In August 2002, a symposium was held in Hiroshima to discuss the experience of the nuclear attack on Hiroshima, not only from the viewpoint of Japan, but also from those of various countries around the world. For some people, it might seem strange to consider the atomic bombing of Hiroshima from the viewpoints of other countries, since the fact of the atomic bombing in Hiroshima is so obvious that there would seem to be only one possible interpretation. Why is it necessary then to discuss various interpretations of the Hiroshima bombing? Some people may ask such a question. In answering that question, I would now like to think about the memories of World War II and their diversity.

The task of passing down the atomic bomb experience in Hiroshima, namely the “Hiroshima memories,” to future generations is not only to keep alive the memory of the disaster of the war. As the slogan “No More Hiroshimas” clearly indicates, the objectives of activities for disseminating Hiroshima’s atomic bomb experience also include promoting the political option of deterring future wars by remembering the calamities of war, preventing the use of nuclear weapons and never repeating the tragedies of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Therefore, preserving the Hiroshima memories has been inseparably connected to the policy demand for a total abolition of nuclear weapons.

Remembering the past has become the sine qua non for the formulation of present policies. The immense scale of the sacrifices claimed by that bombing has sustained the longing for the abolition of all nuclear weapons. Combined with this sense of mission, the Hiroshima memories have acquired a universal significance.

All this, however, does not lead to multiple tales of Hiroshima. For, if it is important to disseminate the Hiroshima experience as widely as possible around the world, there should not be diverse interpretations of that experience.

However, people in other countries do not necessarily interpret the nuclear attack on Hiroshima in the same way as those in Japan. When visiting foreign countries, we find that the Hiroshima bombing is considered from viewpoints vastly different from ours.

For many Japanese, the bombing of Hiroshima was a ghastly event of mass destruction that heralded the era of nuclear weapons. However, there were people in other countries who regarded the atomic bombing as an event that marked the surrender of Japan and the end of the Second World War. From their perspective, far from being an ominous affair, the hitting of Hiroshima was the incident that brought to an end the long, disastrous war. When many people in Hiroshima died in the bombing, many elsewhere in the world thought that, thanks to that event, the war had ended and they could survive. To the people in Hiroshima who died in the bombing, many elsewhere in the world thought that, to prevent the use of nuclear weapons, the war had ended and they could survive.

When interpretations of the meaning of the bombing of Hiroshima thus vary from one region to another, how should we cope with the variations? Of course, arguments justifying the bombing have no legitimate basis and are even not worth discussing. However, we need to realize that it is natural that memories of the war should differ from region to region.

War memories are often different people’s memories of their own sacrifices. If war experiences are discussed in Nanjing, Chongqing, Singapore and Manila, the narratives naturally focus on the damage suffered and the lives sacrificed in those localities. Narratives based on memories of the same war may greatly differ.

People who narrate their experiences in a devastating war for future generations tend to expect others to turn their attention to those experiences, too. To the people of Nanjing and Chongqing, any war narrative that does not mention the Nanjing Massacre and the Chongqing air bombing is simply unfair and biased. Likewise, to Singaporeans and Filipinos, war histories that do not record the massacre of Chinese in Singapore and the Death March of Bataan are not worth counting as histories of the war. Furthermore, it is not uncommon for people who describe war atrocities in their countries to be less than interested in the victims of war in other regions. Those who insist that their sacrifices are the only authentic experiences of a war do not always open their eyes to the total picture of the war. As a result, memories of war often turn out to be accounts of diverse experiences told by people in different regions of the world.

We have to admit that, in some respects, the Hiroshima bombing experience has been told solely from our own perspective. Even those concerned with the significance of the A-bombing of Hiroshima in the context of world history have not always taken cognizance of the incidents in Nanjing and Singapore. In addition, it has taken us a long time to acknowledge the suffering of foreign people who were exposed to radiation in Hiroshima.

Just as the people of Hiroshima discussed the A-bombing as their own disaster, so did people in Nanjing and Singapore talk about their sufferings in a similar way. The perspectives of people outside Hiroshima have not only lacked detailed knowledge of the A-bomb disaster but, more importantly, been strangers’. Therefore, unless the Japanese people turn their attention to the suffering of the people of Nanjing and Singapore, the effort to convey Hiroshima’s experience to them is bound to encounter indifference.

The symposium was an attempt to change those “our own” perspectives in narrating the war experiences. Even if Hiroshima was a city of great military importance, or a hub of armament factories and military personnel, the violent act of burning to death tens of thousands of ordinary citizens along with buildings can never be justified. Yet, if Hiroshima intends to appeal to the universal meaning of its own disaster experience, it is vital to pay attention to the tragedies of ordinary citizens who were killed in the war elsewhere in the world. In fact, unless we treat our own the war calamity suffered by others in the rest of the world, we will never be able to disseminate the message of Hiroshima.

With the participation of panelists both from the Korean Peninsula, which was under Japanese colonial rule during the war, and from the north-eastern district of China, which was invaded by Japan, the symposium adopted an approach designed to turn each panelist’s attention to calamity of war as seen from the perspective of countries other than his or her own. I believe that, by taking this approach, the participants came to share a broader appreciation of the fact that innocent lives were lost as needlessly in other countries as in their own and that those victims were in fact their own. Furthermore, the symposium offered us an opportunity to move beyond the memories of war unique to each people and view it from the point of view of the victims of a global phenomenon that claimed human lives in many nations and regions. The symposium was thus a memorable experience not to be easily forgotten.

