. To be

sure, some people stopped at the Cenotaph to leave flowers and pray, and one had only to enter the Atomic Bomb Museum to be jarred into grotesque nuclear truth. But in the park itself, there was indeed peace, and the atmosphere could be said to have been pastoral, even bucolic.

While experiencing, like others, the pleasantness of the scene, I felt myself to be a bit troubled by it. Was *that* the way to memorialize the atomic bomb and its victims? The problem is that the atomic bomb defies memorialization. There is no adequate way of representing an event of that magnitude to future generations.

(Lifton vii)

5. Hiroshima and Japan

In the 68 years since the dropping of the bomb, the National government's relationship to Hiroshima has gone through several changes. The National government's early attitude toward Hiroshima was "*Shikata ga nai*" or "It couldn't be helped." This attitude was also reported in John Hersey's book, *Hiroshima*, based on interviews with survivors shortly after the war. Post-war Japan was an occupied country, where the GHQ was working with the remnants of the Japanese government to reconstruct a socially and economically viable country. In terms of reconstruction, most of Japan had been pulverized by conventional bombing raids for months prior to the end of the war. Hiroshima and Nagasaki may have been the most severely devastated, but many other cities, including parts of Tokyo, were also in ruins.

After the special Hiroshima Peace Memorial Construction Law of 1947, Hiroshima was left to define its identity and reconstruct itself. The National government's dependence on the United States set it apart from

Hiroshima, as Hiroshima became a separate voice against nuclear testing. The tacit understanding was that while the Mayor of Hiroshima could speak out against nuclear testing at the United Nations and elsewhere, in agreement with Japan's post-war three anti-nuclear principles, it was not speaking for the National government, which could continue to support American foreign policy and its nuclear umbrella.

Questions remain: Does Hiroshima exist so that the rest of Japan does not have to think about these issues? In setting itself up as the anti-nuclear voice of conscience and speaking out at every available international forum, is this enabling the rest of the population to delegate this issue to Hiroshima and avoid responsibility for its own participation? Has the Fukushima nuclear power plant accident rekindled an awareness throughout the rest of the country that until that point only Hiroshima was addressing?

Hiroshima is a modern city of 1.2 million residents. It is the international headquarters of Mazda Motor Company, its major employer, as well as the Chugoku Electric Company, its second largest. In 2010, 3.5 million Japanese visitors came, almost equally men and women. Japanese come to Hiroshima for several compelling reasons. Elementary, junior high and high school students come to Hiroshima on school trips. Although each school is free to choose its trips, Hiroshima, Nagasaki and Okinawa have traditionally been considered important destinations. Elementary school children learn about Hiroshima in the context of moral education, where "peace" starts at home and school is often the site of bullying. Adults come to Hiroshima on group tours, a one-night stop usually including Peace Park, Itsukushima Shrine Miyajima and a voucher for dinner to eat Hiroshima *okonomiyaki*.

6. Hiroshima and its Residents

After the war, most of its residents, including its mayor and council members, were *hibakusha*, so all reconstruction decisions were made with their benefit in mind. As the city recovered, people from outside Hiroshima moved in, and by 1955, the population had returned to its pre-war level. At present, very few of Hiroshima residents have any relationship to the atomic bombing. Steven Leeper, former-Chairman of the Peace Culture Foundation, reports that as of March 2011, there were still almost 70,000 *hibakusha* living in Hiroshima. There are many organizations working for *hibakusha* welfare, but primarily the *7-dantai* with fewer than 1000 members. “The number of *hibakusha* who offered their testimonies in *hibaku taiken shogensha koryu-no tsudo* is 241 as of April 1, 2011. This figure includes our 33 official A-bomb witnesses. Considering the number mentioned, the percent of *hibakusha* who have told their story is less than 10%.”

Ōe extensively quotes Yoshitaka Matsusaka, who eloquently expresses a contrary *hibakusha* opinion, which may explain the vast silence of survivors:

Must all surviving A-bomb victims eventually meet a tragic death caused by radiation after-effects? Is it not possible for the victims to overcome their illnesses, and their psychological anxiety and inferiority complexes, and thus die a natural death like other people? Must we, instead, all face tragic deaths cursed by radiation after-effects: and must our deaths then be used as data for opposing atomic bombs?... Therefore, I determined not to indulge myself in the victim complex that some A-bomb victims in Hiroshima have developed.

