Reviews


In this brief but informative volume, Keiō University’s Tanaka Akira has brought together nine superb historiographical essays dealing with a wide variety of contentious topics in the history of modern Sino-Japanese relations.

The first four essays tackle several key themes in the history of Japanese colonial rule in Manchuria. Xie Xueshi 解学詩 begins with a short review of topics and sources in the economic history of the Manchukuo state, “Manshūkoku keizai no kenkyū kadai to shiryō no genjō 滿州国経済の研究課題と史料の現状 (The present state of research subjects and source materials on the economy of Manchukuo).” Yanagisawa Asobu 柳沢遊 follows with an excellent discussion of changing trends in the postwar historiography of Manchuria’s position in the general history of Japanese imperialism, “Nihon teikokushugi no ‘Manshū’ shihai 日本帝国主義の「満州」支配 (Japanese imperialism’s control over Manchuria).” Yamamoto Yū 山本裕 and Hirayama Tsutomu 平山勉, both doctoral candidates at Keiō, take on more specific topics in their essays. Yamamoto explores the history of Japanese entrepreneurship in the Chinese northeast with “‘Manshū’ Nikkei kigyō kenkyū shi” 日系企業研究史 (The history of studies on Japanese business in Manchuria), while Hirayama explores Japanese treatments of the South Manchuria Railway Company’s extensive research activities in his “Nihon ni okeru Mantetsu chōsabu ron 日本における満鉄調査部論 (Studies on the South Manchuria Railway Company Research Section in Japan).

The next three chapters cover more controversial wartime topics. Itō Kazuhiko 伊藤一彦 begins with a survey of archival sources and the state of the field in studies on forced labor conscription, “Chūgokujin kyōsei renkō kyōsei rōdō” 中国人強制連行・強制労働 (The forced conscription of Chinese laborers). Matsumura Takao 松村高夫 and Eda Izumi 江田いづみ follow with two chapters on the Japanese Imperial Army’s infamous Unit 731. Matsumura’s piece, “Nihon ni okeru nana-san-ichi butai no kaimei 日本における七三一部隊の解明 (Clarifying Unit 731 in Japan), compliments Eda’s essay, “Chūgoku ni okeru nana-san-ichi butai ninshiki” 中国における七三一部隊の了解 (Understanding Unit 731 in China), in much the same way as essays by Mark Eykholt and Yoshida Takashi do in Joshua Fogel’s, The Nanjing Massacre in History and Historiography. What Eykholt and Yoshida did to enhance our appreciation of how the Nanjing atrocities have been variously represented in postwar Japanese and Chinese historiography, Matsumura and Eda similarly do in illuminating Sino-Japanese perspectives on the brutalities perpetrated in Unit 731 medical experiments.
Eda Kenji 江田憲治 and editor Tanaka Akira provide the final two essays. In “Kō-Nichi minzoku tôitsu sensen keisei shi” 抗日民族統一戰線形成史 (The history of the formation of the national united front against Japan), Eda looks at the complex diversity of popular, Communist, and Nationalist anti-Japanese resistance movements. Tanaka then turns to the issue of debates on the modern “emperor system” in Japan and its implications for the historiography of the Sino-Japanese War with his “Kindai tennōsei ron no riron teki shomondai” 近代天皇系論の理論的諸問題 (Various theoretical problems in theories on the modern emperor system). Tanaka’s essay is followed by a wonderful bibliography that deserves special praise. Arranged chronologically rather than alphabetically, it is especially useful for tracing the evolution of historiographical trends. The separate bibliographic list for each chapter is another reader friendly attribute.

*SJS* readers should find this book highly useful as a reference tool. As mentioned, the essays by Yanagisawa, Matsumura, and Eda (Izumi) stand out as particularly well-crafted and valuable contributions.

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Tonami Mamoru 礦波護 and Fujii Jōji 藤井謙治, eds. Kyōdai Tōyōgaku no hyakunen 京大東洋学の百年 (The centenary of East Asian studies at Kyoto University) (Kyoto: Kyoto University Press, 2002). ix, 296 pages. ¥2400, cloth.

Many retrospective volumes of this sort, collections of essays on great historians of the past, have been published over the years in Japanese, and their quality varies. Some, such as the two-volume collection Kindai Nihon to Chūgoku 近代日本と中国 (Modern Japan and China),¹ are especially fine and remain useful now three decades after their initial appearance. Others seem to be little more than excuses of publishers to recycle material already published elsewhere. In any event, such volumes are almost always of some utility and are, as in this case, the work of established historians and literary scholars in their fields.

This volume contains eight essays, each reasonably substantive and all by Kyoto University professors or emeriti. The contents runs as follows:


¹ Edited by Takeuchi Yoshimi 竹内好 and Hashikawa Bunzō 橋川文三 (Tokyo: Asahi shinbunsha, 1974), 2 volumes.
There is something of a company history quality to these essays. It might have been nice to include just one non-Kyoto scholar among the authors or topics. By the same token, inclusion of a non-Kyoto author might have been as tokenism; inclusion of a non-Kyoto topic with criticism of the subject might have been seen as gratuitous. Fortunately, sinology has a long and distinguished history at Kyoto University, and this makes it all the easier to fill out eight essays on eight remarkably distinguished scholars.

In a short review such as this one, one can do little more than indicate that each of the essays is clearly based on both the latest scholarship on the men in question and often on much of their written work as well. The popularity and often high quality of such volumes in Japan speaks well to the concern of Japanese scholars with historiography and the willingness of publishers to bring them out so frequently. Has a single such volume appeared in English since *Historians of China and Japan* over forty years ago? As valuable as that book remains, a new book, even with the same title, would be inordinately valuable.

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