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In this issue we explore Japan's involvement in Manchuria with four reviews looking at books covering different aspects of this period and its bitter aftermath. Japan invaded Manchuria in 1931 and set up the puppet state of *Manshūkoku* (満州国) into which there was a massive influx of Japanese colonists. By the time Tokyo surrendered in 1945 about 1.5 million Japanese civilians had been encouraged to settle in the colony. Upon Tokyo's capitulation, the Soviets immediately attacked Japanese forces in Manchuria resulting in chaos which left tens of thousands of Japanese women and children stranded in China. Today this group of abandoned Japanese are generally referred to as the *zanryu-hojin* (残留邦人) and are the subject of Yeeshan Chan's superbly researched new book. Most abandoned children were adopted by poor Chinese peasant families and absorbed into the local population while young Japanese women were forced to marry local men. In her book the author examines the life histories of a number of *zanryu-hojin* and their families. Most suffered great poverty and hardships in the immediate postwar decades and it was not until they were allowed to return to Japan in the 1980s and 1990s that their economic situation changed. Chan also looks at the impact these people are having on Japan and China today. It is estimated that in Japan *zanryu-hojin* and their extended families number at least 100,000. Fumiko Halloran looks at a book on the plight of Japanese prisoners of war who were captured by the Soviets in Manchuria. The number of POWs is estimated to be well over 600,000 many of whom were sent to Siberia and other parts of the Soviet Union. Although the American and Soviet governments concluded an agreement in 1946 to return the POWs within a year, the USSR endlessly delayed the process and it was not until 1956 that the last 811 survivors returned to Japan. At least 60,000 Japanese died from hard labour, hunger, and illness. The book *Falling Blossom* depicts the real life story of Kiyoshi Suzuki who was captured by the Soviets in Manchuria. Kiyoshi, who was working as an interpreter attached to a railway regiment defending the Southern Manchurian Railways Company (南満州鉄道株式会社), was shipped off to the Russian mining town of Raychikhinsk. He and the other POWs were put in cattle sheds despite freezing temperatures. Harsh conditions and a lack of food took a terrible toll on the captivities and like so many young men Kiyoshi eventually succumbed to illness and died. Kiyofumi Kato's impressive reference work examines the Southern Manchurian Railways Company, which was a key component of Japanese colonial rule. The company, which was far more than just a railway, had a profound economic and political impact on the region's development. At the time of its demise the railway ran or owned 71 companies with 340,000 employees, including 248,000 Chinese and Russians. The book is packed with maps, diagrams, photos along with a detailed chronology of the company and its structure.

Moving away from Manchuria, Susan Meehan looks at a disturbing and complex movie which follows the trail of death and destruction wrought by Yuichi Shimizu, the villain (*Akunin*) of the title. The movie explores loneliness, the desperate longing to be loved, the pain and fear of losing love and the ambivalence of good and evil. Sir Hugh Cortazzi rounds off this issue with a look at a new work on the British Museum's extensive collection of Japanese prints (*ukiyo-e*). Dr Ellis Tinios has selected a wide variety of Japanese prints for this richly illustrated volume which includes well known as well as lesser known prints in the collection. It is a fascinating survey of important aspects of Japanese prints and gives a fascinating account of how Japanese prints were made.

New reviews

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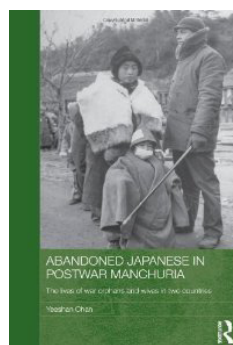
We are grateful to our regular reviewers:

Sir Hugh Cortazzi
Fumiko Halloran
Ian Nish

William Farr
Susan Meehan
Ben-Ami Shillony

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Abandoned Japanese in Postwar Manchuria: The Lives of War Orphans and Wives in Two Countries

by Yeeshan Chan

Routledge (Japan Anthropology Workshop Series), 2011, 208 pages
ISBN: 0415591813 £85.00

Review by Sean Curtin

This is a superbly researched work about the lives and experiences of the Japanese women and children who were abandoned in Manchuria at the end of the Second World War. The sheer force and tragedy of most of the individual case studies makes it compelling reading. For example, in 1945 a seven year old boy, Morita, was trapped in Manchuria, his mother was killed in a Soviet attack, his father was captured and shipped to Siberia. He found himself in a harsh refugee camp from where he was adopted by a poor Chinese family and began a life of hardship and violence. He was repatriated to Japan in 1985 with his wife and four children, but even then their lives were difficult and Mr Morita eventually died of a heart attack in 1994. It remained tough for his family after his death as a few extracts from the Morita family saga illustrate. His daughter, Kasumi's mental health deteriorated after his death, so the mother arranged for her to marry a Chinese man, "but after a few months Kasumi's husband ran away with their savings, aggravating Kasumi's mental condition. At about the same time, the youngest son's [Chinese] wife divorced him the day after her application for permanent residency was approved (page 73)." The book contains many more turbulent individual case studies and family histories which illustrate the harsh lives of these people who straddle the gulf between China and Japan.