Although exposed to the atomic bomb, I wanted my body and soul to recover so that I could live my life and die as naturally as people not bombed by nuclear weapons. (Ōe 21–22)

Like anywhere, tourists are more interested in Hiroshima than most of its residents, who tend to take it for granted. For many residents, Peace Park is a pleasant place to pass through, cutting diagonally across it, passing by both the Dome and the Cenotaph. Indeed, until recently, the home baseball stadium for the Hiroshima Toyo Carp was across the street from the A-bomb Dome. However, both residents and tourists converge during the activities of August 6th. Yet these days, August 6th is not a holiday. Sirens do not go off and downtown shops and banks are open for business. There is an awareness that something special is happening—but over there in Peace Park.

7. Hiroshima and Foreigners

In 2010, 1.5 million foreigners came to Hiroshima, twice as many from Europe than America. When planning a trip to Japan, it is unlikely that Hiroshima is the primary destination, taking a secondary or tertiary place behind Tokyo or Kyoto. But when they do come, it is with various motivations.

Some foreign tourists come to Hiroshima for its historical significance. They go to Peace Memorial Museum and read the panels carefully, in order to understand the background and destruction of the atomic bombing. They may be guided through Peace Park, pausing at various monuments. But the fact is that, except for the A-bomb Dome and other more inaccessible buildings, very little is left of the city that was destroyed by the A-bomb, only the photos, recreations and testimo-

nies left to tell that story. Unlike a battlefield, there is a relatively small area where a tourist can walk, imagining the site of the destruction.

Some foreign tourists come to Hiroshima as a pilgrimage site, much as a pilgrim would go to a site sacred to his religion, a cathedral, temple or cave. These tourists tend to be peace activists back home, for whom Hiroshima represents the epitome of inhumanity, the source of their dedication. For these tourists, there is a visceral response. It is important to come here, to hear the testimonies of *hibakusha*, to find resonance with their values and cause for their efforts, and to be a witness to what happened here. A symbolic gesture may be the bringing of folded paper cranes to present at the Children's Monument, walking up the steps to ring the Peace Bell or simply offering a silent prayer of grief and sympathy at the Cenotaph.

Some come out of curiosity. Of all the cities in Japan that foreigners can name, Hiroshima is certainly one of the most well-known. And so, it stands out as a tourist destination as someplace familiar. The fact that Hiroshima has two World Heritage Sites gives it status and credibility, and is certainly worth spending one night.

Perhaps combining several of these motivations is the concept of "dark tourism." Amanda Kendle quotes the definition of "dark tourism" used by its University of Lancashire researchers, as "the act of travel and visitation to sites, attractions and exhibitions which have real or recreated death, suffering or the seemingly macabre as a main theme." She refines this as a "fine line between curiosity and exploitation...a boundary between sympathy and snooping." Hiroshima fits into her definition, along with other disaster sites like Auschwitz Concentration Camp in Poland or Ground Zero in New York.

In addition to the foreign tourists who do come to here, Hiroshima casts a long shadow around the world, as a paragraph in history text-

books worldwide and as part of humanity's common history. The dropping of the atomic bomb was named the most important news event of the 20th century. The response to Hiroshima continues unabated in America, where justification of the dropping of the bomb and its equation with Pearl Harbor are still dominant views. In 1995, a planned exhibition of the *Enola Gay* fuselage at the Air and Space Museum in Washington was canceled after some groups claimed that the exhibit focused too much attention on the Japanese casualties, rather than on the motivations for the bombing or the bomb's role in ending the war.

It was only in 2010 that the U.S. Ambassador to Japan attended the Peace Memorial Ceremony on August 6th, accompanied by ambassadors from England, France, Russia and the U.N. Secretary General. However, even this token of sympathy caused a response from the son of Paul Tibbets, the *Enola Gay* pilot, who characterized the ambassador's attendance as an "unsaid apology" on Fox News. On the other hand, that same August 6th, in an open letter to the *Chicago Tribune*, Clifton Truman Daniel, grandson of President Harry S. Truman, wrote about his meeting with Sadako Sasaki's brother and nephew and his desire to come to Hiroshima some day. He concluded, "The tears of the aging veterans and Sadako Sasaki's last crane have great emotional power. I choose to honor both."

Two films have recently been made featuring Tsutomu Yamaguchi, the man who was exposed to atomic bombs in both Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Until his death, Yamaguchi was a strong anti-nuclear activist. After meeting Yamaguchi in 2009, blockbuster film director James Cameron bought the rights to a book about Hiroshima. If his Hiroshima movie is made, there is no doubt that millions more tourists will come to Hiroshima to see the site of what Cameron recreated, much like they take a boat from Newfoundland to see the site where the *Titanic* went

down.

