

BOOK REVIEWS

John L. Esposito and Dalia Mogahed. *Who Speaks for Islam? What a Billion Muslims REALLY THINK*. New York: Gallup Press, 2007. ISBN: 978-1-59562-017-0

Values and Perceptions of the Islamic and Middle Eastern Publics. Mansoor Moaddel, editor. New York: Palgrave / MacMillan, 2007. ISBN: 978-1-4039-7527-0

Reviewed by Gordon L. Bowen

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Seven years now separate us from 9/11 and the United States apparently has a public relations problem. Though few in the press and even fewer scholars have embraced The Government's prescribed solution, since January 2008 the U.S. officially no longer has been engaged in a "Global War on Terrorism," or GWOT. That month, at the direction of the Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Government officials were directed to jettison the GWOT from their vocabulary. At least until January 2009 when new wordsmiths arrive in Washington, Homeland Security would have it be said that the U.S. is pursuing a "Global Struggle for Security and Progress," the newly preferred war-moniker for the final Bush year.

In the precise sense George Orwell anticipated, in *The Politics of the English Language* (1946), that "the great enemy of clear language is insincerity," this announcement of the death of the official term "GWOT" is insincere. On the ground in Afghanistan and Iraq, from the air in Pakistan and Somalia, and throughout the world in less visible ways, in 2008 Muslims still are being detained and still are dying at the hands of U.S. Armed Forces. Our state, if not our whole nation, remains at war. But naming it a "war on terrorism" is said to be breeding misunderstanding of American purposes. In an age in which it is officially inconvenient to refer now to the enemies of the U.S. as "*jihadis*," or as "*Islamists*," how shall we think about our potential adversaries? With descriptors such as "Islamic terrorist" and "*Salafist*" also forbidden, how shall we speak of the actual enemies of the United States?

In different ways, these two new books embrace the rationale for this search for a new lexicon in the Middle East and South Asia. Esposito uses findings from survey research among Muslim publics to describe a struggle different from the one Americans have come to know. He argues: "Muslims truly reject terrorism," so the modern collision of cultures is "an 'out group' activity as any other violent crime" (95). Both books demonstrate the authors' perceptions of the inadequacy of code-words such as "the clash of civilizations," that spread in the current decade following Harvard's Samuel P. Huntington use of the phrase in a summer 1993 *Foreign Affairs* article of that same name.

Of the two volumes, the edited collection by Moaddel gives scholars much stronger guidance. While Esposito feigns to present as an academic study, Gallup's preference for mass audiences has insured that footnoting, orientation to existing social science theories, and information about the surveys' methodologies are all kept to an absolute minimum. A sparse 166 pages of large print text are all Esposito needs to provide his overview of one billion Muslims' opinions. Despite this brevity, direct quotations of anonymous individuals' views manage to be included on most pages. This is a book designed to be leafed through while waiting in an airport, as its numerous boxed sidebars pack summaries of what seem to be key survey findings to assist those too busy to pore over the short book itself. Readers who penetrate the breezy, bullet-point riddled narrative will discover no complete tables: full reports of the actual surveys cited are entirely absent from the book. Most readers of Esposito, therefore, are likely to linger over sidebars that report what seem to be key facts. The impression conveyed advances most the belief that massive misunderstandings have guided the Bush Administration approach to the post-9/11 global security situation. Consider this arrestingly editorial sidebar on page 97: "There are 1.3 billion Muslims

today worldwide. If the 7% (91 million) of the politically radicalized continue to feel politically dominated, occupied, and disrespected, the West will have little, if any, chance of changing their minds.” That heady mix of (apparent) survey results and conjecture appears directly adjacent to this conclusion in the text that “about 9 in 10 Muslims are moderates.” Tables which report the data from which these insights emerged, however, appear nowhere in the book. And just what “moderate” means to Esposito proves equally tricky to learn. Contradictions never are reconciled between what (by Western standards) appear to be modern views of Saudi women favoring the right to drive an automobile, which receive about as much of Esposito’s attention as do survey reports stressing a widespread embrace of a preference to be governed by Islamic *shari’a* law, a decidedly anti-modern set of social and criminal codes.