This group of abandoned Japanese is generally referred to as the *zanryu-hojin* (残留邦人). Children are specifically referred to as *zanryu-koji* (残留孤児) meaning abandoned war orphans. Most were adopted by poor Chinese peasant families and absorbed into the local population. Some "led

their lives as ordinary Chinese without knowing their background as adopted children or Japanese orphans until they were told in their forties, fifties, or even sixties (page 30).” The Japanese women trapped in Manchuria often had no choice but to marry a local to survive the ensuing postwar chaos. They often suffered great poverty and other hardships in an environment where “wife-beating was common (page 94).” This group are referred to as zanryu-fujin (残留婦人) or stranded war-wives.

While in the 1950s there were some attempts to repatriate these people, many children were ignorant of their Japanese heritage. Most of the women had children with their new Chinese husbands and could not abandon their offspring and families, which was the price of repatriation. The Japanese state therefore concluded that these women “chose” to remain in China and it was not until later decades that their real plight and suffering was recognized. The example of Shizuko illustrates this dilemma (page 28). She visited Japan in 1967 and wanted to stay to look after her sick mother, but this would have meant abandoning her four daughters in China at a time of great chaos, so she was compelled to return to China. At the time the Japanese state viewed such cases as “merely a woman who had married a foreigner and thus given up her Japanese nationality (page 27).” Yuriko Sakamoto’s story (pages 82 -84) highlights a different set of issues. She was trapped in Manchuria, while her husband was captured by the Soviets and survived several years of harsh treatment in Siberia before being repatriated to Japan. He searched for Yuriko, but presumed she was dead and reluctantly remarried. Only later did he discover she was alive and had also remarried having five children. However, because they had married outside Japan proper, the Japanese state did not recognize their marriage as legitimate and she was classified as having “chosen” to give up her Japanese citizenship. Her former Japanese husband wanted to get back together with her, but this was not possible and he eventually committed suicide in despair. She was eventually able to come to Japan in 1977 with her Chinese family.

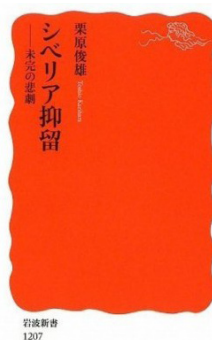
Many of these unfortunate zanryu-hojin individuals were declared “war dead” in 1959 by the Japanese government who removed 30,000 names of the “missing” from family registries (page 26). At the same time, the Chinese government estimated the number of living abandoned Japanese to be about 13,000. Many of these people were effectively cut off from all contact with Japan until the 1970s, and most endured incredible hardship.

When Japan re-established diplomatic relations with mainland China in 1972, the dynamics of the situation slowly began to change and gradually the zanryu-hojin were repatriated to Japan, often along with several generations of their extended Chinese families. Shifts in government policy over the decades have allowed more of these people to enter with their families and to resettle in Japan. Today it is estimated that they number at least

100,000 people (page 53). This is a significant figure and is having an impact on both Japan and China. These families are binding the two countries together and will no doubt have a long term impact on Sino-Japanese relations. The overseas remittances this community sends to towns in northeast China has also had a massive effect which the study charts.

The book also explores how the zanryu-hojin view themselves in the context of their dual national identities. The author, Yeeshan Chan, who describes herself as a “Hong Kong citizen holding an Australian passport (page 9),” managed to gain the confidence of this community, producing many fascinating insights from her informants. She analyzes how they identify themselves, and relate to Japan, China and different groups within each country. For example, she observes that in Tokyo the zanryu-hojin, “seemed to face more severe discriminatory attitudes from other types of Chinese migrants than they did from the mainstream Japanese (page 96).” There is also some excellent theoretical analysis, but for me the most compelling sections are the gripping case studies that depict the tremendous suffering and tragedy of these people.

Yeeshan Chan is to be commended for having produced such a substantive and impressively researched work which makes a significant contribution to our understanding of the zanryu-hojin and the impact this community is having on the people of both nations.



Japanese POWs in Siberia, Unfinished Tragedy [シベリア抑留 — 未完の悲劇]

by Toshio Kurihara [栗原俊雄]

Iwanami Shinsho [岩波新書], 2009,
211 pages, 735 yen,
ISBN-10: 4004312078

Review by Fumiko Halloran

On 9 August 1945, six days before Japan’s surrender to the Allied forces in World War II, the Soviet Army began a massive attack on Japan’s Kwantung Army [関東軍] in Manchuria [満州国] in northeast China. Some 1.6 million Soviet soldiers, 5000 tanks and 5000 planes attacked a Japanese army that had 700,000 soldiers, 200 tanks, and 200 airplanes. In Manchuria, governed by Japan, were 1.5 million Japanese civilians who had migrated there. The Soviet attacks and the ensuing collapse of the Kwantung Army resulted in chaos. The Soviets killed and raped civilians and looted their homes and shops while Japanese soldiers were imprisoned and put into hard labour, mostly in Siberia. The number of POWs was initially estimated at 600,000 but recent disclosures from Soviet archives have kept revising the number upward. While this experience is often summarized as “the POWs in Siberia,” as majority of camps were in Siberia, but in reality there were 2,000 hard labour camps for Japanese POWs spread all over the Soviet Union.

