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Tamanoi/Memory Maps

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Introduction

“Manchuria” in Postwar Japan

The frontispiece of this book may look like one of the paintings of Jean-François Millet or Théodore Rousseau, leaders of the Barbizon School of painting in mid-nineteenth-century France. Yet this is not a painting but a photograph (circa 1934) of the landscape of Manchuria (Northeast China), where Japan’s imperial power reached at the turn of the twentieth century. The photo depicts the countryside, not the city; the margins, not the center; and “the foreign” in the eyes of the Japanese. In the age of empire, this photo must have captivated millions of Japanese, who eventually left Japan proper (naichi) and moved to Japan’s overseas empire (gaichi) in search of Utopia.

The photographer, Terashima Banji, was an employee of the South Manchuria Railway Company (hereafter SMR), which the Japanese state built in the port city of Dalian in 1906. Located at the tip of Liaodong peninsula, which Japan leased from Russia at the conclusion of the Russo-Japanese War (1904–1905), the SMR had become a mammoth company with more than two hundred thousand employees before it dissolved in 1945 (Itô 1988:3; 1964). Since many among them had an interest in photography, Terashima formed an amateur photographers’ club in the company, and the members traveled to Mukden (Shenyang), Changchun, and Harbin, as well as more remote areas of northern and western Manchuria, to take photographs of landscapes and people. The members were also artists who, incorporating the techniques of Pictorialism (Kaiga Shugi), transformed photos into paintings. Hence it is not the passage of time but Terashima’s own “paint brush” that reproduced this image as a sepia-tinted photograph. In 1932, when Japan created its puppet state of Manchukuo (and labored to make it look like an independent nation-state), it mobilized these photographers to carry on active propaganda for the Japanese Empire. At the Chicago World’s Fair of 1933, Terashima and other members of the club displayed their photographs in the SMR Pavilion (Mantetsu-kan) to “let the world know of Manchukuo.” Yet the photographs were interpreted as works of pure art, and after the fair ended, the photographers were invited to hold another thirty-two exhibitions throughout the United States. Back in Manchukuo, however, Terashima and other members of the club took their role of propagandists seriously. Using *USSR in Construction*, the official magazine of the Soviets, as a model,
in 1933 they published the first issue of *Manchurian Graph* (*Manshū gurafu*) to propagate the existence of “the newly constructed, independent nation-state of Manchukuo” throughout the West (see Takeba 1994).

In 1994, I saw for the first time the original of Terashima’s photo at the Nagoya Metropolitan Museum in Japan. Under the exhibition title of *Ikyō no Modanizumu* (Modernism in Manchuria), Terashima’s works were prominently displayed, along with photographs of colonial Manchuria that his mentors and colleagues had taken in the early twentieth century. “Ikyō” refers to “a place that is far away from home.” Nonetheless, such a place, although foreign (to the Japanese), constitutes another home (for the Japanese). Hence “ikyō” in this case refers to Manchuria in the age of empire to which millions of Japanese people emigrated. This particular photo was exhibited with the title “Southern Manchuria in Autumn” (*Nan-Man no Aki*). It was easy for someone viewing the photo to succumb to nostalgia for Japan’s imperial past. Indeed, looking at the photo, I could not help but feel nostalgia for the land about which I had heard so much while growing up in Japan. It is true that this Manchuria held romantic images for Japanese in the early twentieth century: “idealists and visionaries of every hue saw there a frontier of boundless possibilities that were unlikely to be found in any other part of the Japanese Empire,” primarily because Manchuria was represented to the Japanese as a vast, virgin land, distinct from densely populated Taiwan or Korea (Duara 2003:62; see also Yamamuro 1993:14–15). My relatives, from whom I heard many stories of Manchuria, were surely among these “idealists and visionaries.” I therefore set my mind to exploring Japanese people’s memories of Manchuria in order to understand the sense of nostalgia in twenty-first-century Japan, caught in the web of global capitalism. In 2001, however, something occurred that forced me to substantially revise my manuscript.

As I was completing the first draft of this book, I telephoned Mr. Yamashita Yasukazu to ask his permission to use Terashima’s photo for my cover. Mr. Yamashita, who runs a photo studio in Tokyo, was one of Terashima’s disciples. On the phone, he agreed to not only what I had asked for but also gave a brief biography of Terashima that clearly suggested the multiethnic composition of Manchuria’s population in the early twentieth century. According to Mr. Yamashita, sometime in the late 1930s, Terashima met a Russian woman in Dalian who had escaped the Russian Revolution of 1917 and moved to Manchukuo. (Terashima married this woman, but the marriage did not last long. Soon after Japan’s capitulation, he returned with his wife to Tokyo and then left her; she eventually moved to Sydney, Australia.) At the end of our conversation, Mr. Yamashita recounted to me what Terashima had often told his students: “The place he [Terashima] had photographed in “Southern Manchuria in Autumn” was the execution ground. On that particular site under the trees, Teacher Terashima used to
say, the Japanese troops killed many Chinese activists.” What had been tactfully concealed in Terashima’s photo since 1994 was now revealed to me: the Japanese executioners, the Chinese nationalists, and the power of the Japanese state. I had to revise my manuscript.

In this book, I will present “the history of the present,” in which certain Japanese, Japanese-Chinese, and Chinese people remember Manchuria. This Manchuria of memory refers not only to a geographical area of Northeast China but also to the effect of the geopolitical imaginaries of these people, shaped by imperialism, colonialism, Pan-Asianism, post-coloniality, and globalization. I am particularly interested in how these people remember (or have forgotten) the power of the Japanese state, which was deeply involved in the construction of Manchukuo and yet is concealed in Terashima’s photograph (see McCormack 1991:106). In post-colonial studies, “the history of the present” usually refers to the investigation of popular memory of past colonial relations of power (see, for example, Stoler and Strassler 2000:4). Yet in this formulation of the history of the present, “the past” and “the present” are defined, rather unproblematically, as the colonial period (“the past”) and the post-colonial period following the end of formal colonialism (“the present”). “Past colonial relations of power,” however, linger in the post-colonial period, which has already had a certain duration (and still continues) in any nation that was involved in imperialism as either the colonizer or the colonized. I therefore find it necessary to explain how I use “the present” and “the past” as part of my methodology.