The breezy and essentially *a priori* conclusions that abound in Esposito nowhere are to be found in the Moaddel volume. *Values and Perceptions of the Islamic and Middle Eastern Publics* approaches very differently the issue of what Muslims think. The international team of contributors to the Moaddel (Sociology, Eastern Michigan University) study includes major figures in survey research. Ten of the twelve chapters are careful empirical studies, among them excellent pieces analyzing Muslims’ worldviews in comparative perspective (Ronald Inglehart of University of Michigan), a seven nation comparative inquiry into the implications for economic justice in the context of *shari’a* law by senior sociologists Nancy J. Davis (DePauw University) and Robert V. Robinson (Indiana University), a survey based inquiry into attitudes toward democracy in four Arab states (Mark Tessler, University of Michigan), a policy relevant examination of the impact of war on levels of xenophobia in Iraq (Inglehart, Tessler, and editor Moaddel), and a look at how Moroccans and Egyptians responded to 9/11 (Moaddel and University of Cairo’s Abdul-Hamid Abdul-Latif). All contributions proceed after having been built around solid orientations to recognizable academic literature across the social sciences. Each chapter speaks to the adequacy of major theories appropriate to their foci, ranging from modernization and development theories, to cross-regional debates about key features of democratic transitions. Throughout, the volume employs and reports clearly about appropriate methodologies to engage important questions, rooting its topical and contemporary focus in a manner to enlarge the needed realm required for policy thinking.

The editor has done a superb job orienting the book overall within accepted methods and questions central to comparative study in the social sciences. Of greatest interest to this reviewer was Tessler’s comparative study of how Islamic identity affects attitudes toward democracy in Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Algeria. The portrait that emerged showed considerable variation in the preferences of different national samples regarding the degree of proper influence for Islam over politics and public life, with greatest enthusiasm for religion in politics found in Egypt, and lowest enthusiasm for it in Algeria. Two of the conclusions that emerge from Tessler’s research merit special attention: “[s]upport for political Islam does not lead to unfavorable attitudes toward democracy...” (120), and “cultural explanations alleging that Islam discourages or even prevents the emergence of support for democracy are misguided, indeed, misleading” (122).

Tessler carefully avoids leaping atop a soapbox to pronounce policy implications, but American readers in 2008 would be well advised to feel less constrained. As the nation debates alternative courses amid three taxing wars, sound analysis of facts surely should precede hasty judgments. Recent tinkering by the Bush Administration in the realm of diction has suggested our war difficulties best can be finessed by essentially “re-branding” key terms used to describe a continuing, even broadening, conflict which must be won militarily. Closer attention to the diverse preferences of Muslim peoples—as the contributors to the Moaddel volume provide—, on the other hand, might point us toward changed policies. In light of the short lived but abandoned “Democracy in the Middle East” initiative, one ironic feature of that change might well be a renewed emphasis on overcoming the several difficult obstacles to promoting genuine democracy in the Muslim world.

Chen Guidi and Wu Chuntao, *Will the Boat Sink the Water: The Life of China's Peasants*. New York: Public Affairs, 2006. Translated by Zhu Hong. 229 pp. ISBN: 1-58648-358-6

Reviewed by Daniel A. Métraux

The media in the West inundates us with news of China's economic miracle. There are glowing reports of the tall sky scrapers and the new technological marvels of Shanghai and Beijing -- wonders such as the world's fastest train that whips travelers from Shanghai's airport to downtown in just a matter of minutes. We hear about the unbelievable pollution found in China's air and unbelievably dirty waters, but what we don't often hear about is the misery still prevalent among the nation's hundreds of millions of peasants.

Historians often describe Mao's communist movement as a revolution of the peasants and the land. Deng Xiaoping's reforms were supposed to give the peasantry rights to their own land and greater control over their destinies. When I accompanied a Fulbright seminar across much of China in the summer of 2006 one heard that since 1980 the country's per capita gross domestic product (GDP) had increased nine-fold since 1980 and that hundreds of millions of Chinese had been lifted out of poverty. But when wandering the streets of Beijing and other towns and villages one sees signs of poverty, much of it very intense, everywhere.

Chen Guidi and Wu Chuntao, a husband-wife team and two leading Chinese writers and investigative journalists, have written a book, originally in Chinese but recently translated into English as *Will the Boat Sink the Water: The Life of China's Peasants*, where they conclude that China's economic miracle is happening despite, not because of, China's 900 million peasants. Several years ago they went to Wu's native Anhui Province, one of the poorest areas in China, to investigate the conditions of peasants there. They asked one very basic question: Have the peasants been betrayed by the revolution undertaken in their name by Mao and his successors? Their response is a very disturbing and emphatic "Yes!." Told principally through four dramatic narratives of particular Anhui people, we get a vivid portrait of the pain, poverty and corruption that China's peasants face every day.