I use the term "prisoners of war" or "POW" but the Japanese word is usually "抑留者" or "detainees." The Japanese themselves refused to be called prisoners, reflecting the Japanese Imperial Army's disdain for being captured. The army indoctrinated soldiers to choose death in honour, not shame as captives, and gave them no training on how to act as prisoners.

Although the U.S. and Soviet governments concluded an agreement in 1946 to return Japanese POWs in one year, the Soviet government delayed and threw every possible obstacle in the way of fulfilling that agreement. It was not until 1956, eleven years after Japan's surrender and three years after the San Francisco Peace Treaty ended Allied occupation that the last ship delivered 811 survivors from Siberia. Even then, the Japanese foreign ministry had the contact addresses of 500 former POWs who still lived in the Soviet Union, in addition to an estimated 900 prisoners whose whereabouts were unknown. And at least 60,000 Japanese died from hard labour, hunger, and illness.

The author, an award winning journalist, interviewed many survivors and their families to present a comprehensive picture of the fate of the POWs. The survivors, in their eighties now, are still fighting in the Japanese courts for an apology and financial compensation from the Japanese government whose wartime policies caused their hardship. All appeals in the court have so far been denied. The Soviets never issued work identification papers, which has hindered their case.

The book points to a contrast in the German government's treatment of former POWs in Siberia. The number of Germans in the Soviet Union was almost 2.4 million that were detained until 1953. Japanese and German prisoners often worked side by side. Upon the return of the Germans, the Bonn government swiftly passed a special law to provide compensation and various benefits.

Among those who returned to Japan, the president of the Association of POWs in the Soviet Union, Hideyuki Aizawa, ninety years old, is former Vice Minister of the Finance Ministry and was a member of the House of Representatives until he retired at the age 84. In a different publication, Aizawa talks about the "death march in snow" in Siberia. When the war ended, he was a young army officer stationed in China but was ordered to go to Korea which the Soviet army occupied. He was put in a camp, then after a three-week train ride across Siberia, "We were dropped off at a station late at night where the snow was two meter high. The march began as snow was falling, with no knowledge of destination. If you fell asleep during the march, that meant death. Some soldiers stumbled to the ground and never woke up. Occasionally, wild dogs or wolves were running alongside us (looking for a corpse)" After several days, they finally arrived near Moscow where 5,000 middle-ranking Japanese officers were gathered with another 5,000 officers from Germany, Romania and Hungary. Aizawa spent three years in the camp and returned to Japan in 1949.

The life of POWs in Siberia was harsh [see the Review of Falling Blossom in issue 4 for an individual account of one man who was captured in Manchuria and died in a labour camp in Siberia]. The Soviets disarmed the Japanese and divided

them mostly into units of 1,000 each, then transported them on the trains to Siberia, where the prisoners were ordered to build their own camps. They were put to work in the forest to cut trees, to build railways, stations, ports, buildings for towns, to work in coal mines and in agricultural fields. Their rations were not enough so they scrambled for extra food by eating food waste from Soviet garbage bins and ate snakes, insects, and grass. Many died from chronic malnutrition. All who tried to escape were caught and shot to death. Many died from accidents with little medical treatment. Each prison was required to be financially independent and the salaries of the Soviet administrators were connected with work quotas filled by the POWs. Many administrators and guards stole food from the POWs to sell in the black market. According to the survivors, the worst enemy was the climate in which temperatures often dipped well below freezing in winter.

Worse than the physical hardships was the Soviet propaganda seeking to brainwash the Japanese. Lower ranking soldiers and non-commissioned officers were easy targets as they were already angry with the senior officers whom they blamed for losing the war against the Soviets. The Soviets did not break up the Imperial Army hierarchy as they figured that an orderly system was better for hard labour. While some Japanese officers tried to help their subordinates, many abused their positions to better themselves. Lower ranking soldiers retaliated by pointing fingers at the senior officers as reactionary anti-communists, sometimes causing violence. The Soviets appointed their own officers in charge of propaganda; they published a Japanese language newspaper filled with criticism of the emperor and capitalism but praise for communism and Stalin.