“The present” in this book refers to the period that the Japanese call “the postwar era” (sengo), a period that has continued ever since August 15, 1945, when Japan surrendered to the Allied Forces at the conclusion of the Asia-Pacific War (or World War II). Since then, the Japanese state, mass media, and people have continued to use this term to refer to “the present,” despite the official declaration of the end of the postwar era in 1976, the death of the emperor who lent his hand to the construction of Manchukuo, and a new imperial era. Yet as the period now covers more than half a century, the postwar era seems to have already been pushed into the past. To retrieve “the present” from the past and make it meaningful for this book, I need an intervention from Hannah Arendt, who states the following: “Seen from the viewpoint of man, who always lives in the interval between past and future, time is not a continuum, a flow of uninterrupted succession; it is broken in the middle, at the point where “he” stands; . . . Only because man is inserted into time and only to the extent that he stands his ground does the flow of indifferent time break up into tenses” (1961:11).

This passage suggests that “the present” does not exist in the flow of progressive time. Indeed, the present is disappearing every second. Yet as a historian, Arendt retrieves it by making “a man” stand in time. This
particular point in time where “he” stands constitutes “the present” for Arendt; “the past,” then, refers to what comes before this point. Following her, I use “the present” to refer to the multiple points in time of the postwar era where individuals stood (whether in Japan or China) and remembered Manchuria in “the past,” which begins at the onset of the age of empire. These individuals include the following:

1. The Japanese who emigrated to Manchuria as agrarian settlers but returned to Japan after the war’s end, between 1946 and 1949.
2. The children of these agrarian settlers who were left behind in China in the aftermath of Japan’s capitulation. Most of them were raised by Chinese adoptive parents, married Chinese citizens, and raised families in China but began to return to Japan permanently in the mid-1970s.
4. The (Japanese-Chinese) children of the children of Japanese agrarian settlers in Manchuria who have joined their (Japanese) parents in Japan.
5. Chinese people who have survived the Japanese dominion in Manchuria in the age of empire.

In essence, I will use these people’s memories as “the data” for the purpose of constructing the history of the present. Note, however, that “the present” has changed and so have these people’s memories (see Nora 1978:468). In addition, the nature of what they call “the Japanese state” has also changed since the dawn of the modern era—through the age of empire (from the turn of the nineteenth century to 1945) and the postwar era—in its organization, personnel, and ideological orientation. As I remembered Manchuria differently in 1994 and 2001, they also remembered it differently, depending on where “in the present” they stood.

Recently, “memory” has come to occupy a respectable place in the profession of history. The history of memory in the West, however, suggests that this fairly recent development represents “the return of the repressed.” Indeed, in medieval Europe, memory was a source of social knowledge, such as legal and social customs and the rights and duties by which a community lived (Fentress and Wickham 1992:8). Since then, memory has been steadily devalued as a source of knowledge behind the increasing domination of the textual paradigm of knowledge. Although in the 1970s “oral history” brought memory under scholarly attention, this branch of history hardly gained a prominent position, largely because oral sources, from which historians try to reconstruct the past, were judged merely in terms of truth. In other words, memory was regarded as yet an-
other, but less trustful, raw material for history. The recent return of memory has forced us to inquire into not only the nature of memory but also the nature of history, as well as the relation between the two. Such inquiry leads us to believe that although memory and history appear to be in fundamental opposition, they are not in opposition at all. Rather, if we understand history as the product of “complex transactions between the past and the present,” where historians stand, rather than a mass of data to which they add more data as they find them to fill the progressive yet empty time, we can entertain a radically different relationship between memory and history (see Duara 1995:4). Such a relation, then, is dialectic. On this relationship between memory and history, Jacques Le Goff states, “A twenty-first century historiography remains to be developed. I believe the relations between history as it occurs, history as historians write it, and the memory of men, women, peoples, and nations will play a major role in the birth of this new historiography” (1992:x).

“History as it occurs”—that is, “the past”—cannot be resurrected as it was: the past is revealed to us only through narration (Boyarin 1994b; Benjamin 1968:225; Fujitani, White, and Yoneyama 2001:1). Hence history as historians narrate it is only partial to the past (Rappaport 1990: introduction; White 1973). “The memory of men, women, peoples, and nations” provides empirical information for historians. They may even revise the history that has already been written. Memories, however, are also constructions of (and often for) the present. Thus, if we understand histories in the plural rather than History with a capital H, memory and history come ever closer. Yet although Le Goff refrains from predicting the future of this triangular relationship, he argues that “the discipline of history must nonetheless seek to be objective and to remain based on the belief in historical ‘truth’” (1992:xi). Restated, historians should continue to play an important role by entering into “the great dialectical process of memory and forgetting experienced by individuals and societies,” while making the discipline of history and memory nourishing to each other (ibid.).