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Competing Memories of Hiroshima: How the War Has Been Remembered: Hiroshima and the Politics of Memories

A war produces not just a single memory, but various memories. Conflicts over these different memories—in other words, conflicts caused by the different ways people remember a war—are one of the major issues in the world today.

Memories of war are rooted in each region’s experiences and are given different meanings from place to place. Moreover, these memories are selective. Some memories are remembered and passed on to others; others are not. Most memories of war are memories of one’s own suffering. Therefore, a conflict arises when memories of individual sufferings, i.e., different memories of war, encounter each other. This symposium was planned with a view to preventing such encounters from becoming a cause of conflict.

The symposium aimed not only to convey the experiences of Hiroshima to the world, but also to learn how the experience of Hiroshima has been differently perceived in other places in the world. For instance, Chinese and Korean standpoints could present us with alternative views and help us to broaden our perspective when talking about the war. I would like to take up three points pertinent to the relationship between memory and wars (or conflicts). The first point is that memories of wars are not a problem of the past, but relate to current conflicts. Conflict between Japan and China over historical perceptions shows this fact clearly. The second point is that memories of wars vary from region to region. Individual memories of war (i.e., small memories of war) are linked to ideology (or big memories of war) of the region. We thus need to pay attention to these regionally varying memories. The third point is that memories of war have great potential for preventing wars in the future. Japanese people need to do more than remember the war solely from the point of view of their own suffering. They must also pay attention to the Japanese aggression abroad and think about what meanings the war had to people who lived in different regions. I believe that this should be the foundation on which we make decisions about the future.

Since the September 11th attacks last year, the use of nuclear weapons has become a real threat. Also, the rhetoric of “just war” is frequently employed. As the threat of war increases, so the tendency to interpret history in one’s own favor also increases. Now is the time to consider memories of wars in a broader perspective.

In 1945, there were only four nuclear weapons in existence, but their number increased to tens of thousands after World War II. The number of nuclear states also increased. The U.S. has insisted on the legitimacy of possessing nuclear weapons in the name of nuclear deterrence. It has also demonstrated to the world that nuclear weapons are a sign of influence and power. The current situation has its historical roots in the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. But I wonder if those historic incidents were inevitable.

By the time of President Roosevelt’s death in April 1945, the idea had been germinated that America could win the war and assure an American-controlled peace if it possessed nuclear weapons. Nuclear weapons thus became valued as new and potentially all-powerful weapons. Roosevelt passed on two ideas to Truman. The first was that, after careful consideration, atomic bombs might be used against Japan with appropriate warning given to the Japanese. The second was that a postwar U.S. monopoly of atomic weapons would be useful in dealing with the Soviets. At the same time, Roosevelt was fully aware of the dangers of U.S. monopoly of atomic weapons as well as their supposed advantages. Roosevelt was a man of experience, confident enough to decide against the use of atomic bombs in the war if presented with convincing arguments. However, under the Truman administration, these two ideas of Roosevelt merged. The use of atomic bombs, which would demonstrate their devastating effects and in theory bring about a sudden conclusion to the war, came to be seen and valued not as a necessary step in convincing the Soviets that these new weapons were unmatchable. Therefore, the U.S. needed to validate atomic bombs as real usable weapons by actually dropping them on cities in Japan.

Ironically, the Emperor said in his speech to the Japanese people that the American use of a “cruel new weapon” was one of the reasons for Japan’s surrender. This helped to convince the U.S. that the atomic bombs had ended the war, and the use of nuclear weapons in diplomacy was initiated after the war. The U.S. maintained its atomic diplomacy during the Iran crisis, the Berlin Blockade and the Korean War. John Foster Dulles, the Secretary of State under the Eisenhower administration, promulgated the theory-based doctrine of massive retaliation. Though the Kennedy administration shifted this “massive retaliation” strategy to a defensive mode with the concepts of mutually assured destruction and nuclear deterrence, it still left nuclear weapons and their deployment against civilian populations at the center of U.S. national security policy. After the Cold War, it was wrongly believed that the Soviet Union collapsed because of its arms race against the U.S.

For more than 50 years, public debate over the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki has been distorted. To adequately confront the legacy of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, we need to consider an alternative future. The assumption that the atomic destruction of the Japanese cities acted as a deterrent to future use of nuclear weapons strikes me as more of a rationalization than a logical deduction. If President Truman had not used the atomic bombs, he would have been asked for the reason after the war, and would have had to stress the inhumanity of these weapons and the wrong of using them. Had the U.S. taken that position, the build up of nuclear weapons would not have been advanced. The Soviet Union would also not have produced weapons that the U.S. had rejected because of their inhumanity. But it did not happen that way. It is still Hiroshima’s mission to cry for “No More Hiroshimas” so that there will be no more Hiroshimas.

Legacies of the First Nuclear War

Chinese People’s Thoughts on the Atomic Bomb Explosion in Hiroshima and the Importance of War Memory for Sino-Japanese Relations

When I first came to Hiroshima, I visited the Peace Memorial Park, and later the Museum. I learnt that most of the victims of the atomic bomb were women and children, non-combatants in the war. Until then, I had felt that Japanese people stressed only their own suffering. But thanks to my visit to the museum, I could understand the feelings of the Japanese sufferers. If I had not come to Japan and had not visited the Peace Memorial Museum, I would not have been able to understand their feelings about their suffering. Likewise, I imagine that many Japanese do not deeply understand the suffering of the Chinese, nor have much idea about Chinese perceptions and feelings as victims of the war.