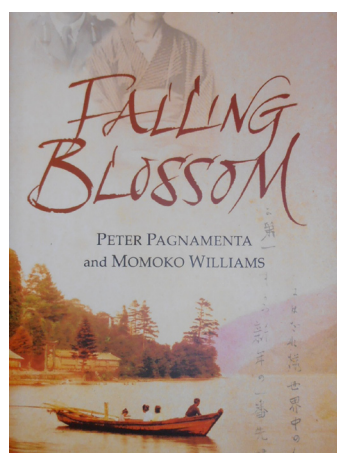
Many prisoners swallowed the slogans or pretended to be converted so they could survive in the harsh environment. This caused problems when they returned to Japan as they were suspected to be Soviet agents and could not get hired by Japanese companies. They were often harassed by the police. Some became "actives," participating in efforts to brainwash their fellow prisoners and later became involved in socialist and communist activity in Japan. But many only pretended allegiance to the Soviet system. They kept silent about their experience for fear that they would be discriminated against by their fellow citizens.

The Soviet government desperately needed a labour force in the reconstruction of their country as 30 million Soviet citizens died during World War II, according to the Soviet statistics. Stalin's idea of using POWs as labourers started in July, 1945, when the Allied forces announced the Potsdam Declaration. Although the Soviet Union and Japan had a "Non-Aggression Treaty," the author of this book determined that neither the Soviets nor Japanese military leaders intended to honour the pact and were preparing to attack each other.

According to Soviet archives, the Soviets put into hard labour not only 640,000 Japanese POWs but also 2.38 million Germans and more from twenty-four other countries, for a total of 4.17 million. The number of Japanese POWs itself became a pawn in the Cold War between the U.S. and the Soviet Union with Americans pushing for a higher number to discredit Soviets, while Soviets continued to argue for lower numbers.

In recent years, the Russians have become conciliatory on this issue. In 1992, President Mikhail Gorbachev of the Soviet Union met in Tokyo with Aizawa and other leaders in the Japanese POWs associations and expressed his sympathy for those who had suffered during the war. In 1993, President Boris Yeltsin of Russia publicly apologized in Tokyo for "the inhuman behaviour of the Russians." In 2005, the Russian government provided the Japanese Ministry of Health and Welfare microfilms of personal information of 40,940 Japanese POWs who had died during their detention. The information included names, the locations of death, cause of death, and burial spots. The ministry began DNA testing on the remains in Russia in 2003.

There are few publications in English on this subject but the POWs themselves have written published and private memoirs. Japanese academics, nonfiction writers, and journalists have analyzed the tragedy. For English publications, please check: William Nimmo, "Behind a Curtain of Silence: Japanese in Soviet Custody, 1945-1956" Greenwood Press, 1988.



**Falling Blossom:
A British Officer's
Enduring Love for a
Japanese Woman**

**By Peter Pagnamenta
and Momoko Williams**

**Century, (Random House
Group), 2006, 314 pages
including notes and
acknowledgements, £12.99,
ISBN 9781844138203 and
ISBN 1844138208**

Review by Sean Curtin

The central focus of this well written, moving and excellently researched book is the decades-long relationship between a British Army officer, Captain Arthur Hart Synnot, and a Japanese woman, Masa Suzuki, spanning the early 1900s up to the 1940s. One of the subplots of this gripping narrative is the lives of their two children, Hideo and Kiyoshi. Hideo died during childhood, while Kiyoshi grew to manhood and was eventually posted to Manchuria. His tragic story is a typical example of the fate of countless Japanese captured by the Soviets in Manchuria and the meaningless waste of precious human life. It also illustrates the incredible hardships these men endured.

Kiyoshi was a bright young boy and managed to pass the entrance exam for the prestigious Kyoto Imperial University in 1925. He studied law for four years. His student status meant he was able to defer compulsory military service which all twenty year olds were normally obliged to do. After he completed his studies he moved back to Tokyo to be with his mother and enrolled in a postgraduate course at Tokyo University, studying philosophy. This enabled him to yet again postpone his military service. In 1935, he was

awarded a French government scholarship which meant he could go to study philosophy at Sorbonne in Paris. Kiyoshi's French was already very good and the scholarship gave him an opportunity to study in France for four years. It further extended the deferment of military service. He immersed himself in his studies and appears to have enjoyed Paris life. While outside Japan, anti-democratic, ultra-nationalists were getting the upper hand in Tokyo, setting the country on the path to war. He returned to Japan in 1939, shortly after having a brief reunion with his British father in Lyon. It was the first time the two had met in 25 years.



Kiyoshi Suzuki, and his fiancée Tetsuko Katsuda, after his return from Paris in 1939

Upon returning to Japan, he went back to Tokyo University before getting a fulltime job with the overseas branch of the state radio service NHK. This allowed him to use his language skills and the salary meant he could afford to marry his long-standing girlfriend Tetsuko Katsuda. However, the shadow of war was looming and in July 1941 he was called up for military service and ordered to report to the 10th Heavy Field Artillery Regiment at Ichikawa to the west of Tokyo.