Writing in the mid-1990s, Lisa Yoneyama stated: “the fact that the Japanese do not remember themselves as aggressors and only remember their victimization in the atom bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki has become almost a cliché, even in the U.S. news media.” Yet she also argued that “although this amnesia over Japan’s past deeds is unmistakably persistent in certain sectors of [Japanese] society, it is no longer pervasive or as dominant as many claim” (1995:500). This book, then, follows up her claim on two fronts. First, I highlight the life histories of the Japanese agrarian settlers and their descendants and those of the Chinese farmers who lived under the Japanese. In the age of empire, these two groups were
near the bottom of the societal hierarchy in their own societies. Hence, dividing them along the lines of “the colonizer” and “the colonized” is not effective. In post-colonial China, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) instructed Chinese citizens to view the Japanese colonists who once tried to settle in Manchuria as the victims of Japan’s imperialism. In the post-war era, the lives of both groups crisscrossed in yet another important way: in the aftermath of Japan’s capitulation, about five thousand Chinese couples adopted the children of Japanese colonists (Asano and Dong 2006:vii). Here I try to relate these people’s life histories (instead of presenting only the life histories of Japanese nationals), and in so doing, I aim to challenge the U.S. (and Asian) media’s “portrayal of ‘the Japanese’ as a monolithic entity and [the media’s] inattention to the diversity of historical awareness within Japan” (Yoneyama 1995:500).8

Second, writing in the early twenty-first century, I deal with the sense prevalent among the Japanese of their not so much being victimized as being nostalgic about the perished empire of Japan. I ask how the memory of victimization has turned to nostalgia for the same past that “victim-ized” the Japanese. In Yearning for Yesterday, Fred Davis argues that nostalgia tends to “eliminate from memory or, at minimum, severely to mute the unpleasant, the unhappy, the abrasive, and, most of all, those lurking shadows of former selves about which we feel shame, guilt, or humiliation” (1979:37). For this reason, nostalgia enables a person (or a nation) to maintain his (or its) identity intact. Yet Davis’ argument implies that the identity of such a person (or nation) has already been ruptured, and that it is the reason why he (or the nation) resorts to nostalgia. This is why, Davis argues, nostalgia is fashioned “from the alternating continuities and discontinuities of our lives and times” (ibid.:50). If so, the sense of nostalgia in contemporary Japan does not represent simply the nation’s yearning for the landscapes, lifestyles, and spectacles of the lost empire; it also represents the nation’s “strategy,” which has enabled its citizens to forget the existence of “the rupture in history” (rekishi no danzetsu): the abrupt dissolution of the Japanese Empire. This dissolution of empire, by an external mandate—that is, the U.S. Occupation Forces—ruptured not only the nation’s progress on the path of modernization and democracy but also the national identity of the Japanese people, from that of the imperialist to the defeated (see Yamanouchi 1998). Here the following passage by Igarashi Yoshikuni is extremely insightful: “Postwar Japan has naturalized the absence and silence of the past by erasing its own struggle to deal with its memories. It may appear that postwar society readily left its experiences behind in the pursuit of economic success. However, the actual process of forgetting the loss was not an easy one; it involved a constant struggle to render memories of war into a benign, nostalgic form” (2000:10, emphasis added). It is important, then, to examine the natural-
ization of the process of forgetting through not so much the sense of victimization as the sense of nostalgia that has been aroused by, for example, Terashima’s photo exhibit in Japan in 1994.

To focus on the state, however, may be futile, for, as A. R. Radcliffe-Brown once noted, the state, in the sense of an entity over and above the individuals who make up a society, does not exist in a phenomenal world but is a fiction of philosophers (1940:xxiii); “the state” has come to exist owing to the attention given by the world’s great thinkers, from Aristotle, Hegel, Marx, Durkheim, and Weber (to name a few) to the political sociologists of our time. However, a focus on the state is important for the theoretical discussion of the subject for two reasons. First, we are now at a crossroads in pondering the transition from empire to nation-state (and to a lesser extent, perhaps, from nation-state back again to empire). In 1962, Rupert Emerson baldly declared that “empires have fallen on evil days and nations have risen to take their place” (quoted in Esherick, Kayali, and Young 2006b:1). True, the old, simplistic assumption of imperial history—that the more developed states of Europe (and Asia) would incorporate most parts of the less-developed world into empires—lost its compulsion some time ago. Yet in the past twenty years or so, scholars, who are motivated by “the present” both empirically and theoretically, have revived an interest in “empires” (which constituted the dominant subject in history in Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries) (Pagden 2006:36). The reason, I argue, is twofold: while some scholars are interested in understanding the nature of the “American empire” or the European Union (see, for example, Esherick 2006, Pagden 2006), others are interested in how to utilize post-colonial theory to understand the age of empire from the viewpoint of the present. Thus, historians such as David Fieldhouse now ask, “Can the fragments of the old imperial history be put together again into new patterns which are intellectually respectable?” (1984:9–10; see also Barkan 1994; Darby 1998; Howe 1998; Kennedy 1996). Rather than insisting on the difference between empire and nation, these scholars try to see, through careful investigation of the transition from empire to nation, the similarity between the two. Edward Walker thus argues that empires are states that call themselves empires and nations are states that call themselves nations (2006:302–306). Walker so states, I believe, because what Anthony Pagden has called “some kind of center” exists in both empires and nations. If empires “have always assumed the existence of a polity with some kind of center and one or more dependencies” (Pagden 2006:37, emphasis added), then how should we understand the continuity and/or discontinuity of this “some kind of center” from the age of empire to the present, the center, in the case of this book, being the Japanese state?