We see that the living conditions of many peasant families have not really improved at all since the Communist revolution that was supposed to be realized on their behalf and that Chinese leaders today are just as oppressive and corrupt as they were before the revolution. They are, note the authors, the truly the voiceless in modern China. They are also, perhaps, the reason that China will not be able to make the great social and economic leap forward, because if it is to leap it must carry the 900 million with it.

The four case studies described here are in-depth very detailed portraits of the struggles peasants face in various villages. The story of one corrupt and cruel village official, Gao Xuewen, gives one much of the flavor of the book:

To begin at the beginning, Gao Xuewen was universally hated in Gao Village. Ever since worming his way to the position of Village Chief, the man had been walking on clouds with his nose in the air, seeming to have forgotten the surname of his own ancestors. No matter how many documents and directives were passed down from the Party Central Committee on relieving the peasants' burden, the amount of taxes and dues in Gao Village still depended on Gao's word. You had to pay exactly what he ordered, and not a cent less. Opposing Gao was tantamount to opposing the people's government, even the party. If you were so unfortunate as to get into his bad books, he had no compunction against cursing and striking you. Not enough to be beaten and abused, the injured party was obliged to apologize before the matter was allowed to end. (68)

Readers of this book may well reach the conclusion that China's Communist Revolution, rather than being particularly a good thing for the nation's peasants, was in fact an unmitigated disaster for most. We see how local authorities abuse, cheat, vastly overtax and physically abuse peasants in their villages and

regions. Those so abused have no recourse, and when a few brave souls do raise their voices, they and their families are often arrested on trumped up charges or even physically attacked or killed. The writers help us understand some of the corruption, bribery and intimidation that is undertaken by corrupt local officials against those Chinese citizens who can bear it the least, poor peasants. It also shows the courageous efforts undertaken by some peasants to achieve basic justice, and be able to get on with their lives.

Chen and Wu have produced a brilliant but highly disturbing book. Their work for understandable reasons was banned soon after its publication in China, but tens of thousands of underground copies have circulated throughout the country. It is exactly the kind of book that anybody even remotely interested in China should read because it gives a much more realistic portrait of the underside of China's economic miracle than is available elsewhere. I have added this book to the reading list for my courses on modern China and I would urge every other Asian Studies professor to do likewise.

Gi Wook Shin and Kyung Moon Hwang, Eds. *Contentious Kwangju: The May 18 Uprising in Korea 'as Past and Present*. Kanham MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2003. 159pp.

Reviewed by Eric Strange

May 1980 marked the time when the world finally paid attention to South Korea. The images of soldiers kicking and beating civilians in the province of Kwangju horrified many. For some, the image served as a haunting reminder of what can happen when evil men go unchallenged. For most of the revolt, news of what was going on did not get out to the rest of Korea or the rest of the world. South Korean students studying abroad feared for loved ones back home once news of the strife became known. They heard that what was going on in Kwangju was that the uprising was a "Communist-agitated incident" with the government having done what it could in order to preserve national security. The subject became taboo among South Korean citizens themselves. However, with the emergence of Korean democracy, the Kwangju uprising has claimed its rightful place in history. Gi-Wook Shin and Kyung offer a book with a balanced and comprehensive assessment of both the event and its effects on the people of South Korea.

The editors employ a variety of sources as they examine this very tumultuous time in South Korean history. Some of the materials found here include notes from leading American officials in Korea at the time, oral interviews with people who were at the front lines during the confrontations of troops and students, and the editors' own experiences. This work offers not just statements from US and Korean personnel, but also telling contrasts with the infamous Tiananmen massacre of 1989.

There are two main sections of the book. Part one offers personal retrospectives of the actual event while the second part explores the aftermath of the incident. Gi-Wook Shin's introduction gives the reader a comprehensive overview of the importance of the massacre in Korean and world history. Shin discusses the problems of legitimacy that plagued the government of Chun Doo Hwan through his tenure in office and the emergence of anti-Americanism among some college students who were convinced that the US government was an accomplice of the Chun government. Later, in a concluding afterword, Hwang summarizes the resistance heritage of Kwangju and its place in Korean history. This hub of the Cholla region in southwest Korea has become a shrine as citizens remember it as the birthplace of contemporary Korean nationalism.