8. Hiroshima as literary inspiration

From the outset, some Hiroshima *hibakusha* responded to the bomb in both poetry and fiction, despite the problems of getting their works published, due to the censorship under the Occupation GHQ from 1945 to 1951. Toge Sankichi, Tamiki Hara, Munetoshi Fukagawa, Sadako Kurihara, Shinoe Shoda, Hiroshi Maruya and many others found companionship sharing their poetry with each other and the public. Unfortunately, except for inclusions in a few anthologies, little of it has found its way into English translation. In the 1990s, the poetry notebooks of an unknown Hiroshima *hibakusha*, Yasusada Araki, were discovered and published, drawing rave reviews, until it was alleged that Araki was actually a fabrication and the publication of his poems a literary hoax. Controversy still surrounds the poems, which many critics still praise on their own merits. In 1995, poet John Bradley compiled a collection of nuclear-related poems by more than 100 poets, including some well-known American poets like Allen Ginsberg, Richard Wilbur, Adrienne Rich, Denise Levertov, Barbara Kingsolver, Gary Snyder and including one poem each by Sadako Kurihara and Toge Sankichi.

Kenzaburo Ōe edited a collection of short stories about Hiroshima and Nagasaki, translated by the Japan P.E.N. Center, in 1985. However, among the nine stories included, only two were written by Hiroshima survivors, Tamiki Hara and Yoko Ota. Ōe also published his *Hiroshima Notes* in 1965, essays based on repeated trips to Hiroshima, translated into English in 1981. Among non-*hibakusha* writers who have written novels about Hiroshima, certainly Masuji Ibuse's 1965 *Black Rain* (English translation in 1966) is best known. Others include Tamiki

Hara's short stories (including "Summer Flowers"), Yoko Ota's 1950 *City of Corpses* (English translation in 1990), Hiroyuki Agawa's 1956 *Devil's Heritage* (English translation in 1957), Yoshi Hotta's 1963 *Judgment* (English translation in 1963), Makoto Oda's 1981 *Hiroshima* (English translation in 1990), Ryuzo Saki's 1983 *Mushroom Cloud* (English translation in 2006).

Probably by far, the most popular representation of the atomic bomb has been *Barefoot Gen* (Hadashi no Gen), a manga series by Hiroshima survivor, Keiji Nakazawa, published in serial form from 1972–1985. Translated into English in the 1970s, it was the first manga to be published in English, and it now spans 10 volumes. From 1976–1980, there were three live-action film adaptations by director Tengu Yamada and two animation adaptations in 1983 and 1986, directed by Masaki Mori for Nakazawa's own film company.

A more recent but also popular manga was *Town of Evening Calm, Country of Cherry Blossoms* (Yunagi no Machi Sakura no Kuni 2003) by Fumiyo Kouno. The book was translated into English in 2008, the same year it was made into a movie in Japan. Although she was born in Hiroshima in 1968, neither of Kouno's parents were *hibakusha*. She explains her motivation to write *Town of Evening Calm*:

After living in Tokyo for a while, however, I came to realize that people outside of Hiroshima and Nagasaki didn't really know all that much about the ravages of the atomic bomb. Unlike me, they weren't avoiding the subject—they never had the opportunity to learn about it even if they wanted to.... And I realized the guilt I feel for enjoying peace is far stronger than the unnatural tendency I had as a person from Hiroshima to avoid the subject. This was no time to hold back. I hadn't experienced war or the bomb firsthand, but I

could still draw on the words of a different time and place to reflect on peace and express my thoughts. This is what I had to do.

(Kouno 103–104)

Pictures drawn by *hibakusha* had been collected and put on display by the Peace Memorial Museum but had not been published in book form until the Japan Broadcasting Company (NHK) edited a book in the late 1970s. The English edition, *Unforgettable Fire: Pictures Drawn by Atomic Bomb Survivors*, came out in 1976. According to its American editor, this was “the first time any sizable number of images of Hiroshima’s atomic experience made it into mainstream American culture.”

9. Hiroshima as cinematic inspiration

Almost immediately after the war, Americans had a chance to vicariously experience the “heroic” effort to make the bomb that ended the war. The first was *The Beginning or the End* (1947) starring Brian Donlevy as General Leslie Groves and Hume Cronyn as Dr. J. Robert Oppenheimer. According to Lifton and Mitchell, earlier scripts showed the effects of the bomb, but the focus shifted:

after many revisions—some demanded by the White House—as a Hollywood version of the official Hiroshima narrative: the bomb was necessary to end the war and save American lives.... The decision to use the bomb, in revised scripts, was viewed as justifiable, even admirable. Now, after the bombings, no victims appeared—just a burning landscape observed from the air.