Until the 1970s, in China, the significance of the atomic bombs was considered to be that they contributed to the early conclusion of the war. From the 1980s to the mid-1990s, this gave way to the recognition that the U.S. had dropped the atomic bombs as a political warning to the Soviet Union, and that the atomic bombings were more important for their effects on international politics than for their military impact per se. Since the mid-1980s, there has been a further recognition that the Japanese need to consider the atomic bombings in connection with their responsibility for a war of aggression caused by Japanese militarism, and that other nations need to consider the horrible consequences of atomic bombs.

The foregoing is a summary of theoretical ideas accepted by Chinese scholars. We need to distinguish them from the emotional perceptions of history held by ordinary Chinese people. Most emotional memories of the war held by ordinary Chinese people are of Chinese suffering and Japanese aggression, including the Nanjing Massacre, the Chongqing Air Raids, Unit 731 and comfort women. In Japan, on the other hand, most memories of the war are related to its own people’s suffering, for example, in the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the Tokyo air raids and the Battle of Okinawa.

Mutual understanding and exchanges of historical perceptions have so far been insufficient. As a result, there is a gap between the findings of academic research and the emotional perceptions of the war held by ordinary Chinese. For instance, there has been insufficient explanation.
of the suffering caused to the Japanese by the atomic bombings, and
Chinese people know little about Japanese feelings about the atomic
bombs. If, in addition to our own emotional perceptions of the past, we
also appreciated the emotional perceptions of ordinary people in the other
country, it would be possible for us to understand each other better and
to share a common historical understanding. Therefore, it is necessary for
China and Japan to exchange memories of the war at the grass-roots level.
However, certain historical views to which some conservative Japanese
politicians and “liberal” scholars adhere hinder improved mutual
understanding.

The Chinese people’s image of the war is Nanjing, while that of the
Japanese is Hiroshima. Both Chinese and Japanese people need to extend
the scope of their humanism; the Chinese need to extend theirs from
Nanjing to Hiroshima and understand the cruelty of war as such, while
Japanese need to extend theirs from Hiroshima to Nanjing, so that they
may realize their responsibility as perpetrators of aggression. It is very
important for us to share a historical understanding, especially to
investigate and understand facts about the history of aggression, if Japan
is to restore its relations with neighboring countries based on mutual trust
and to improve its standing in the international community. Hiroshima
has an important role to play in building a peaceful 21st century, a century
of peace and humanity. As a witness to peace, Hiroshima is a peace
symbolized by Hiroshima. Koreans need to pay due attention to the
message of Hiroshima, which is supposed to be very simple and
understand the function of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima. Koreans need to
know about the conduct of the Japanese Imperial Army in China and on the
Korean peninsula, and about Chinese and Korean perceptions of the atomic
bom bings and Japan’s defeat in World War II.

There are irreconcilable memories of the war between Korea and Japan. And Hiroshima has a place in those
memories. Memories of war are the personal recollections of people’s own war experiences on the battlefront or at home. At the same time, they are
reconstructed as public memories of war and inherited by later generations, members of which did not experience the war at all. Japanese liberals
view the war as a period when freedom and democracy were suppressed, while some Japanese nationalists argue that the war was inevitable for
defending Japan’s national interests. Despite these differences, Japanese
all agree that the U.S. atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were
inhumane and want to turn Hiroshima into a global symbol for peace and
capitalism and a bastion of the anti-nuclear weapons movement.

Korean memories of the Pacific War, on the other hand, naturally
relate to memories of the Japanese colonial rule, and Hiroshima has a
very marginal place in those memories. The Korean memories of the war
transcend political and ideological divisions and are consumed as solid
collective memories integrated with the people’s national identity. Many
Koreans view the atomic bombings as a means to bring about victory for
justice. Koreans agree on the horrendous consequences of atomic warfare
and oppose any future use of atomic bombs. On the other hand, they are
eager to point out that the Japanese government has not yet fairly treated
Koreans. Many Koreans criticize Japan for its failure to apologize for its
past colonial rule and accuse it of distorting history. They also suspect
that Japanese tend to overemphasize the tragedy of the atomic bombing
of Hiroshima, while trying to cover up their role as perpetrators of crimes.

How can we make Hiroshima a bridge for reconciliation and peace
in Asia? It is very difficult to let the memories of war lead to reconciliation.
If we want to reconcile ourselves with each other over what has happened
in the past and build a new relationship for the future, we had better stop
playing the game of victims and accept the fact that we have mutually
irreconcilable memories of the war. Should we not then try to overcome
our nationalisms (and their hidden political goals) that impede
reconciliation between Korea and Japan? In that respect, I would count
on the younger generation’s cosmopolitan outlook.

I think that Hiroshima can play an important role in this process of
reconciliation, since no one can deny the universal value of peace that
Hiroshima has constantly upheld since the end of the Pacific War to this
day. The two civil societies of Korea and Japan must support the norms of
peace advocated by Hiroshima. Koreans need to pay due attention to
what Hiroshima stands for. The tasks for the Japanese are more
challenging. When Japan confronts the negative legacies of its own
aggression and learns to consider the atrocities committed by itself along
with the Hiroshima experience, Hiroshima will become the bastion of
peace and humanity. When Koreans and Japanese unite in the common
cause of promoting pacifist and humanitarian values, wrangling over the
irreconcilable war memories will give way to true friendship and to a
common effort to build a better future in Asia.