At the age of 34, he was thrown into military life and after only a few weeks training was posted to China. He first arrived in Mukden, present day Shenyang (瀋陽), the capital of Japanese Manchuria (滿州国). He was then posted to the small town of Kairyu (海龍) not far from Mukden. As tensions between Japan, Great Britain and the United States ratcheted up and General Hideki Tojo became Prime Minister, Kiyoshi was posted to Muling (穆稜), a city not far from the Soviet border.

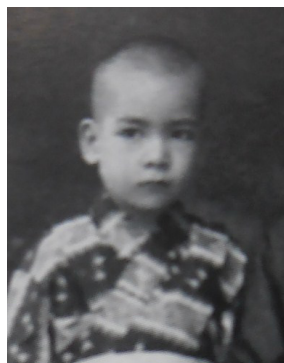
In 1943 Kiyoshi was selected as a suitable candidate to study Russian and sent to a military interpreter school in Harbin (哈尔滨). A year later in 1944, after having mastered Russian, he returned to his unit as the tide of war began to turn against Japan. A few days after the US dropped nuclear bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945, the Soviet Union declared war on Japan, ceasing the Northern Territories off Hokkaido and invading Manchuria. At the time of the invasion Kiyoshi was working as an interpreter attached to a railway regiment defending the Southern Manchurian Railways Company (南滿州鐵道株式会社). He was caught up in fighting with the Soviet army, but the surrender broadcast made by Emperor Hirohito on 15 August 1945 led to his regiment surrendering to the Soviets.

At least 600,000 Japanese troops became Russian prisoners of war. Kiyoshi and his fellow soldiers were kept in camps

for a few weeks before being shipped off by rail to the port of Vladivostok in the Soviet Union. From there they were moved a further 800 miles by train to Siberia. "To the Russians the Japanese prisoners were war booty" and were "a pool of educated labour to put to work in mines, factories and forests (page 297)."

The highly talented Kiyoshi and a group of about 500 POWs ended up in the mining town of Raychikhinsk and were housed in cattle sheds with earth floors. Despite the bitter cold and little shelter they were only dressed in summer uniforms. Their first task was to build their own labour camp, which was hard in the cold temperature with meagre rations of millet porridge twice a day. As the temperature continued to drop, the harsh labour and malnutrition began to take its toll with several men dying every day from dysentery and exhaustion.

After catching a fever, Kiyoshi was taken to a military hospital in Zavitsinsk. The conditions at the hospital were very basic with little medicine. Kiyoshi acted as a translator for the Russian doctors and nurses and the Japanese POWs. His condition did not improve and he died weak and emaciated on 24 December 1945, having just reached the age of 39. Just before he died, he asked a friend, Tojo Yamanaka, to take a message back to his wife, Tetsuko and to thank his mother, Masa. Yamanaka survived and was repatriated to Japan in 1947, informing Tetsuko of Kiyoshi's fate, but Masa was never told. Tetsuko feared that knowing of her only remaining son's death would be too much for her to take. Masa eventually passed away in 1965. While Kiyoshi's story is a sub-strand to the central narrative of this superb book, it is illustrative of the fate of a great many Japanese captured in Manchuria at the end of the war (see another Review of *Falling Blossom* in issue 4).



Hideo Suzuki, who died young, in about 1914

semi-public corporation that was far more than a railway corporation. Born as a by-product of Japan's victory in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904 to 1905, it had a profound economic and political impact on the region's development and the outcome of World War II in Asia.

Mr. Kiyofumi Kato, a Ph.D. candidate at Waseda University, specializes in modern Japanese history and is a research fellow at The National Institute for the Humanities [人間文化研究機構]. His book on the Mantetsu is highly readable and backed by solid research into extensive primary sources as well as academic papers and secondary source publications. It includes several maps, many photos, a detailed chronology, a complete list of managers under each president, and organizational charts.

The 40-year history of the Mantetsu fascinates not only Japanese historians but also the general public, partly because of the image that Japanese were building a new semi-autonomous state outside of Japan. More than 1 million Japanese civilians migrated to Manchuria to begin a new life in better economic conditions. They had a western colonial lifestyle, enjoying golf clubs, large parks, and western style housing. The special express trains called "Asia" were among the fastest, best appointed trains in the world. The capital of Manchukuo [満州国], Hsinching [新京 - literally "New Capital"] (now Changchun [長春]), was built with modern urban planning with avenues and streets akin to Paris. In 1937, the Mantetsu owned 15 companies, 32 subsidiary companies, and invested in 33 more companies. They operated transport (rails, shipping, and airline), industry (steel mill, chemical, oil refinery, cement, textile, sugar), commerce (trading, retail), construction, lumber, minerals (coal and gold), electric and gas power, real estate, telecommunication and the press, and hotel chains. By its end, the Mantetsu ran or owned 71 companies with 340,000 employees, including 248,000 Chinese and Russians.