(Lifton and Mitchell 73–74)

Indeed, it could not be otherwise, since General Groves, Manhattan Project director, had script approval. MGM distributed a sizable publicity brochure, which became the source of many of the “facts” related to the bomb. In touting their film, MGM effusively proclaimed:

From the moment an atom bomb dropped on Hiroshima, on August 6, 1945, it became the greatest news story ever to break upon the consciousness of the civilized world.... Filming the story of the atom bomb today, as the Atomic Age is still in its infancy and while the atom bomb is contemporary history, marks an event unprecedented in the motion picture industry.

(MGM Press Release, *The Beginning or the End?*)

The second version of the making of the bomb was *Above and Beyond* (1953), which focused, not on the scientists making the bomb, but the pilots who dropped it. Paul Tibbetts, the main character played by Robert Taylor, was a paid consultant and the U.S. military willingly cooperated. Though filled with historical inaccuracies, this would remain the dominant narrative, praising the decent men who flew an unfortunate but necessary mission.

In 1989, director Roland Joffe attempted a revisionist account, *Fat Man and Little Boy*, with anti-war activist actor Paul Newman playing General Groves bullying the civilian Oppenheimer. In one controversial scene a young scientist dies from the radiation exposure, presaging by several years the confirmation of the deadly effects of the plutonium experiments conducted on Americans before the dropping of the bomb.

Hollywood’s interest in the atomic bomb quickly shifted from historical docu-dramas to the more sensationalistic genre of “atomic bomb cinema” (Conelrad 100 website, *Atomic Bomb Cinema, Apocalypse Movies*).

Through the years, but especially the 1950s and 1960s, scores of movies were produced, featuring radiation-formed mutants, like the Americanized *Godzilla, King of the Monsters* (1956), or apocalyptic scenarios, like Roger Corman's *The Day the World Ended* (1956).

Inspired in part by the Cold War strategy of Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD) based on a global nuclear holocaust, these films usually pitted a heroic scientist against the mutant antagonist from outer space or under the sea. A handful of these films were thought-provoking, like Stanley Kubrick's *Dr. Strangelove* (1964), Sydney Lumet's *Fail-Safe* (1964) or the film version of Neville Shute's *On the Beach*. But most of these movies were frivolous and sensationalistic, like *Killers from Space* (1954), *Them* (1954), *The Atomic Man* (1956), *The Lost Missile* (1958), *The Doomsday Machine* (1967), *Radioactive Dreams* (1985), plus the Godzilla-clone industry films.

Although there were several early films made about Hiroshima in Japan, *Children of Hiroshima* (Genbaku no Ko, 1952) and *Hiroshima* (1953), Westerners would not have had any realistic visual representation of the bomb until 1957, in Alain Resnais' *Hiroshima Mon Amour*, scripted by Marguerite Duras. As film critic Tom Englehardt recalls:

... you could grow up, as I did, without ever learning what two actual atomic bombs had done to Hiroshima and Nagasaki... [T]hat film gave me a gut-level primer in nuclear politics and nuclear destruction available nowhere else in my world.... I was, however briefly, taken under the mushroom cloud to see something then essentially taboo in this country: the real results of our "victory weapon," of what we had done to them, of my father's war as I would never otherwise have seen it on-screen. (Englehardt 67)

Japan has continued its cinematic inspiration of Hiroshima-based films. *Black Rain* (Kuroi Ame, 1989) directed by Shohei Imamura played in theatres worldwide and gave another glimpse of the after-effects of the atomic bomb at a personal level. More recent Japanese films include *Women in the Mirror* (Kagami no Onnatachi, 2003), *The Face of Jizo* (Chichi to Kuraseba, 2005), *Yunagi City, Sakura Country* (Yunagi no Machi Sakura no Kuni, 2007), in addition to the live-action and animation versions of *Barefoot Gen*. *Ground Zero* (2008) is a computer recreation of the Nakajima-cho where hibakusha director Masaaki Tanabe grew up. Japanese American filmmaker Steven Okazaki has made two documentaries, *Mushroom Club* (2005) and *White Light/Black Rain* (2007) and the Hiroshima Peace Film Festival regularly releases Hiroshima-based films, recently including films from the U.S., France and Germany.