Second, the recent rise of global capitalism—that is, massive flows of people and capital—has brought the concept of the state to the fore. While
the scholars of globalization have challenged the concepts of “territoriality” and “sovereignty” that lie at the heart of the idea of the state (Sharma and Gupta 2006:6; see also Sassen 1996, 1998), they are nonetheless more interested in the retreat of the state rather than in the state in itself. Hence some of these scholars have dabbled in a rather questionable reductionism: the retreat of state sovereignty, which necessarily accompanies globalization, will generate a general desire all over the world for market-led and multicultural democracy without the state (see, for example, Friedman 1999; Higgott, Underhill, and Bieler 2000; Ohmae 1990, 1995; Strange 1996). In this formulation, the state has become an object that no longer calls for the exploration of its meaning. But if empires were “the logical and inevitable outcome of the process of nation- and state-building that had created the world system of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries” (Fieldhouse 1984:9; see also Duara 2003), will the state disappear so quickly and easily? Since the nation-state became universal only in the second half of the twentieth century, between the age of empire and the age of global capitalism (Chatterjee 2005), how should we connect these two eras through the investigation of “some kind of center” that has reformulated itself after the fall of an empire to “some kind of center” of a nation-state? Has the influx of people from the former empire into the metropolis, Japan, revived the memory of empire but not the memory of “some kind of centers” of this empire?

In the sections of this introduction that follow, I aim to accomplish three tasks. The first is to introduce my fieldwork sites, which are necessarily local and yet are intimately connected to regional, national, and transnational sites. The second is to present the larger picture in which this work should be situated, a brief history of the Japanese imperial expansion into Northeast China. The third is to explain how I have structured my discussion around the device and metaphor that I call “memory maps.”

Fieldwork Sites: Ina Valley, Nagano, and Tokyo

After Manchukuo was established, the Japanese state made the country’s more than forty prefectures compete with one another in a race to colonize Manchuria. The prefectures all together sent a total of about 322,000 farmers to Manchuria, but the winner, and therefore the most “patriotic,” was Nagano Prefecture (L. Young 1998:328). Nagano sent 33,741 colonists to Manchuria, about one-fourth of whom came from the Ina Valley, my fieldwork site from 1988 to 1996 (Nagano-ken Kaitaku Jikôkai Manshû Kaitakuushi Kankôkai [hereafter NKJMK] 1984a:309, 719, 724). Situated in southern Nagano, in central Japan, the Ina Valley lies between the Southern Alps (or the Akaishi mountain ridges) to the east and the Kiso mountain ridges to the west. The Tenryû River runs through the valley from the
north, and it widens in its midpoint to the south. Except in the north, the terrain is unsuitable for farming; hence in the early twentieth century the people of Ina relied on sericulture as their main source of income while at the same time engaging in small-scale farming. When the Great Depression hit the area in the early 1930s, however, the price of silk plummeted, devastating the region’s sericulture. This was when the people of Ina began to leave for Manchuria. Indeed, as many as sixteen villages and counties in the Ina Valley participated in the state-initiated “group emigration” to Manchuria in the age of empire (see table 2 in chapter 3).  

In the group emigration system, each village or county sent a certain number of households (often reaching about one-third of an entire village or county population) to northern Manchuria. The emigrants brought to the vast terrain of Manchuria the names of their “mother villages” (bo-son) in Ina and established “branch villages” (bun-son) of the same names. These names include Kawaji, Yasuoka, Chiyo, Kami-hisakata, Inatomi, Kôno, Shimoina, Mibu, Fukihara, Inan, Minami-shinano, Achi, and Matsushima. Today, these are still the names of local administrative bodies in Ina.

For this study, I did not conduct fieldwork only in the Ina Valley. The “returnees from Manchuria” (manshû hikiage-sha) have aged and moved to other parts of Nagano since their repatriation. Available documents occasionally led me to search for specific individuals beyond Ina. Hence my fieldwork site widened, incorporating other villages and towns of Nagano where former agrarian settlers in Manchuria were located. Furthermore, thousands of these agrarian settlers were forced to leave their children in Manchuria in the aftermath of Japan’s capitulation. The children were then adopted by Chinese couples. Since Japan did not normalize diplomatic relations with China until 1972, the children who grew up in China did not begin returning to Japan until the mid-1970s. Accompanied by their Chinese spouses and Japanese-Chinese children, these people tended to avoid rural regions such as Ina and lived instead in major cities, where job opportunities abounded. In 1998, I moved to Tokyo, where I conducted fieldwork for seven consecutive summers. That I conducted fieldwork in multiple sites reflects the fates of agrarian settlers and their descendants in Manchuria and Japan, both during wartime and in postwar periods.

Setting: A Brief History of Japanese Imperial Expansion

For the past several years, scholarship on Manchuria has gone through a gradual yet radical transformation. Understanding Manchuria as a place that global forces have crisscrossed since the seventeenth century, scholars of Chinese, Manchu, Japanese, Korean, and Slavic studies have challenged the hitherto dominant image of Manchuria as a region of warlords that was eventually victimized by Japanese imperial power. They have tran-
scended the barriers of area studies and together brought Manchuria into
the imaginations of various national and ethnic groups, including the
Japanese, Chinese, Manchu, Koreans, Russians, Polish, and Jews (Clau-
Here I will focus on Manchuria in the Japanese imagination.

Today Manchuria is unmistakably part of the sovereign territory of
the People’s Republic of China (PRC) and one of its thriving centers of
industrialization. Nevertheless, the term Manzhou (Manchuria) does not
officially exist in China. What exist are Dongbei (Northeast China) and
Wei-Man (False Manchuria). The latter denies the existence of Manchui-
ria and explains why the Chinese state refuses to use Manzhou: Manchui-
ria is a product of Japanese imperialism, and calling it Manzhou recognizes
Japan’s imperial legacy. In postwar Japan, however, several names for
Manchuria exist: Manshū (Manchuria), which can be written with two dif-
ferent sets of Chinese characters;14 Manshūkoku (Manchukuo); Man-Mō
(Manchuria-Mongolia) and its reverse, Mō-Man (Mongolia-Manchuria).
Those who emigrated to Manchuria and were subsequently repatriated
to Japan use these terms almost interchangeably, as do Japanese scholars
of Manchuria. Further, referring to China, they use both Shina (a term
with a pejorative connotation used mainly in the prewar period)15 and
Chūgoku (the Middle State, a postwar term that the Japanese state offi-
cially uses).16 The presence of all these names in postwar Japan and their
absence in China raise several questions, none of which is easy to answer.
What precise geographical entity does “Manchuria” designate? To which
historical era does it belong? And what warrants its separation, if any,
from China in the Japanese mind?