Jung-Woon Choi's opening chapter, "The Formation of an Absolute Community," describes the citizens' protest as they formed a community against the government's flagrant violence. The next chapter by Jong-Chui Ahn tells the story of citizens coming together to defend their family, children and friends. Jean Underwood then relates her personal memoirs and the diaries of friends as eyewitnesses to this ugly segment of Korean history. Keun-sik Jung closes this section of the book with a chapter, "Has Kwangju been realized?" Here Jung concludes that the power shift that occurred in 1997 in South Korea was only the beginning of how Kwangju set the tone for autonomy and integration and, hopefully, down the road,

to national unification with North Korea. Although the road to true democracy may be hard, Jung remains confident that South Korea can pull it off. He points to other nations that have used South Korea in the past as their model when declaring independence from a dictatorship.

The second part of the book opens with an article by Linda S. Lewis and Juna Byun who discuss the legacy of the Kwangju movement and its living victims. Lewis and Byun draw the conclusion that people die many times through post-traumatic stress disorders which encompass physical, psychological, and financial loss. Jung-Kwan Cho in chapter six talks about the Chun regime and that government's lack of legitimacy. Cho argues that the Kwangju movement has inspired contemporary and future politicians to keep democracy in South Korea alive.

Writer Don Baker comments on the transformation in the public mind of those involved in the violence of the Kwangju from innocent victims to martyrs who fought tyranny and injustice. Baker cites literature, music, and other forms of media to support his contention. The book closes with Sally Yea exploring the historical and political topography that actually led to the uprising in Kwangju.

Both Shin and Hwang deserve high praise for editing this powerful testimony to the meaning of Kwangju. The uprising today occupies a deserved place in both Korean and world history. This collection of articles will serve as a valuable instrument to future historians who look back on the Kwangju as a critical step forward in the search for democracy in Korea and Asia.

Charles K. Armstrong, *The Koreas*. New York and London: Routledge, 2007. 210 Pages. ISBN: 0-41594-853-3.

Reviewed by Daniel A. Métraux

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When developing a reading list for my college course on modern Korea, I found that it was not easy to find a book which deals simultaneously with both contemporary North and South Korea. My main text, Bruce Cumings's brilliant *Korea's Place in the Sun*, does have some chapters devoted to North Korea, but even here there are only limited attempts at cross-comparisons. It was only when I read Charles K. Armstrong's 2007 book, *The Koreas*, did I find quite what I wanted.

Armstrong, Associate Professor of History and Director of the Center for Korean Research at Columbia University, is one of the leading experts on Korean affairs and author of many books on the subject. His short book covers a wide range of topics on contemporary Korea including Korea's place in the world, South Korea's rise to globalism, the limits of North Korea's "self-reliance," the Korea Diaspora, and the question of unity. Armstrong's clear analytical writing in these chapters gives the student or general reader an excellent view of what is transpiring on the Korean peninsula today.

Armstrong's most interesting chapter, "One Korea, Many Koreas," focuses on the challenging question of Korean unity, which he views more as a distant ideal rather than a readily attainable reality. He is not optimistic when he notes that:

"There has never been a modern, independent Korean nation-state. The Korean nation has been, and remains, a nation in fragments. Foreign domination, colonization, national division, and diaspora characterize Korea's entire 'long twentieth century' from the late 19th century to the present." The division of Korea into two mutually exclusive regimes, he argues, contradicts the idea of Korean unity. "But division also reinforces unity as an ideal: the abstract goal of political unification elides both the real differences that have emerged between the two societies since division, and the differences within each of them. It almost goes without saying that after sixty years of radically different political, economic, and social systems, the two Koreas have evolved into two very different kinds of societies." The ideal goal of unity is also hampered by the huge economic gap between the two nations—not only would the hordes of

poverty-stricken North Koreans swamp South Korea's economy, but the vastly different cultural and social differences that have grown up between the two would make it hard if not impossible for people from both countries to live together. The reality is that we now have two very separate Koreas that are not at all amenable to unity anytime soon.