10. Hiroshima as branding

Every city has its own nickname, theme or brand image. For example, London's iconic image is Big Ben; New York, the "Big Apple," has the Statue of Liberty; Paris, the "City of Lights," its Eiffel Tower. In Japan, the unofficial image of Kyoto is Kiyomizu-dera, Matsue is a theme-town of Koizumi Yakumo (Lafadio Hearn), and Hiroshima, the "City of Peace," has its A-bomb Dome.

This is perfectly natural, as every town wants to attract visitors, appealing by a familiar visual image or attractive catchphrase. Yet beneath the general projection by the city, local businesses, too, appropriate the image for their identity. Thus in Philadelphia, where the Liberty Bell is the iconic image, you have Lady Liberty Taxis, Liberty hot dogs, Liberty Place shopping mall and the Liberty Belles, a female football team.

Hiroshima is no exception. Just as there are a variety of Peace

activities occurring in Peace Park during August 6th and a variety of Peace projects coordinated by the city, there are also a variety of businesses, which find the word “peace” attractive to their purposes. A cursory survey of local businesses shows the use of the English word PEACE in many types of shops. There are three *okonomiyaki* shops, a beauty salon (Hair Pro Peace), a Gothic and Lolita style clothing store (Peace Now), a pet store (Fun Wan Peace), and a gay bar (studio Three Peace).

If you search for businesses that use HEIWA (平和), the Japanese word for peace, you will find an even greater number and variety, including:

- Advertising agency
- Barber shop
- Bookstore
- Chinese restaurant
- Construction company
- Drug store
- Gas station
- Industrial waste treatment company
- Jewelry shop
- Life insurance company
- Mahjong hall
- Nursing home
- Pachinko parlor
- Public bath
- Taxi company
- Toy store
- Used car dealership

The use of the Hiroshima “brand” image is only one way of seeing Hiroshima, where there is no dissonance between the concept of “peace” as it relates to the aftermath of the atomic bomb and the use of the word “peace” as the name of a taxi company, Gothic Lolita clothing store, *okonomiyaki* restaurant or industrial waste company. There are multiple ways of relating to Hiroshima and its image, and the City has little control over this.

It may be irreverent but not irrelevant to consider Hiroshima a “peace” theme park, offering visitors a variety of peace-related experiences passive and interactive—museum, park, photo opportunities, and a choice of 12 peace-related tours (trees, buildings, monuments). Perhaps in response to this too-focused branding, the Hiroshima Visitor and Tourist Bureau has renamed Hiroshima as the “City of Water,” which probably will not attract as many visitors as its “City of Peace” identity. However, the HVTB has a multiple agenda—to attract people to Hiroshima through its “peace” identity, but keep them here longer to experience the other aspects of Hiroshima City and its environs.

Conclusion: Hiroshima’s multiple facets

From the very beginning of its post-bomb reconstruction, the City of Hiroshima committed itself to the humanitarian mission of using its horrific experience as a case study against the use of nuclear weapons. From the first commemorations in 1946 and 1947, the mayor chose to focus on his desire for world peace in his Peace Declaration. The city also received special reconstruction funds from the national government under the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Construction Law in 1947. These funds were not only used for the construction of the Peace Memorial Park, but also infrastructure, roads and buildings.

As a result, Hiroshima became a “City of Peace,” attracting both Japanese and foreign visitors, now several million a year. The reasons for their coming are a mix: in homage to the dead, to experience the exhibits, for the curiosity of dark tourism. There is no set way of relating to the part of Hiroshima that is dedicated as a testament to peace. Tourists amble through Peace Park, smiling for photos in front of the A-bomb Dome. Residents cut through Peace Park on their way to other parts of the city. School children are led around to the basic sites in tightly controlled groups. Even August 6th provides a wide variety of activities. Broderick summarizes the diverse responses:

‘Hiroshima’, the ‘Peace Park’ and ‘Genbaku Dome’ are deeply complex, contradictory and contested spaces. Creating local, national and international narratives that satisfy competing constituents is patently impossible. However, as a site of contemplation, recollection and suffering—alongside didactic educational propaganda and political expedience—these places evoke a range of emotions and associations.

As these ten facets have shown, there are many ways to approach Hiroshima, from the superficial to the profound, and people will continue to come here in order to have their own personal experiences. Hiroshima is a concept, comprising the dichotomy of the worst act in human history with the noblest aspirations of a peaceful world without war. There is no single way to view it, where all these facets form a prism, reflecting the viewer.

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