When I discuss issues related to the atomic bombs and nuclear weapons in university courses, I try to
touch on the course the U.S. followed in developing the atomic bombs and dropping one on Hiroshima.
I also talk about whether there was any possibility of Japan taking measures to avert the atomic bombing. I teach students
about the conduct of the Japanese Imperial Army in China and on the
Korean peninsula, and about Chinese and Korean perceptions of the atomic
bom bings and Japan’s defeat in World War II.

This is because Japanese youth would risk making wrong decisions as members of the international society if they should base them only
on the viewpoints of “Japanese” or “Hiroshima” and because dialogue between Japan and the international community could not even begin if they
did not realize that there are a wide variety of perceptions of events around
the world, each for its own good reasons.

Prior to our discussion of the diverse interpretations and perceptions,
however, we must agree at the outset that the atomic bombings, which
indiscriminately killed and wounded a huge number of non-combatants,
were unquestionably inhumane acts. But we often come across arguments
that ignore this fact and that address other issues that are deliberately
linked to the problem of the atomic bombings. These arguments are often
connected to political, ideological, or nationalist issues and are found in
peace movements at home as well as overseas. We must carefully examine
the substantive message of Hiroshima by purging it of the political and
nationalist encumbrances.

Hiroshima has related its experience of the atomic bombing over
and over through the centuries in the Pacific War and in World War II with a view to informing as many people as possible of the facts about its
tragic experience as accurately as possible so as to spare them of the tragedy
of indiscriminate mass killing, no matter where or under what
circumstances they lived. Each atomic bomb survivor has his/her own
different memories, but feelings of hatred, grudge, and hostility have
gradually been overcome and replaced by a genuine and pure desire for
peace.

The message of Hiroshima, which is supposed to be very simple and
clear, sometimes fails to reach the outside world, presumably because the
people to whom it is addressed live in circumstances we do not know about
or are faced with problems such that we cannot simply say we did not
know about. Like most other Japanese, people in Hiroshima must pay
serious attention to the colonial policies pursued and the aggression and
crimes against humanity committed by Japan and sympathize with those
who had gone through the devastating experiences caused by the inhumane
Japanese actions.

On the other hand, the theory of punitive justice that Hiroshima
should take full responsibility for Japan’s wartime wrongs is incorrect.
Survivors of the atomic bomb have been discriminated against in their
own society and subjected to constant worries about their health.
Hiroshima should continue to play the role of the witness speaking
to the world against the inhumanity of nuclear weapons in the 21st century
as it did in the previous century. Also, I hope Hiroshima will have an
infinite amount of sympathy for those who have suffered similarly tragic
experiences and offer helping hands to them.

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The Making of a New State

By Christian P. Scherrer

East Timor has endured one of the most tragic histories of any nation since the 1940s, at which time it was a Portuguese colonial enclave in Dutch-controlled Island Asia. From 1940 Timor became the theater of one of the bloodiest battles of WWII.

Only 35 years later, Timor went from bad to worse. According to the shocking evidence found in newly declassified official documents (published by the National Security Archive at the end of 2001), then U.S. President Ford and Secretary of State Kissinger gave, in December 1975, with the complicity of the Australian government, the green light to the Indonesian military (TNI) for invading the just independent ex-colony. This led to massive-scale genocide. Every third Timorese lost his or her life during the next 24 years of occupation! East Timor became the world’s deadliest country.

The fall of the Suharto regime in May 1998 and a democratic transition in Indonesia opened the way for change. TNI managed to prevent a complete dismantling of the corporatist state structure built up over 35 years of military rule. The illegal occupation of East Timor continued until a referendum on its status was held at the end of August 1999, thanks to intense pressure applied by the U.N. and some world powers. When the 80% vote for independence became known, a premeditated onslaught took place, which left thousands dead and the country in ruins.

Successful Peacekeeping Operation

Today East Timor is known for one of the most successful U.N. peacekeeping operations. U.N. fact sheets advertise 20 achievements. Instead of a success, I believe, when looking at this engagement, we should rather talk about reparations for the failure in 1975, when the United States blocked the United Nations from taking action against the invader—thus bearing co-responsibility for the genocide.

The task of my field research in East Timor was to compare the realities found on the ground with the mandate of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET), in order to assess its achievements. The mandate required:

- providing security and maintaining law and order;
- establishing an effective administration;
- assisting in the development of civil services;
- ensuring delivery of relief and rehabilitation;
- capacity-building for self-government;
- establishing conditions for sustainable development; and
- ensuring that the perpetrators of crimes would be brought to justice.

Achievements in Independent Governance

UNTAET for the most part fulfilled its mandate, though critical issues remain unresolved. In particular it was able to:

- provide security through a large and costly U.N. peace enforcement force initially of 8,700, which was reduced to 6,000 by May 2002;
- establish an effective administration;
- re-establish state services and recruit 12,000 civil servants;
- rehabilitate the country;
- build sufficient capacities for self-governance and continue this support with 200 advisors; and
- negotiate a fair treaty with Australia on the exploitation of oil deposits in the Timor Gap.