Armstrong's *The Koreas* is a clear and concise analysis of the impact of globalization on both North and South Korea. He discusses the various ways we can look at Korea and Koreans, how in fact there are today many different Koreas including large Korean communities in the West, and how Koreans and the Koreas look at each other. There is here a fascinating interweaving of facts and analysis to demonstrate just how complex the problems of Korea are today. We also see here how very important Korea has become in world affairs. There is no other recent publication on Korea which does as good a job in bringing together so much on Korea as does Armstrong in this seminal work.

Hideaki Matsuoka, *Japanese Prayer Below the Equator: How Brazilians Believe in the Church of World Messianity*. Lexington Books: Lanham MD: 2007. ISBN: 0-7391-1379

Reviewed By Daniel A. Métraux

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Many observers in the West tend to view the concept of globalization as the spread of Western culture to the rest of the world, but the situation is in fact far more complex. Many of my American college students have become passionate about aspects of modern Japanese pop culture and today several new Japanese religions such as Soka Gakkai, Seicho-no-Ie and the Church of World Messianity have found strong support from hundreds of thousands of non-ethnic Japanese throughout the world. Professor Matsuoka Hideaki's *Japanese Prayer Below the Equator: How Brazilians Believe in the Church of World Messianity* is a fascinating case-study of this Japanese religion's rapid growth in Brazil.

The Church of World Messianity (*Sekai kyūsei kyō*) is a prominent Japanese "new religion" founded in 1935 by Okada Mokichi (1882-1955) who derived many of his new faith's teachings from Omoto-kyo, an older "new religion" he belonged to at an earlier date. Greatly influenced by traditional Japanese Shinto, the heart of the religion centers around the concept of Jhorei (loosely translated as "God's Healing Light"). Okada is said to have received a divine revelation which empowered him with Jhorei, permitting him to channel the light of God into other people to remove illness, poverty and strife throughout the world. World Messianity's aim is to "realize Heaven on Earth," which means "a world without sickness, poverty and war." (Matsuoka, 50).

While the Church of World Messianity (COWM) is far smaller than very large Japanese new religious organizations like Soka Gakkai, its claims of a following of 800,000 in Japan and Brazil make it one of the larger new religions in Japan. Like several other of Japan's New Religions, World Messianity has made a major attempt to proselytize its faith in Brazil which has one of the largest expatriate Japanese populations anywhere. Seicho-no-ie and Perfect Liberty claim 2.5 million and 350,000 members respectively, placing them ahead of the 300,000 members claimed by COWM.

Berkeley-trained Japanese anthropologist and psychiatrist Matsuoka Hideaki has done extensive fieldwork in Brazil focusing on why a Shinto-based Japanese religion would find acceptance in a vastly different culture in Brazil. Contrary to what one might think, COWM has the highest percentage (60%) of non-ethnic Japanese of all the Japanese new religions in Brazil. A key reason for this development is that starting in the 1950s, the first COWM missionaries from Japan immediately focused on propagating their faith to non-Japanese communities. Conversions came slowly, but increased very sharply in the 1980s and 1990s once COWM began developing strong roots in various Brazilian communities.

Matsuoka lists five factors that have contributed to the strong success of new Japanese religions in Brazil:

1. Adoption of Portuguese
2. Training of non-ethnic Japanese-Brazilian clergy
3. Adoption of the Brazilian way of life and thinking
4. Support from Japanese headquarters
5. Respect of the relationship between Brazilians and Japanese and/or Japanese culture.

The fact that COWM closely adheres to 1-4 on this list can partially explain its success in Brazil.

Cultural adaptation, however, is not the only reasons why these Japanese religions achieve success. My studies of Soka Gakkai activities in Southeast Asia, Hong Kong, Australia and Canada indicate that the Gakkai's emphasis on individual self-empowerment to attain one's goals in life and achieving benefits (including greater happiness) here and now have won it a large following among better-educated, younger and more self-motivated natives. Matsuoka makes a similar discovery about COWM. He quotes Brazilian followers who are attracted by the religion's doctrine "that human beings can change their lives by themselves." (Matsuoka, 161)

Matsuoka's work is valuable not only because of his study of COWM in Brazil, but also for his extensive introductory analysis of the history and significance of Japanese new religions in general. Because of these extensive background comments, this study is accessible not only to the specialist, but to the general reader as well. The research and bibliography are superb and the writing is clear. The author's experience of being on a COWM pilgrim bus that was hijacked by four thieves and the surprising reaction of the pilgrims to this situation makes for fascinating reading. The only really disappointing section of the book is the very brief conclusion which fails to really discuss the significance of many of Matsuoka's findings.

