

Having struggled to grasp the intricacies of Chinese politics, Rayna could hardly be expected to understand the even more poisonous situation in Moscow. She quickly realized that she was an embarrassment to Eugene Chen, and more woundingly that Madame Sun would no longer protect her – which she described as “an even harder bump”. While still on the road to Moscow she had concluded that the world was “made up of people whose theory is each man for himself”.

Nor could Rayna understand the political dangers facing Borodin, when he finally arrived, which made her plight (she soon ran out of money and had nowhere settled to live) of minor importance. Rayna did make a start on a project proposed by Borodin to write an analysis of what had happened in China, but he soon lost interest in it – and the pushy Anna Louise Strong was competing for his attention. With Bill stranded in Shanghai, Rayna became entangled with the US correspondent Vincent Sheehan. Though fascinated by her (as he would recount in later writings, including his *Personal History*) he did not perceive how ill she had become until it was too late.

Rayna’s letters from China to Helen Freeland and, from Moscow, to Bill, are written with a lively pen even as the story becomes gloomier. Baruch Hirson and Arthur Knodel skilfully fill out most of the gaps, with the editorial help of Gregor Benton (unfortunately both authors died before the volume could be published). Benton’s introduction also provides some useful historical context.

However, they appear to have overlooked a possible explanation for Madame Sun’s coolness towards Rayna. The two had broken, according to Dan Jacobs (*Borodin: Stalin’s Man in China*, pp. 303–04), when Madame Sun “learned that Rayna had kept from her a *New York Times* story romantically linking [her] with Eugene Chen”. Perhaps this is why a remorseful Madame Sun refused to ride in the limousine put at her disposal and insisted on walking, in the bleak November cold, all the way behind Rayna’s funeral cortege.

The joint authors’ verdict is bitter but probably correct. “The Soviet leadership knew it had hopelessly mishandled the Chinese situation”, they write. “In China, Rayna had been privy to fateful and disastrous decisions ... Increasing the pressure on Rayna to leave Moscow was probably the simplest solution the authorities could apply, and they did just that. But any embarrassment that might have resulted was spared them by Rayna’s death. The expense of a state funeral was a small price to pay.”

It is a sad tale and also one which, as the authors suggest, forms “a valuable record of a crucial moment in the history of modern China”. The letters bring to life “the girl from Chicago with flaming red hair”, but they also illustrate the lesson which other foreigners have since learned in China: there can be a price to pay for getting involved in another people’s politics.

John Gittings

BOB TADASHI WAKABAYASHI (ed.):

The Nanking Atrocity 1937–38: Complicating the Picture.

(Asia Pacific Studies: Past and Present.) xx, 433 pp. New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2007. £55. ISBN 1 84545 180 5.

December 2007 marked the seventieth anniversary of the Nanking Massacre and this book is a timely reminder not just of the events of late 1937/early 1938 but of the many different ways in which they continue to be remembered and

reconstructed. The subtitle accurately captures the ethos of the book and none of the contributors shy away from a reconsideration of the more controversial aspects of the debate. The use of the word “atrocities” is preferred precisely as a means of avoiding the more reductive and misleading terms “rape” and “massacre” and the result is a set of rich and complex chapters offering us a sophisticated understanding of Japanese actions in and around Nanking in 1937–38, and how they have been interpreted since.

The editor should be congratulated on bringing together key academics working on Nanking, in particular those whose work is well known in Japan, but appears here for the first time in English (the late Fujiwara Akira and Ono Kenji). While there tends to be some overlap in the telling of the story across a number of chapters, this does at least mean that each can be read independently without losing any of the essential background. The book is divided into three sections with an introduction and postscript. The introduction includes a chapter by Wakabayashi setting out “The messiness of historical reality” and an overview of the Nanking Atrocities by Fujiwara. Section 1 contains chapters by Kasahara Tokushi, Ono Kenji, David Askew, Bob Wakabayashi and Timothy Brook, and focuses on the debates about “War crimes and doubts”. Section 2, with chapters by Amano Saburo, Timothy Brook, David Askew, and Takashi Yoshida deals with “Aggressors and collaborators”; and section three focuses on memory and the “industry” surrounding Nanking denial, with contributions by Joshua A. Fogel, Masahiro Yamamoto, Kasahara Tokushi and Kimura Takuji.