From the beginning, however, the activity of the Mantetsu and the development of Manchuria were riddled with confusing objectives. There was political infighting back in Japan among politicians, the foreign ministry and the military over its control. Relations between the Mantetsu and the Chinese in Manchuria were complicated. The Kwantung Army (Kwantung Army), at first a division of the Japanese Imperial Army, grew into a powerful presence that in the end controlled the Mantetsu.

The Mantetsu's first president, Shinpei Goto [後藤新平], was a charismatic leader who was instrumental in modernizing Taiwan that became a Japanese colony in 1895. In Taiwan, Goto served as deputy to Governor Gentaro Kodama [児玉源太郎] from 1898 to 1906. Goto was expected to apply similar skills to the Mantetsu that was established in 1906. Goto's vision of the Mantetsu was modelled after the British East India Company's rule in India that not only pursued economic interest for the British Empire but was involved in diplomatic manoeuvring and military intelligence.

The author argues that during the turbulent period of domestic political upheaval in Japan and the Hsinhai



The Comprehensive History of the South Manchurian Railway Company [満鉄全史]

by Kiyofumi Kato [加藤聖文]

Kodansha [講談社], 2006, 266 pages, 1600 yen, ISBN-10: 4062583747

Review by Fumiko Halloran

The year 2006 was the 100th anniversary of the establishment of "Mantetsu" [満鉄], or "Minami Manshu Tetsudo Kabushiki-kaisha," [南満州鉄道株式会社], in English the Southern Manchurian Railway Company, a

Revolution of 1911 overthrowing the Ching Dynasty in China, two fundamentally incompatible views about the Mantetsu emerged: The Mantetsu's leadership believed that by succeeding in business, the Mantetsu could pave the way for peace and prosperity in the region that would be beneficial to Japan. Another view was for the government in Tokyo to take the initiative in diplomacy that would benefit the Mantetsu's business interests. Gradually, the "national policy first" supporters began to control the Mantetsu.

The book narrates in detail the Mantetsu growth into a large-scale enterprise, its complicated relationship with the Chinese warlord, General Chang Tso-Lin [張作霖], and his assassination by the Kwantung Army [關東軍]. It delves into the rising anti-Japan movement in Manchuria, the Mantetsu's participation in the establishment of Manchukuo, and deteriorating Mantetsu operations during World War II. Finally, it assesses Japan's surrender in 1945 and its aftermath. With Manchukuo and the Japanese military collapsing, Motomiki Yamazaki [山崎元幹], the last president of the Mantetsu, negotiated with the Soviet military that occupied Manchuria in the closing days of the war. He and his senior managers sought to protect more than 1 million Japanese and to obtain their safe return to Japan.

The Soviet army continued to occupy Manchuria after the war during which time they transferred most of the hardware materials from Mantetsu plants to Russia as war bounty. The Nationalist generalissimo, Chiang Kai-shek, was fighting communists and had little control over Manchuria. When Chiang's forces finally reached the area, they recruited 11,400 Mantetsu employees to run various plants and railways. The Chinese communists recruited 80,000 Mantetsu employees for the same reason in the areas they controlled. The last employees returned to Japan in 1948.

In summary, Kato's book illustrates the complex history of the Mantetsu from many angles. He particularly focuses on how the concept of "national policy" that was supposed to guide the Mantetsu was the source of trouble. Different civilian and military leaders who had their own agendas interpreted national policy in different ways.

Kato makes the point that the post-war study of the Mantetsu by Japanese had an ideological premise to prove that the Mantetsu was only a tool of Japanese imperialism that inflicted damage on the Chinese. He observes that after the end of the Cold War, however, more studies have been published without those ideological twists. Memoirs and books by those who were in Manchuria or with the Mantetsu tend to be nostalgic and idealizing, and this tendency becomes more intense as they get older.

A perceptive observation by Kato is that for China, the Mantetsu is still a politically sensitive issue. The Mantetsu left behind detailed records of their activities in archives that were transferred from the Soviet military to the Chinese communists. This vast collection is preserved in the Liaoning Provincial Museum [遼寧省博物館], but it is not open to the public. Kato read a portion of the collection by way of publications by the museum itself, several Chinese

universities, and Japanese publishers.

The Northeast region, which Manchuria was also called, was instrumental as a supply base for the Peoples Liberation Army during the civil war and as a heavy industrial zone after the birth of the Peoples Republic of China (PRC) in 1949. Although the Soviets provided economic and technical assistance in the early years after PRC was established, there was no question that the region benefited from the industrial facilities and technical assistance by the Mantetsu employees who remained in China after the war.

For the Chinese, the study of this aspect is problematic. Kato explains that currently, Chinese academic works that show that the Northeast region's heavy industry was the backbone of the revolution are rejected, particularly in light of the fall during the Cultural Revolution of Lin Biao [林彪] and Liu Shao-chi [劉少奇] whose power base was in that region. In that sense, the history of the Mantetsu still haunts today's interpretation of that period in China.