Amy Docksert Marcus, *Jerusalem 1913*. London: Penguin 2007.

Reviewed By Daniel A. Métraux

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The on-going clash between Palestinians and Israelis has its origins in the late 1800s when the modern concept of nationalism was gaining traction in Europe and elsewhere. The area that now encompasses Israel and Palestine was firmly under the control of the Ottoman Empire. The Zionist movement in Europe led by Herzl and others determined that Palestine was to be the homeland of the Jews and by 1913 many Jews had migrated there from Europe and elsewhere. Arabs in Palestine, on the other hand, were growing restless under Ottoman rule, especially when so much of their land was being bought out by Jewish settlers. Both groups sought to assert and protect themselves under the inept and deteriorating rule of the Ottomans.

Wall Street Journal reporter Amy Dockser Marcus has prepared a short, succinct, and clear account of the period culminating in World War I when the nucleus of today's bitter conflict was born. Through Marcus' writing one can clearly see in embryonic form the entire mess that so engulfs the Middle East today. We see how the precarious balance of people and forces in the region was shattered by the convulsive ways of nationalism. This well-written fascinating little book belongs in the syllabus of any course on the history of the Middle East.

Kozaburo Nagatsu, Hisao Suzuki, and Toshio Yamamoto, Eds, *Against Nuclear Weapons: A Collection of Poems by 181 Poets*. Tokyo: Coal Sack Books, 2007. Translated by: Naoshi Koriyama, Masumi Oyama, and Aya Yuuki. ISBN: 9784903393216

Reviewed By Daniel A. Métraux

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This large anthology consists of poems by eminent Japanese poets and peace activists who wish to keep alive the memories of the horrific atomic bombing of Nagasaki and Hiroshima and the on-going threat that these weapons present the world today. There are 304 pages of translations of poems and short essays by Japanese writers dating from 1947 to 2007.

The editors published this “anthology of poems about the Atomic Bombs so that we may not forget the victims of the Atomic Bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki on August 6 and 9, 1945. We vowed that the nuclear bombs used in Hiroshima and Nagasaki must be the first and last nuclear weapons ever used by humankind.... We firmly believe that some day poetry about the Atomic Bombs will take root at the bottom of each and every human being’s heart as a foundation for peace. Then, the imprinted shadows of those victims of the atomic bombs will be released from the stone and will start talking to us about their indescribable regret and their aspirations for peace.”

The following poem composed by Yoshiko Ito in the 1980s typifies much of the poetry in this volume:

Before dawn we had much rain.
In the western sky lightning flashed.
But soon the sky turned clear as if it had forgotten all.
And the sun in August shines burned the stone pavement

It is 11:02 am. To the sky of Nagasaki
The sound of the siren comes shouting up from the bottom of the earth.
People stop walking, have a rest and stop breathing.
I also bow quietly in the middle of preparing lunch

That day.
Mothers were preparing for the substitute food.
Children who died will stay hungry in the sky.
They did not have a drop of water
Because lunch had not been prepared for them yet.

This is the forty second summer since then.
In the city they have too many things and too much food.
I am preparing soft porridge for my sick mother
Hamburgers for my children.

Now if I take a bow
To give another deeper prayer
How much comfort could the spirits regain?
What the dead ones had seen with their eyes
Even now I cannot see yet.

Another poem by Tamiki Hara evokes the emotion of Hiroshima:

These are human beings.
Look, how they were changed by the atomic bomb.
Bodies are so dreadfully swollen.
Men and women have become indistinguishable from each other..
Oh, out of the swollen lips of the broken face
Scorched black and deformed, came a voice,
A frail, faint voice.
“Please, help.”
These....these are human beings
These are the faces of human beings.

The poetry and lyrical essays in this volume vary greatly in quality, but throughout one gets a clear sense of the suffering and horror that the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombs brought on Japan. The poets and writers want to remind their readers that hundreds of thousands of lives were lost and many more terribly disrupted by these tragic events. It is said that young Japanese are losing the strong pacifist drive of their parents and grandparents, but this anthology assures us that those who died so miserably

In August 1945 are not forgotten. We owe a deep debt of gratitude to the editors and translators of this beautiful work for reminding us of the horrors of nuclear weaponry.