Indeed, except for Manchuria’s border with Japan (the Sea of Japan),
all of its other borders—“the boreal forests of Siberia,” “the steppes of
Mongolia,” “the geographical realm of China,” and “the peninsula of
Korea” (Janhunen 1996:3)—are not only continuous but also ambigu-
ous. Juha Janhunen, a contemporary scholar of geography and history,
argues that depending on who views Manchuria, “a variety of alternative
divisions and delimitations” are allowed (ibid.). Since the viewer is also a
historical being, the toponym of Manchuria becomes quite complex.
Here Owen Lattimore, America’s most prominent expert on Inner Asia
in the early twentieth century, offers much insight. In his seminal work,
Manchuria: Cradle of Conflict (1935), Lattimore claims that “Manzhou”
ever existed in local people’s parlance, largely because the region had
been “a cradle of conflict” for many centuries:

Manchuria, Mongolia and Chinese Turkestan were once important as
the lands in which the “northern barbarians” of China’s frontier ma-
neuvered in war and migration, working out among their own tribes
their destinies of conquest in China or migration toward the West. They are now becoming a field of contest between three types of civilization—the Chinese, the Russian and the Western. In our generation the most acute rivalry is in Manchuria, and the chief protagonist of the Western civilization is Japan—whose interpretation and application of a borrowed culture is of acute interest to the Western world, as on it turns to a great extent the choice which other nations have yet to make between their own indigenous cultures and the rival conquering cultures of Russia and the West. (1935;ix)

Contradicting Lattimore’s claim regarding the absence of “Manzhou” in Chinese parlance, scholars of Manchu Studies argue that the term has indeed existed since the seventeenth century (Elliot 2000, 2001; see also Crossley 1997, 1999; Rawski 1998; Rhoads 2000; Yamamuro 1993, 2006). According to these scholars, when the Manchu emperors established the Qing Empire south of the Great Wall, they claimed the land north of the wall as their homeland, trying to turn it “into a preserve of Manchu heritage unspoiled by Chinese or other foreign immigration” (Duara 2003:41). Still, they could not stop a large number of Han Chinese from emigrating to Manchuria from China proper. In Manchuria, the Qing Empire incorporated these Chinese immigrants into the institution known as “Eight Banners,” the military-social system that organized Qing soldiers and their families into different groups called “banners” (Crossley 1997:6; see also Elliot 2001). The presence of Han Chinese in Manchuria, however, offered the West and Japan a fine excuse for their imperial passion: since the Manchu emperors had allowed the Chinese to “colonize” Manchuria, they should also allow “us” to do the same.

In Japan, beginning in the early twentieth century, the idea that Manchuria was “an empty land” open to anyone desiring to expand his living space began to appear in scholarly discourses. For example, in Shinchô jidai no Manshû yori genjô made, Ueda Kyôsuke compared Manchuria before and after the turn of the twentieth century, when Japan’s influence reached the area. Manchuria “before,” according to Ueda, was not known to the world; in fact, even the Chinese (in China proper) had hardly heard of it. Those who had heard of Manchuria imagined it to be the land of ginseng, tobacco, herbs, and bandits (1928:17). Further, in Manshû ken-koku jûnenshi, written around 1942, the authors claim that Manchuria did not, and does not, belong to any particular group of people; it was and is a land open to all, including Chinese, Koreans, Japanese, and Mongols. Even ethnic Manchus, they argue, cannot claim to be the legitimate occupants of Manchuria because they once left the area to the south to govern China; rather, they are “return migrants” (de-modori) to Manchuria (Manshû Teikoku Seifu 1969:3–7).17 Thus, following Russia and other
Western nations, Japan began pushing for its share in Manchuria. In this respect, Manchuria is not merely the creation of the Qing emperors. It is also “a modern creation used mainly by Westerners and Japanese for their imperialistic ambitions” (Lee 1970:60). Let us now look at this Manchuria in the larger context of Japan’s empire making in East Asia.

Japan’s move toward Greater Japan began with the domination of its neighboring regions, which were densely populated (Peattie 1984:7). It was also an incremental process (Matsusaka 2001:1). First, a victory over China in 1895 permitted Japan to acquire its first colony, Taiwan. Second, at the conclusion of the Russo-Japanese War in 1905, Japan gained control of the southern tip of the Liaodong Peninsula and named it the Kwantung Leased Territory. Both victories effectively eliminated the Chinese and Russian powers from Korea. Next, Japan occupied Korea (first as a protectorate in 1905 and then as a colony in 1910), turning it into “a gateway to colonize Manchuria” (Park 2000:195). Thus, more than six hundred thousand Korean rice-cultivating farmers, who had moved to Jiandao (the area of Manchuria bordering Korea) by 1931, served as “molecules” in the diffusion of Japan’s power from Korea to Manchuria (see also Park 2005:44).18

In 1905 and 1906, the Japanese state created three institutions in the Kwantung Leased Territory to not only “modernize” Manchuria but also “concentrate political power in [its] own hands, extract financial profits, and suppress any resistance to the Japanese-imposed political and economic order” (L. Young 1998:27). These institutions were the Office of the Governor General, the SMR, and the Kwantung (Guandong) Army. The first administered the Kwantung Leased Territory with executive, judicial, and legislative powers (ibid.:27, 29). The SMR, which eventually became much more than Japan’s colonial railway company, owned and operated extensive railway lines and managed the so-called attached areas of land to these lines. The SMR also owned and managed numerous properties within these areas, launched several new industries, and set up its own research department, which carried out extensive economic and scientific research relevant to the government of Manchuria (see Itô 1964, 1988; Myers 1989). The Kwantung Army originated in the Japanese garrison defending the railway zones of the SMR at the end of the Russo-Japanese War. Over time, it grew into a massive institution with the important mission of protecting Manchuria from the nationalist movement spreading throughout China and from the threat posed by the Soviet Union after 1917 (L. Young: 1998:30; see also Cox 1989; Peattie 1984:20; Shimada 1965; Yamaguchi 1967:8). The last explains why the Kwantung Army placed more than 322,000 Japanese agrarian emigrants near the border between Manchuria and the Soviet Union for a purely strategic reason: to create a buffer zone against the possible invasion of Manchuria by the Soviets.