**Akunin [Villain] [悪人]
by Sang-il Lee (李相日)**

2010, 139 minutes

Review by Susan Meehan

It is five years since the release of Sang-il Lee's hugely enjoyable *Hula Girls* [read our review on issue 11], a Full Monty-style feel-good film replete with social commentary and the only one of his works I'd seen. I was, naturally, looking forward to *Akunin [Villain]*, an altogether different type of film for a more mature audience perhaps. It is a film about loneliness, the desperate longing to be loved, the pain and fear of losing love and the ambivalence of good and evil. Not quite as sophisticated or as subtle as it could be, it is, nonetheless a fine though bleak and disquieting film to watch and ponder. The acting is universally good and the shots of the Kyushu countryside are breathtaking. A plot spoiler follows!

Given the title I was on the lookout for the villain from the start. The first character to be introduced is steely-faced Yuichi Shimizu [清水祐一] sporting dyed blond hair and watching a raunchy video while having his car filled up at a petrol station. Too easy to identify perhaps and though wavering in my conviction at times, my instinct was spot on.

Various characters are introduced as the film progresses; Yoshino Ishibashi [石橋佳乃], a coquettish young insurance saleswoman who lives in Hakata, her young female co-workers, Yoshino's father who wishes she still lived at home with his wife and him, and Masuo Keigo [増尾圭吾], a playboy who irritates from the start with his misplaced arrogance and distinct lack of empathy.

Yoshino is seen to regret her relationship with Yuichi,

a Nagasaki-based labourer who, since making her acquaintance online, has been occasionally driving 1.5 hours to see her in Hakata however. Yoshino, however, has set her sights on Masuo.

Having agreed to meet Yuichi after dinner one night but accidentally bumping into Masuo, Yoshino coerces the latter to spend time with her. She makes her excuses to Yuichi who's in his car, asks him to wire her money and drives off with an unwilling Masuo in what will be an eventful trip.

At this point, surprised that Yoshino is receiving money from Yuichi, I was alarmed at the rage and speed with which he pursues the unlikely couple in his car. A sequence later, Yoshino's bruised corpse is found down the wayside by Mitsuge Pass.

Avoiding the police, Yuichi seeks refuge in kind, unquestioning, understanding Mitsuyo [馬込光代], who he's also met online and in person for the first time soon after Yoshino's death. Mitsuyo is a lonely woman from Saga who works in a men's clothing shop and feels that her life is at a dead-end. Yuichi wishes he'd met her earlier.

Trusting her compassion, he confesses to having killed Yoshino on finding her seemingly vulnerable at Mitsuge Pass. Yuichi admits to the rage he felt at being ditched for Masuo and at Yoshino's spiteful words; refusing a ride home with him she shrieks that she will frame him with kidnapping and raping her.

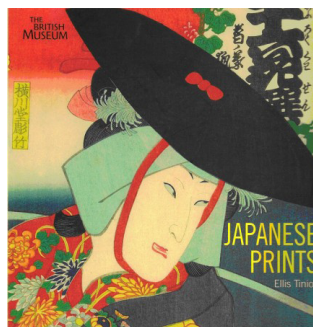
Mitsuyo and Yuichi hide in a lighthouse. It is unnerving to see the susceptible Mitsuyo with taciturn, odd Yuichi. There is no accounting for taste and it is impossible to fathom what she sees in Yuichi other than that he is a man, any man to make up for her searing loneliness.

"Being with you is so painful," says Yuichi, similarly never having experienced a woman's love or tenderness and being terrified of losing it now.

As the police zone in on the fugitive pair in the lighthouse, I again doubted my burgeoning hunch that Yuichi had any redeeming qualities, but maybe it was Lee toying with our emotions and rationality once again.

Akunin [Villain] took four prizes at the 34th Japanese Academy Awards in 2011; Eri Fukatsu [深津 絵里] won best actress for her tremendous role as Mitsuyo, Satoshi Tsumabuki [妻夫木 聡] won best actor for his role as Yuichi, Akira Enomoto [柄本 明] won best supporting actor for his role as Yoshino's father and Kirin Kiki [樹木 希林], sensitively portraying Yuichi's grandmother, won best supporting actress.

Akunin's main competition at this year's Japanese Academy Awards was Confessions [see our review in issue 32]. Though some of the characters in Akunin were morally dubious and included a killer, those in Confessions plunged the depths of sheer evil.