The May 2002 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) report on Timor portrays the new nation as the poorest in Asia—but as one with considerable future potential. A U.N. trust fund will provide funds for the period needed to develop these oil resources by 2005.

Positive Outcome, Questions and a Failure

Questions have to be asked about the continued presence of 6,000 peacekeepers. This is in contrast with the modest size of the 1,200-strong future national army (half of it already in place) and the lightly armed, 1,800-strong police force. If this force of 3,000 East Timorese is sufficient for the future maintenance of security, then there is no point in having peacekeepers standing by.

Besides the unlikelihood of renewed attacks by Indonesia, there are practical issues. Compared with productive investments that contribute to stability, standing foreign armies are a waste of money. The costs for peacekeeping in East Timor are US$600 million per perspective, including the issues of foreign victims of the atomic bombings and Japan’s war responsibility, how should we regard the Chinese and Korean victims of the atomic bombings?

Sherrin: The point is that neither atomic bomb was necessary to bring the war to a conclusion in August of 1945. There were members of the Truman administration who believed that, but their views were not accepted. President Truman could have made the decision not to use atomic bombs.

Bu: It is difficult for the aggressors and the aggressed to share perceptions of history. But I believe that our efforts to work on something together in the globalized world, such as holding a symposium, are useful for understanding each other’s views.

Lee: Japan has to accept its own wartime criminal responsibility as it dwells on the responsibility of the U.S. towards Hiroshima’s victims. Korean victims of the bombing have not been treated properly in Hiroshima. If you take an approach to the Hiroshima problem as if it were a local question, that is, exclusively a question for Hiroshima residents, then that undermines the meaning of the Hiroshima atomic bombing itself. If you want to appeal to the world about the meaning of Hiroshima, you have to make it a more universal human rights issue. I hope that the Japanese will be more honest about a very contradictory situation in which they are perpetrators and victims at the same time.
Most perpetrators of serious crimes now in East Timorese jails are from among the rank and file of the former militia. The “big fish” all managed to escape to West Timor or to Java. This means that they are out of reach of the East Timorese judiciary. Indonesian tribunals proved utterly unable to deliver even a modicum of justice.

Thousands of poor farmers were forced to join the militias in 1999. With regard to the reintegration of former collaborators and members of the militia, the UNTAET developed a sophisticated approach based on the court-relevant classification based on four categories: (1) the organizers and perpetrators of killings and rapes, (2) those who participated in violent acts, (3) those who destroyed property or looted, and (4) those who were forced to join the militia. Especially light cases are those in category (4) who came in the night, under cover of darkness, to warn of planned attacks.

The Need for Justice

Justice for East Timor and for Indonesia is inescapably linked: the chief perpetrators are the same. Free East Timor will continue to be a showcase for democratic and peaceful change in Indonesia. And only a democratized Indonesia can stabilize the achievements reached in East Timor.

The Establishment of a Truth Commission

In January 2002 the members of the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation (CRTR) were sworn in with a mandate to investigate crimes committed between April 1974 (Portuguese revolution) and October 1999 (after TNI left and INTERFET forces flushed out the militias) and to formulate recommendations for the government, for which the CRTR was given two and a half years. The task seems quite enormous in view of the limited resources and manpower available.

Most of the returnees from West Timor were integrated into the local communities without major problems. Since late 1999, however, many killers came back but were refused by the local communities and redirected to the only large town, Dili. If more of the remaining refugees return, the probability of the presence among them of similar serious cases will increase. Monitoring this situation in the local communities is one of the key tasks of the Regional Commissioners who were sworn in ahead of independence in May 2002.

Conclusions

If justice cannot be achieved in East Timor, then a dangerous time-bomb could explode in the future. Revenge instead of justice could destabilize the country, and the most highly appraised success of the United Nations in recent years could turn into a failure.

The non-existing accountability for state crimes in Indonesia invites future gross human rights violations by the army, secret services and special police forces. Impunity undercuts the democratic control of the army by elected representatives and sabotages the rule of law in general. Abuses by the army and endemic corruption in the political class could continue.

Of the 21 truth commissions that have been constituted worldwide, only a few have succeeded in the eyes not only of experts but also of the victims of organized violence. There is no model applicable to the East Timorese case. The commissioners’ first task is to construct a viable concept for the truth commission that is adequate to local conditions.

Justice for East Timor and for Indonesia is inescapably linked: the chief perpetrators are the same. Free East Timor will continue to be a showcase for democratic and peaceful change in Indonesia. And only a democratized Indonesia can stabilize the achievements reached in East Timor.

Scherrer is professor at HPI

Mr. Gianni Deligia spoke about the historical background leading up to independence in East Timor and visions of state building. This was followed by discussion among the participants regarding the current situation from various angles.

As East Timor became independent of Indonesia on May 20, 2002, discussion focused on how to create a completely new social infrastructure in the newborn nation. Other serious issues discussed included the achievement of “justice” and “reconciliation”; the reintegration of a society fragmented by decades of conflict toward the goal of establishing a nation-state; the shortage of human resources such as medical and legal experts; and relations between the East Timor government and the U.N., whose role in the new state will gradually be reduced.