Meanwhile, since the mid-nineteenth century, Europe and the
United States had placed China under an unequal treaty system. This system was first created by the British, who imposed a free trade treaty on weaker states such as Persia, Turkey, Siam, and China (Duus 1989:xiv–xix). While creating this “empire without colonies,” the Western powers honored China’s territorial integrity. Japan, which was unable to escape from the same network of unequal treaties until 1911, initially took a cautious and realistic approach, relying on skillful diplomatic tactics within the framework of international cooperation (Hata 1988:277–278; Jansen 1984:62–64). As the military began to function as an increasingly independent and powerful group, however, Japan was caught in aggressive operations in Manchuria, and eventually in China proper, in order to join the Western imperial powers.

The history of Japan’s expansion onto the continent between 1905 and 1931 is now the topic of several well-researched books (Matsusaka 2001; McCormack 1977; L. Young 1998). Here I introduce only the major events that took place during that period. First, the Qing dynasty ended in 1911. The internal turmoil in China emboldened foreign powers to further encroach into Manchuria and China. Russia, for example, succeeded in making Outer Mongolia independent. In turn, negotiations with Russia gave Japan “a sphere of influence in the eastern part of Inner Mongolia” (Hata 1988:279). Second, the Japanese military participated in a joint Allied intervention in the Russian Revolution. Although the intervention failed, the prolonged stay of the Japanese military in Siberia “enabled the Japanese troops to move freely throughout almost all of China” (ibid.:281). Third, Chinese nationalism presented a growing challenge to Japan’s expansion. The establishment of the Nationalist Party (Guomindang) in 1912, its expansion under Chiang Kai-shek (Jiang Jieshi) in the 1920s, the nationalist movement (particularly after the infamous Twenty-one Demands), and the establishment of the CCP in 1921 all pointed to the power of Chinese nationalism. In 1928, Chiang’s army pushed north to drive Zhang Zuolin, the most influential warlord in Northeast China, from power. Incensed by the Japanese cabinet’s decision against military intervention, some extremist officers of the Kwantung Army organized a plot to blow up Zhang’s train as it was returning to Shenyang (see McCormack 1977:124–126). Immediately after Zhang’s death, his son, Zhang Xueliang, joined the Guomindang. Japan’s reaction to the growing nationalism in China reached its apex in 1931. Having missed the opportunity to occupy southern Manchuria in 1928, the Kwantung Army began another round of intensive military action in Liutiaogou on September 18—the so-called Manchurian Incident. The army also expelled “the estimated 330,000 troops in Zhang Xueliang’s army” from Manchuria (L. Young 1998:40) and finally created Manchukuo in 1932.

In the words of Peter Duus, Manchukuo—first a republic and later an
empire—was “a separate state under Chinese leaders who took their orders from Japanese officers and civilian officials” (1989:xxviii). In this respect, Manchukuo was a puppet state of Japan, and by 1933, the Kwantung Army had integrated the railway zone and the four provinces of Jilin, Liaoning, Heilongjiang, and Rehe into it. Still, Manchukuo was born with all the symbolic formalities possible of a modern, independent nation-state: a declaration of independence (kenkoku sengen); a head of state (the last Qing emperor, Puyi); a national flag; an anthem (which later changed twice); a capital, Xinjing (J: Shinkyô); and a state with an executive, a legislature, and a judiciary. Thus, while Duus is right in characterizing Manchukuo as a puppet state of Japan, Manchukuo was not like Japan’s other colonies. The Japanese “labored mightily to convince themselves and others of the truth of Manchurian independence” (L. Young 1998:40–41), so among certain groups of Japanese and Chinese intellectuals there was a vision of sovereignty in Manchukuo.

Who made up the population of Manchuria in the age of empire? To shed light on this question, let me first examine the population census of the city of Harbin (in northern Manchuria) compiled by the Manchukuo state in 1933. This census encompasses as many as thirty national and ethnic groups, including Chinese, Taiwanese, Soviet (those with Soviet passports), Russian (those without Soviet passports), Japanese, Korean, British, American, German, French, Italian, Polish, Jewish, Greek, Dutch, Turkish, Austrian, Hungarian, Danish, Latvian, Portuguese, Czech, Armenian, Belgian, Serb, Swedish, Romanian, Swiss, and Indian (Dai Harubin Annaisha 1933:4–6). The populations of large cities such as Harbin may have been more diverse than those in Manchuria’s countryside. Still, this census does not include Manchus, Mongols, and other northern (or Tungusic) tribes, who have lived on the soil of Manchuria since time immemorial. Nor does it include the approximately two thousand Nikkei, Japanese who had first emigrated to the United States and Hawaii and then emigrated from there to Manchuria after 1932. John Stephan states that these Nikkei, who left behind their relatives in the United States (most of whom were later sent to relocation camps), became part of “the Japanese” in Manchuria (1997; see also Sano 1997). Whether all these groups of people “melted” together in Manchuria is another question. Yet the existence of such a bewildering array of population groups is sufficient to claim that Manchuria in the age of empire was indeed “the imperial melting pot,” the land of multinational and multiethnic groups (Mitter 2005).

