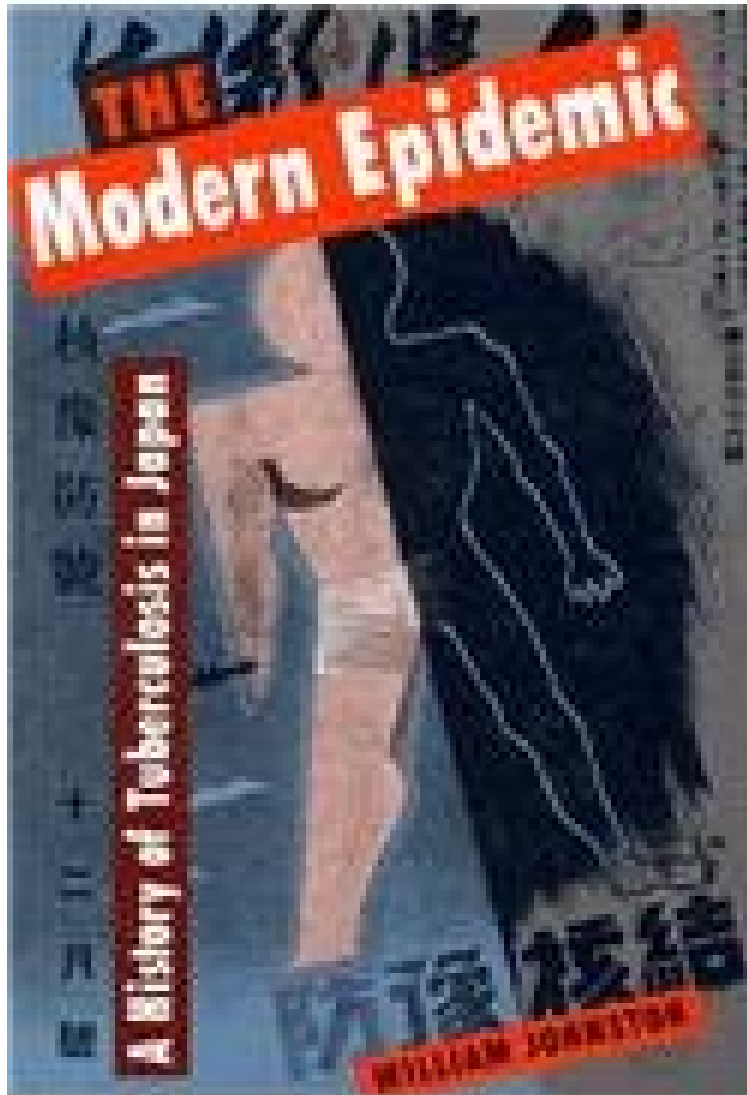


[Mobile book] The Modern Epidemic: A History of Tuberculosis in Japan (Harvard East Asian Monographs)

## The Modern Epidemic: A History of Tuberculosis in Japan (Harvard East Asian Monographs)

*William Johnston*

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**William Johnston : The Modern Epidemic: A History of Tuberculosis in Japan (Harvard East Asian Monographs)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Modern Epidemic: A History of Tuberculosis in Japan (Harvard East Asian Monographs):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Thorough and FascinatingBy CleoVery comprehensive and detailed, this book considers the tuberculosis epidemic of modern Japan from multiple perspectives. It is clearly structured, engaging and the science is well balanced with the human elements making for an interesting presentation of a complex topic.

Through a historical and comparative analysis of modern Japan's epidemic of tuberculosis, William Johnston illuminates a major but relatively unexamined facet of Japanese social and cultural history. He utilizes a broad range of sources, including medical journals and monographs, archaeological evidence, literary works, ethnographic data, and legal and government documents to reveal how this and similar epidemics have been the result of social changes that accompanied the process of modernization. Johnston also shows the ways in which modern states, private organizations, and individual citizens have responded to epidemics, and in the process reexamines the concept of the epidemic itself, showing that epidemics must be thought of not only in medical and biological terms but in political, social and cultural terms as well.

In Japan, the near panic associated for a half-century with this untreatable disease cast a dreadful shadow on any family affected by it. As a result, no accurate statistics could be kept. Families would deny its existence among their ranks, past or present, and physicians avoided making the diagnosis for fear of being blackballed in the community...William Johnston has used reports from medical journals and archeologic and ethnologic evidence. His most innovative sources are a host of contemporaneous novels. These provide word pictures of the problems of ordinary citizens coping with life with the fear engendered by a mysterious disease that took its toll in a large proportion of families and seemed to spread by magic. (New England Journal of Medicine)Expertly utilizing a wide variety of journals, statistics, and literary works, Johnston describes the tuberculosis epidemic in Japan in all its facets--social, economic, political, and cultural. The result is the most thorough and fascinating account of a modern epidemic in Japan currently available in English. (W. Wayne Farris Technology and Culture)The book... is a substantial and well-written study of a disease that was not only a major killer in the first half of this century, but also a major social and economic problem that broke families apart and eroded the work force. The author is to be highly commended for this instructive, thorough, and at times thought-provoking study, which is a significant addition to the meager literature available in English on the medical history of Japan. Its appeal should extend to students in the fields of medical history, social and cultural history, the history of public health, and even literary history...Johnston has done pioneering work in sketching the broad picture. (Edwina Palmer and Geoffrey Rice Journal of Japanese Studies)From the Back CoverThrough a historical and comparative analysis of modern Japan's epidemic of tuberculosis, William Johnston illuminates a major but relatively unexamined facet of Japanese social and cultural history: the history of the tuberculosis epidemic. He utilizes a broad range of sources, including medical journals and monographs, archaeological evidence, literary works, ethnographic data, and legal and government documents to reveal how this and similar epidemics have been the result of social changes that accompanied the process of modernization.About the AuthorWilliam Johnston is Assistant Professor of History at Wesleyan University.