East Timor’s relations with other countries were also covered in the discussion. A significant challenge for East Timor will now be rebuilding its relationship with Indonesia in order to stand on its own feet, specifically, by solving issues concerning inhumane acts committed by the Indonesian military and by reestablishing economic and trade relations with Indonesia. The presence of fossil fuels in the Timor Gap, a narrow trough in the Timor Sea between Australia and East Timor, has attracted attention as a major source of revenue, for which international cooperation is already underway. These topics, among others, were also touched on by some participants.

By Nobumasa Akiyama, assistant professor at HPI
Both peace studies and peace movements in Hiroshima have hitherto been based on the city’s unique experience as the first theater of nuclear holocaust in the history of mankind. It is therefore not surprising that the major focus of peace studies here has been on issues closely related to nuclear arms and that its peace movements have also centered on the abolition of nuclear arms. In this regard, Hiroshima has undoubtedly played an important role so far and its voice, above all that of the hibakusha (i.e., survivors of the nuclear holocaust), carries a certain symbolic weight in world nuclear dialogue.

Due to the rapidly diminishing number of hibakusha, however, the “weathering of the Hiroshima experience” has become a serious concern for many citizens of Hiroshima in recent years. In order to confront this problem and to revitalize the Hiroshima spirit of aspiring to eternal peace, it is necessary to re-examine the historical uniqueness of the city in a wider theoretical framework of modern war, in which the universal characteristics of modern warfare, notably including the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, can be critically analyzed. In other words, Hiroshima City still possesses the capability of contributing to the establishment of world peace, yet that capability must be enlivened by broadening the scope of peace studies and peace movements in this city and adapting them to contemporary issues of war and peace.

The bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki typifies two kinds of crimes against humanity—indiscriminate bombing and mass killing—both of which are common phenomena in modern and contemporary warfare. Full-scale indiscriminate bombing, which targets and terrorizes non-combatants, was initiated by the Nazis against the civilians of Guernica in 1937 under the term “strategic bombing.” In the European theater of World War II, indiscriminate bombing to terrorize civilians escalated as the war intensified, and many civilians in major cities such as Warsaw, Rotterdam, London, Berlin, and Dresden were victimized with both the Axis and Allied sides engaging in such bombing, with mass slaughter as the result. In the Pacific theater too, as Japan started losing the war, many cities on Japan’s main islands became the targets of U.S. air raids. On March 10, 1945, about 100,000 people in the Tokyo metropolitan area were burnt to death within a few hours by fire-bombs dropped from U.S. B-29 bombers. An estimated one million lost their homes and were driven from the city. Indiscriminate bombing reached its peak, however, when mass-killing atomic weapons were used to annihilate two Japanese cities in August 1945.

Since then, indiscriminate bombing was repeatedly deployed in the Korean War, the Vietnam War, and the Gulf War. Moreover, new types of weapons were introduced in large quantities for such bombing every time a war was waged—for example, agent orange (a type of chemical defoliant) in Vietnam and depleted uranium in the Gulf, both of which caused serious ecological and environmental damage while exacting a devastating toll on civilians. Despite the claim by military specialists that “pin-pointed bombing” for accurate targeting has become possible thanks to new technologies, in the Kosovo-Serbian War and the more recent Afghan War, many civilians were still killed or injured as a result of bombing “wrongly identified targets.” During the Gulf War, U.S. Air Forces dropped 88,500 tons of bombs on Iraq, of which 70 percent missed their targets. In Palestine many civilians including children and babies are currently victims of such “pin-pointed” aerial attacks. It has been 57 years since the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, yet indiscriminate bombing is still employed in many places throughout the world. Furthermore, the danger of using nuclear arms has suddenly become real in the regional conflict between India and Pakistan.

The A-bomb dropped on Hiroshima killed between 70,000 and 80,000 people in one second, and it is estimated that a total of 140,000 died by the end of 1945. In Nagasaki, 70,000 people are believed to have died by the end of the same year. The total death toll up to the present due to irradiation caused by the bombing of Hiroshima is estimated at approximately 450,000. However, in his announcement of the bombing, Truman said, “The world will note that the first atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, a military base. That was because we wished in this first attack to avoid, in so far as possible, the killing of civilians.” The political and military leaders of the U.S. probably did not use A-bombs against Japan with the deliberate intention of genocide. Yet, as a result of bombing Hiroshima and Nagasaki, it became clear that the use of nuclear arms thereafter would be undoubtedly genocidal.

However, mass killing, with genocide as its most extreme manifestation, is not peculiar to the nuclear holocausts in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Between 1915 and 1916, it is estimated that more than one million Armenians were killed by Turks in the Ottoman Empire. Five million Jews, as well as a few million people from other ethnic groups, are believed to have been victims of mass slaughter by the Nazis. Since the end of World War II, there have been numerous examples of the deliberate mass killing of civilians—for example, in Cambodia, Guatemala, the Congo, Rwanda, former Yugoslavia, and in East Timor. According to an article that appeared in the Boston Review, “up to 35 million people—90 percent civilians—have been killed in 170 wars since the end of World War II.”