How large was the Japanese population in Manchuria on the eve of the establishment of Manchukuo? The prewar statistics on Japanese emigration are scant and unreliable. Information is particularly meager when the destinations of emigrants were within areas under Japan’s influence. The government seems to have paid little attention to the Japa-
nese who had left for these regions, which were regarded as a part or extension of Japan proper. A more compelling reason for the scant information is that Japan was a latecomer in colonial politics: Japanese migration to Japan’s overseas territories began only in the late 1880s (Ichihashi 1931:618). Indeed, Japanese emigration to Manchuria did not begin until a few decades before the Russo-Japanese War. From then on, however, the Japanese state encouraged its people to emigrate to Manchuria and Korea, partly in response to the worsening relationship between Japan and the United States over the Japanese emigration to California. By the early 1930s, about 240,000 Japanese had moved to cities in southern Manchuria, the region opened up by the SMR (Iriye 1981:457). The number of Japanese, however, was insignificant in Manchuria for several reasons. First, the Japanese made up less than 1 percent of the total population of Manchuria (about 30 million), the majority of which was Han Chinese. Second, except for Japanese state employees, including soldiers, most Japanese residents in Manchuria before 1931 were so-called “continental drifters” (tairiku rônin), not settlers in the strict sense of the term. Lattimore observes, “The average [Japanese] peasant would far rather move to a town [within Japan] and become a factory worker than go abroad to take up land” (1935:237). Before 1931 Japanese in Manchuria who were not on official duty were largely small-scale entrepreneurs, disadvantaged sons of mostly poor families, and women who catered to the first two groups. The number of Japanese agrarian settlers barely surpassed one thousand (see Araragi 1994:277). Third, while the Japanese state encouraged its subjects to emigrate to Manchuria, it was Chinese (and Koreans) who actually immigrated to the region in large waves. Often described as the world’s largest population movement, the average annual flow of Chinese from south of the Great Wall into Manchuria in the early twentieth century was estimated at five hundred thousand to 2 million. Thus, in 1930, W. H. Hinton (1919–2004), an American observer of the transformation of China, wrote: “Like a deep bass refrain, in the varied discords of historical events during the years since the Revolution, is the roar of this human Niagara pouring into empty Chinese lands dominated by alien powers” (quoted in Chang 1936:1). Similar views were expressed by several other Western journalists, politicians, and scholars, including V. A. Lytton, A. J. Toynbee, and J. E. Orchard (see also Gottschang 1987; Gottschang and Lary 2000). The war fever in Japan following the Manchurian Incident changed this situation considerably (see chapter 2). The Manchukuo government and the Kwantung Army needed more personnel from Japan. The railway and urban construction boom, supervised by the SMR, attracted many more fortune seekers from Japan (L. Young 1998:250–259). In addition, promoting an image of Manchuria...
ria as Japan’s lifeline, Prime Minister Hirota Kōki adopted in 1936 the policy of “1 million farm households [or 5 million Japanese] to Manchuria” over a period of twenty years (Nôrin-shô Keizai Kôseibu 1939:1). In the following year, he initiated a program to help finance “group emigration,” in which a village, a county, or a town would send about a half of its population to Manchuria to build its branch village, county, or town. Though his plan stopped short of the goal, about 2.2 million Japanese, including civilians and military personnel, were said to be living in Manchuria on the eve of Japan’s defeat (Kôsei-shô 1997:11, 32).

Trying to integrate these diverse populations, the Manchukuo state proclaimed an official slogan of “ethnic harmony” (minzoku kyôwa).22 Referring to this slogan, the declaration of independence of Manchukuo states the following: “The will of 30 million people declares the establishment of Manchukuo and its separation from China. . . . There should be no differences among all the people who reside within this new land. In addition to the Han, Manchu, Mongol, Japanese, and Korean people who have already lived here, people of any other nationality will be treated equally, as long as they wish to live permanently in Manchukuo” (quoted in Manshûkoku-shi Hensan Kankôkai 1970:219–221). Historians seem to agree that the Manchurian Youth League (Manshû Seinen Renmei), formed in 1928, was a major force behind the creation of this ideology. Association members, already living and working in Manchuria, perceived Manchuria as a place where “Japan and China” (Nik-Ka) should coexist peacefully and together elevate the economy and culture of China. In addition, in the name of guiding other ethnic groups (minzoku shidô), they emphasized that the Japanese, as a superior race, should take leadership in this joint endeavor (Hirano Ken’ichirô 1972:238–239; Hirano Yoshitarô et al. 1966:644; Tachibana 1966:183; Yamamuro 1993:92–95). Here we should not ignore the political environment in which the association was formed—a rising Chinese nationalism opposing Japanese and Western imperialism. Yet we can also understand “ethnic harmony” as an ideology of the Chinese nationalists. In 1912, Sun Yat-sen (Sun Zhongshan) proclaimed China’s five ethnicities to be the Han, Man (Manchu), Meng (Mongol), Zang (Tibetan) and Hui (Moslem). While racism, assimilation, and autonomy (of each group) complicated Sun’s idea, the notion of a unified Han nationality incorporating the other four ethnic groups constituted an important element in the Chinese nationalist movement (Duara 1995:142–144). The association members, then, utilized Sun’s idea for the purpose of securing their leadership in Manchuria against the Chinese nationalists, despite the fact that the Japanese constituted only a small fraction of the Manchurian population.