The premise of the book is to “deal sensitively yet honestly with the Nanking controversy by introducing new research findings” (p. 19). In so doing, the contributors challenge some of the “key points in the official Chinese narrative and in Western accounts that follow it” (p. 19). Wakabayashi also clearly states that the aim of the book is not to absolve the Japanese of guilt for what they did at Nanking, but “to seek to clarify the nature and extent of that guilt more precisely, and identify its causes and contexts more fairly” (p. 23).

Section 1 takes up, amongst other subjects such as the 100-man killing contest and Justice Pal’s not-guilty verdict at the Tokyo War Crimes Trial, the rather sensitive “numbers issue”. A recurring theme is the need to be explicit about the geographical and temporal scope of the events of 1937–38, since this impacts upon our understanding of what happened and how many Chinese were killed. Distinctions are therefore made by each author depending on whether their research focuses on events that took place in the city and surrounding counties (the Nanking Special Administrative District) or along the route of the assault from Shanghai to Nanking. At the same time, attention is paid to time scales – Kasahara’s calculations run from 4 December 1937 to 28 March 1938 (p. 57), Fujiwara’s from 1 December 1937 to 5 January 1938 (p. 34), while Askew’s study focuses on the six weeks from 13 December (p. 87). The type of victim is defined too – some authors consider civilian deaths only, while some incorporate “defeated stragglers” and Chinese Prisoners of War. A divergence of opinion is clear within just these five chapters, but the authors are open to the possibilities, indeed the need for, additional research which may well mean an upwards revision of the suggested statistics (Kasahara p. 68).

Section 2 offers readers some thought-provoking and more intimate perspectives on the Nanking Atrocities by considering some of those closely involved, ranging from a former Japanese reserve officer (Amano), through collaborators (Brook), to foreign residents in the Nanking Safety Zone (Askew). Yoshida’s chapter recounts the ways in which the events were

documented and reported as they unfolded. All the chapters provide a richness of detail and fresh insights into the subject. In particular, Brook's fascinating telling of Jimmy Wang's story is a very welcome addition to the slim literature on collaboration and challenges some of the "problematically inert moral judgements" on the Nanking Atrocity (p. 198).

The chapters in section 3 deal with the memory of the Nanking Atrocity. Fogel focuses on Chinese historical memory, and is essential reading to understand the reasons behind the "current outrage" (p. 283) over Nanking amongst overseas Chinese (as exemplified by Iris Chang) and "fourth generation" mainland Chinese. Yamamoto's critical analysis of American historiography of the Nanking Atrocity considers the problems associated with the knowledge gap between academics and non-academics, and urges professional historians to "correct unhealthy, irrational research and remarks by uninformed commentators" (p. 300). Kasahara's chapter on Higashinakano Osamichi, Japan's "premier denier of the Nanking Atrocity" (p. 304) is an important expose of Higashinakano's background and ideology, and is a damning criticism of his contentions about Nanking. Finally, Kimura's chapter reminds us of the progress that has been made in Japan towards atoning for the Atrocity, and Japan's aggression in East Asia in general, through the unceasing efforts of left-wing scholarship and grass roots activity.

The book offers a much more nuanced approach to the study of the Atrocity, based on new research findings, and represents a springboard for future scholarship. The many shades of opinion on Nanking are represented and discussed with a fairness and balance not often found in this particular field. The book deserves to be read widely, and should be deemed compulsory reading for undergraduate and postgraduate students of East Asian history and contemporary international relations.

Caroline Rose

BUNROKU SHISHI (translated and with an afterword by LYNNE E. RIGGS):

School of Freedom (Jiyū Gakkō).

Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese Studies, The University of Michigan, 2006. \$29.95. ISBN 1 929280 40 8.

The years following Japan's defeat in the Pacific War were a tumultuous time: Tokyo lay in ruins, millions of soldiers and citizens were repatriated to Japanese soil, resources were scarce, black markets flourished and much of the populace was afflicted with a sense of post-surrender malaise. Yet alongside these scenes of devastation new freedoms in society were being discovered one after another: bans on censorship in print and visual media were lifted, and ideas such as individualism, the equality of sexes and "freedom" were beginning to transform the fabric of post-war society.

Written by Iwata Toyoo (1893–1969) under the pen name Bunroku Shishi, the popular novel *Jiyū Gakkō* (School of Freedom) articulates the excitement, upheaval and confusion that characterized the immediate post-war period and offers a light-hearted view of the social and sexual mores of the age. First published in daily instalments in the Asahi Newspaper from May to December 1950, *Jiyū Gakkō* was released in novel form in 1951. It was a popular best-seller in the 1950s, and was reprinted several times. Two film versions of