The victims of the A-bombs in Hiroshima and Nagasaki were undoubtedly victims of crimes against humanity, regardless of how we assess the decision to use such weapons of mass destruction in order to end the war. Yet what the Japanese also need to remember is the fact that it was the Japanese Imperial Forces who engaged in indiscriminate bombing first in the Asia Pacific region. The victims of Japan’s attacks were Chinese civilians in Nanjing, Wuhan, Shanghai and Chongqing. Chongqing, in particular, was specifically targeted and suffered more than 200 air raids over three years from the end of 1938, bringing the total death toll up to 12,000. The Japanese Imperial Forces committed massacres of civilians in various places in the Asia Pacific region, typified by the case of the Nanjing Massacre in which at least 300,000 people were killed. The Japanese were also perpetrators of many other types of crimes against humanity, including human experiments using bacteriological and chemical weapons, the employment of such weapons against Chinese civilians, the ill-treatment and massacre of prisoners of war, the sexual exploitation of tens of thousands of Asian—in particular Korean—and Dutch women as “comfort women,” and the like.

Thus, the Japanese, who have had such historical experience, should be able to comprehend the physical and psychological pain of the victims of crimes against humanity and, at the same time, the heavy responsibility of the perpetrators of such crimes. In other words, the Japanese have the capability to understand crimes against humanity (in particular those of “mass killing” and “indiscriminate bombing”) as problems relevant to their own experience from two opposing viewpoints: one as victims and the other as perpetrators. This dual perspective must be fully utilized to confront the current situation of war and conflict as well as to promote peace studies, peace education, and peace movements.

If peace-related activities in Hiroshima can overcome their existing self-imposed restriction to nuclear issues and revitalize both realms of research and peace action by embracing the above-mentioned perspectives, Hiroshima will surely contribute to the fields of peace studies, peace education, and peace movements far more widely and effectively. This would seem to be the way of keeping the peace spirit of Hiroshima vigorous for many more years to come.

Tanaka is professor at HPI
The Nuclear-Weapon States made an unequivocal commitment to eliminate their nuclear stockpiles at the 2000 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference. How should we bring this commitment into practice in the first 10 years of the 21st century? With this question and a sense of crisis in mind, the Research Project on Nuclear Disarmament in the 21st Century of the Hiroshima Peace Institute, led by project leader Mitsuru Kurosawa, professor at the Osaka School of International Public Policy, Osaka University, has pursued almost continuous research since the spring of 2000. Its results were compiled by HPI and published by Horitsuunkasha in September, 2002, under the title “Nuclear Disarmament in the 21st Century: A Message from Hiroshima.” Five hundred forty-eight (548) pages in length, it is printed on A5 paper and priced at 5,000 yen.

Following a preface by Jayantha Dhanapala, the U.N. Under-Secretary -General for Disarmament Affairs, the book consists of six sections. In the first section, “The World Situation of Nuclear Weapons,” Japanese, British, and American contributors analyze an international situation in which the U.S. has intensified its unilateral stance since the September 11th attacks. They also analyze the role of civil society and changes in the role of offensive and defensive weapons.

In the second section, “Nuclear Policies and Nuclear Disarmament Policies of Nuclear-Weapon States,” specialists from the U.S., Russia, the U.K., and France analyze and propose the process their governments should follow in nuclear disarmament policies in the future. The specialists are from four of the five nuclear powers (the exception is China), which adopted the unequivocal commitment to eliminate their nuclear stockpiles at the 2000 NPT Review Conference. As the book shows, the outlook for nuclear disarmament still seems bleak, if we depend solely on the initiatives of the nuclear powers. On the other hand, this section presents the possibility that one of the declared nuclear states, the U.K., will soon possess no nuclear weapons.

In the third section, “Regional Issues Caused by Nuclear Weapons,” current problems are analyzed in three regions: South Asia, the Middle East and the Korean Peninsula. In South Asia, two de facto nuclear-weapon states, India and Pakistan, are in a rivalry. In the Middle East, Israel is believed to have embarked on nuclear development in the 1970’s, and Arab nations have been in conflict with Israel. As for the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (North Korea), suspected nuclear development there has been raising concern.

In the fourth section, “Non-Nuclear Policies and Nuclear Disarmament Policies of Non-Nuclear Weapon States,” Australia, New Zealand, Canada and Japan are cited as nations that are enthusiastically promoting non-nuclear or disarmament policies. In addition, this section mentions the New Agenda Coalition as an international group eagerly promoting a non-nuclear policy. Researchers from Japan and Canada, and also an Irish diplomat, write about achievements so far and future tasks.

In the fifth section, “Concrete Measures for Nuclear Disarmament,” specific measures for promoting nuclear disarmament are spelled out. More precisely, this section discusses the following points: the outlook for and significance of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty, the possibility of denuclearization in the Southern Hemisphere by linking nuclear-free-zone treaties, the role of the U.N. as an important actor for nuclear disarmament, and the role of NGOs that support the U.N. in civil society.

In the sixth section, “Conclusion,” based on the detailed discussions in each chapter, Mitsuru Kurosawa makes a comprehensive proposal of tasks for nuclear disarmament, which should be put into action in the early part of the 21st century.

By Kazumi Mizumoto, associate professor at HPI
July 6-7 Karumi Mizumoto attends the spring 2002 research meeting of the Japan Society for Studies in Journalism and Mass Communication in Niigata.

July 9 HPI sponsors an international symposium on “The Russo-Japan War and Ryotaro Shiba’s Historical View” in the HPI lecture series for citizens of Hiroshima City, at the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum.

July 10 Akiyama gives a lecture on “The Dispatch of Troops to the Korean Peninsula by Hideyoshi Toyotomi from a Korean Perspective” in the HPI lecture series for citizens of Hiroshima City, at the Hiroshima City Plaza for Town Development through Citizen Exchange.