Japanese Prints, Ukiyo-e in Edo, 1700-1900 by Ellis Tinios

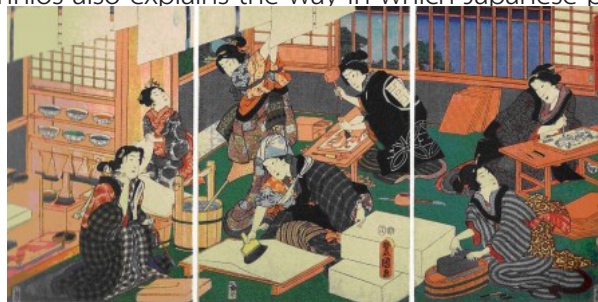
British Museum Press, 2010
143 pages including index
numerous illustrations in colour
ISBN 978-0-7141-2453-7,
£14.99

Review by Sir Hugh Cortazzi

The British Museum has an outstanding collection of Japanese prints (ukiyo-e). This book draws on the Museum's extensive holdings and is an introduction to the Japanese prints in the Museum. In choosing the prints to use as illustrations Dr Tinios has tried to select some of the less well-known prints in the collection. This adds significantly to the interest and value of this book.

This book is not a chronological history of ukiyo-e and it does not claim to be comprehensive, but it is a fascinating survey of important aspects of Japanese prints. Dr Tinios's study is confined to Edo prints and does not, for instance, cover Osaka prints. After a discussion of the reception and appreciation of ukiyo-e in the West from 1860 to the 1910s including the influence of Japanese prints on post-impressionist artists, Dr Tinios gives a detailed account of how Japanese prints were made. The following triptych by Kunisada Utagawa (歌川 国貞) shows the processes, although the artisans would not have been the beauties depicted here:

Dr Tinios also explains the way in which Japanese prints



were subject to censorship. One print by Utamaro Kitagawa (喜多川 歌) shows Hideyoshi Toyotomi (1530-98) holding the wrist of a page boy in feminized dress. The censors would have seen this as veiled criticism of the shogun. This print was issued without a censor's seal and Utamaro and his publishers were duly punished by the



authorities:

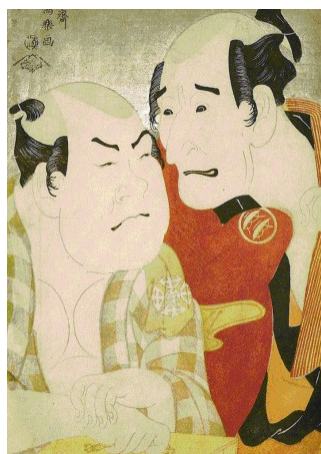
Dr Tinios then discusses Japanese prints in four groups. The first group to which he devotes the largest space is that of actor prints. The following images (overleaf) of two actors dressed as lovers by Shunshō Katsukawa (勝川 春章) and (right) of an actor dressed as a prostitute under an umbrella by Kiyomasa Torii II are striking.

I particularly liked the following two actor prints. The one on the left is of an actor representing a robber by Shun'ei



Katsukawa and the print on the right is by Sharaku Toshūsai (東洲斎写楽 – one of my favourite Ukiyo-e artists):

The next group of prints discussed by Dr Tinios is that of "beauties." He likes particularly these very fine prints by



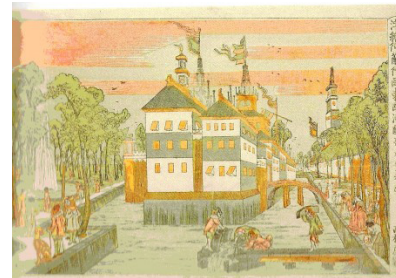
Shunchō Katsukawa (勝川 春湖):

His next section is devoted to landscape prints. The print below left is one of Hiroshige's prints in his series of thirty-



six views of Mt Fuji (not as well known as Hokusai's series, but a striking image):

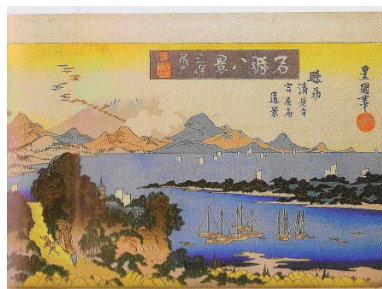
The print above right by Toyoharu Utagawa of an imagined port in South Holland is an example of a print based on



European engravings which uses western perspectives:

Below left is another landscape by Toyokuni Utagawa II (歌川 豊國), who is less well known as a master of this genre:

The last main section is devoted to warrior prints. I was particularly struck by print (above right) of Benkei by



Kunisada Utagawa:

The final section is devoted to the colour woodblock print in the Meiji era and includes a portrait print of the Emperor Meiji as well as prints of the Russo-Japanese War. But there is nothing in this section about the fascinating Japanese prints of foreigners in the genre known as Yokohama-e. Sadly Dr Tinios has also had to omit discussion of another important element in Edo prints that of kachō (flowers and birds) prints. But if he had covered these genres he would have needed many more pages and the Museum press presumably wanted to limit the size of the book. A longer book would have cost more to produce and would have had to be more expensive. Limited though this book inevitably is in its coverage of ukiyo-e, it is a book which anyone interested in Japanese prints will want to have in their library. At £14.99 it is a good buy.