July 11 Ikako Togo gives a lecture on “Japan in the East Asian Security Environment” in a seminar for senior citizens in Furui, organized by and held at Furui Ward Community Hall.

July 12 Akiyama gives a lecture on “Japan and the World Situation: 1. Where Japan Stand Now” in the second series of the Peace Education Course, organized by and held at Furui Ward Community Hall.

July 15 Akiyama gives a lecture in a seminar on economic development policies held by JICA in Tokyo.

July 19 Mizumoto gives a lecture on “Japan’s Self-Defense Forces” in the second series of the Peace Education Course, organized by and held at Furui Ward Community Hall.

Aug. 26-25 Akiyama serves as a coordinator at the 16th ACT Transcultural Seminar organized by the Association for Communication of Transcultural Study (ACT).

Aug. 30-31 Christian P. Scherrer attends as the observer the annual session of the U.N. Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, Geneva, Switzerland. Scherrer meets with a number of indigenous representatives from around the world.

Aug. 31 HPI President Haruhiro Fukui attends a meeting on the introduction and propagation of college courses about Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Mizumoto meets Martin Shaw, professor of English literature at the University of Cambridge, to discuss the renovation of exhibits related to the reasons for the dropping of the atomic bomb, at the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum.

Sept. 4 Mizumoto gives a lecture on “Developments Related to Nuclear Weapons in the Post-World War II World” at the 5th session of the Peace Club for Junior High and High School Students, sponsored by Hiroshima City and the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, at the Hiroshima Children’s Museum.

Sept. 8 Scherrer gives a lecture on “The Relief of the 9.11 Terrorist Attacks by the Bush Government and the Crisis of World Peace” at a Peace Forum sponsored by HANWA, at the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum.

Sept. 9 Fukui gives a lecture on “My View on Peace” at Kagawa Medical University. Tanaka gives a lecture on “The Dispatch of Troops to the Korean Peninsula by Hideyoshi Toyotomi from a Korean Perspective” in the HPI lecture series for citizens of Hiroshima City, at the Hiroshima City Plaza for Town Development through Citizen Exchange. Tanaka, Scherrer, Mizumoto, Akiyama, and Hironaka meet U.N. Disarmament Fellows and discuss nuclear issues at the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum.

Sept. 10 Mizumoto gives a lecture on “The Problem Peace Now” at an annual meeting of the Japanese Society for Aesthetics and Peace Mental Museum.

Sept. 12 Scherrer gives a lecture on “Gross Human Rights Violations and War Against the Ormone in Ethiopia” at the invitation of the Hiroshima Group of Amnesty International, at the World Friendship Center in Hiroshima.

Sept. 12-13 Tanaka and Nagai attend the first workshop of HPI Research Project “Military Violence Against Civilian—A Comparative and Historical Analysis,” at HPI.

Sept. 16 Tanaka gives a lecture on “The Sino-Japanese War and Yukihiko Fukuzawa’s View of Asia” in the HPI lecture series for citizens of Hiroshima City, at the Hiroshima City Plaza for Town Development through Citizen Exchange.


Sept. 23 Tanaka gives a lecture on “Sexual Violence: the Uniqueness of the Comfort Women System and the Fundamental Characteristics of Sexual Exploitation” at the annual conference of the Materialism Studies Association of Japan held at Takasaki City University of Economics. Mizumoto gives a lecture on “Nuclear Disarmament Efforts” at the 6th session of the Peace Club for Junior High and High School Students, organized by Hiroshima City and the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, at the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum.

Sept. 24 Mizumoto gives a lecture on “The Achievements of and Tasks for Hiroshima” at the Hiroshima Peace Forum organized by Hiroshima City and the Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation, at the Hiroshima International Conference Center.

Visitors to HPI

July 9 Dr. Stein Tnassen, Director of International Peace Research Institute, Oslo (PRIO), and J. Peter Burgess, Senior Researcher of PRIO.

July 15 Dr. Tetsuo Sato, Koremoto member of the Lower House.

July 19 Tanya Bennett, Second Secretary at the Australian Embassy.

Aug. 2 Dr. Anthony D’Filippo, Second Secretary at the British Embassy, and Dr. Andrew Knibbs, First Secretary at the British Embassy.

Sept. 20 Paul Meyer, Minister and Deputy Head of Mission at the Canadian Embassy.

Sept. 21 Anitha S. Ghosh, Director at the Indian Council of Social Science Research, and Dr. Indra Ghosh.

- Employment Opportunities at HPI -

Hiroshima Peace Institute at Hiroshima City University, Japan, invites applications for the positions of research associate, assistant professor, associate professor, and/or professor.

Applicants should have a solid academic background in one or more of the following areas: peace theory and methodology of peace research; the Hiroshima and Nagasaki nuclear holocausts; the development, production, deployment, proliferation, disarmament and abolition of nuclear and conventional weapons; international and civil conflict, peace, security in the Asia-Pacific region; and pacifistic ideas, culture, and movements in the Asia-Pacific region.

Mature scholars (under age 60) are particularly welcome to apply. Candidates should possess, or be in the process of obtaining, a doctorate. Fluency in English is required. Applications must reach the Institute by December 20, 2002. All appointments will be effective on dates between July 1, 2003 and July 1, 2004.

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Before applying, please refer to our Web site at:

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