During the Manchuko era, the Japanese settlers called the majority Han Chinese Manjin, which I translate as “Manchurians” in order to distinguish them from ethnic Manchus.23 Ian Buruma calls this practice
a “Japanese deceit” (1994:74). Indeed, this is parallel to the Western practice of referring to the natives of the African continent as “Africans”: both are imperial practices (Wallerstein 1991:127–129). Here let me cite a passage from the travelogue of Honda Katsuichi (1971), who visited Northeast China in the late 1960s. As a prominent left-wing journalist, Honda is quite critical of Japan’s colonial project in Manchuria. In the following, Honda presents an interview with the narrative of one of his Chinese informants, Mr. Xiao, who was living in Pingdingshan at the time of the interview. This village is known for the Pingdingshan Incident of 1932, in which Japanese soldiers killed about three thousand Chinese civilians in reprisal for a resistance raid that they suspected had originated nearby (see Mitter 2000:112–115). Here Mr. Xiao recalls Japanese brutality during the Manchukuo era:

While passing by a Japanese police officer, [this informant] was asked, “What country are you from?” Japanese police officers and those Chinese who worked for them [as spies] often asked this question to search out anti-Japanese activists among the Chinese. If he answered, “I am Manchurian [Manjin],” the Japanese police officer would say, “All right.” But if he answered, “I am Chinese,” the officer would regard him as one such anti-Japanese dangerous element and would even jail him as a political criminal. Since imprisonment meant execution, none would have identified themselves as Chinese. (Honda 1971:115)

Nonetheless, Mr. Xiao declared himself Chinese while trying to run away from the officer. His action enraged the officer so much that he chased Mr. Xiao, attacked him with his sword from behind, and cut off his right ear. This is why, Honda writes, the Chinese in Manchukuo had to identify themselves as Manjin. Over time, however, this term apparently created an illusion among the Japanese that Manjin were ethnically different from Chinese and that Manchuria and China were two different countries.

The category of “Manchurian,” which was forced upon the people in Northeast China, has disappeared in contemporary China. In post-war Japan, however, the loss of Manchuria has not resulted in the disappearance of racial categories, ideas, and ideologies formed during the age of empire. Even though it was a deceit and a sign of ignorance, the term “Manjin” created potent political realities not only in the Japanese Empire but also in postwar Japan (see Stoler 1995:xxiv). When referring to the people of Manchuria, most Japanese still use Manjin or Mankei (those of Manchurian descent) and define themselves in relation to them as Nihonjin or Nikkei (those of Japanese descent). Japanese scholars of Manchuria are no exception. Aware of the colonial roots of these terms, they try to justify their continued usage with somewhat apolo-
getic explanations (see, for example, Araragi 1994:14). I am in sympathy with these scholars because my Japanese informants, who were repatriated from Manchuria after 1945, use Manjin and Mankei interchangeably in reference to the Chinese. I honor their usage of the terms but change them to “the Chinese” in my own discussion.

The expansion of the Japanese Empire did not stop at the Great Wall, which symbolically separates Manchuria from China proper. In 1937, Japan started a war against China, eventually killing and wounding, according to Guomindang estimates, 6,730,000 Chinese, both soldiers and civilians (Hane 1986:339). The Japan-China War ultimately led Japan to war against the Allied Forces. The war thus spread to the entire region of Asia and the Pacific, and the people of Manchukuo were soon mobilized by the Japanese state for its war efforts. Chinese and Korean farmers were asked to increase the quota of various crops to be delivered to Japanese authorities. After the onset of the war against the United States, Japanese male agrarian settlers were increasingly mobilized by the Japanese military and sent to China proper or Southeast Asia. By the spring of 1944, this mobilization became “bottom scraping.” The number of enlisted men who had first moved to Manchuria as agrarian settlers is said to have been about forty-seven thousand (Wakatsuki 1995:163).

This mobilization of male agrarian settlers radically altered the composition of the Japanese population in northern Manchuria; those who were left behind were largely women, children, and the elderly. When the Soviets invaded Manchuria on August 9, 1945, these unprotected civilians were quickly abandoned by fleeing Japanese forces and became easy targets for enemy attack. The local peasants, many of whom had earlier been displaced by the Japanese agrarian immigrants, turned their rage against the immigrants. In addition, the civil war between the Communists and the Nationalists in China, both of whom tried to mobilize Japanese civilians for their own military operations, created more confusion among the Japanese. As the civil war intensified, severe winters and poor hygienic conditions caused malnutrition and disease, from which many more Japanese agrarian settlers, now refugees, died. In order to save the lives of their children, as well as their own lives, thousands of women who had been left to themselves were forced to, in their own words, “leave,” “give up,” “abandon,” “sell,” or “entrust” their loved ones to Chinese families.

The number of deaths among agrarian immigrants from Nagano is staggering (see table 2 in chapter 3). Among those who were not mobilized—namely, women, children, and the elderly—about 60 percent died before reaching Japan’s shores (NKJMK 1984a:719). The rest took months and years to return home. Ironically, the survival rate among the settlers who were mobilized was higher; although many of them were taken to Siberia as prisoners of war by the Soviets, more than 70 percent
returned safely to Japan, as they were better protected by international treaties. Children who had been entrusted to Chinese couples were not allowed to return to Japan until the mid-1970s. While the number at the local level is unavailable, it is believed that approximately thirty thousand Japanese nationals were still in China in 1972, when Japan normalized relations with the PRC (see Yampol 2005:129).

Memory Maps

The history of the present that I intend to write in this book is complex. To mitigate this complexity, I have created “memory maps,” which I draw from the memories of former agrarian settlers in Manchuria, their children who had been left in China but began returning to Japan in the mid-1970s as well as their Japanese-Chinese children, and Chinese people who lived under Japan’s rule in Manchuria, including those who eventually adopted the children of Japanese agrarian settlers. I am aware that memory maps usually designate the maps of destroyed places. Hence such maps, which indicate how the places used to look, are “visual analogues to taped oral histories” about events that occurred in places that no longer exist (Slymovics 1998:7). Memory maps often appear in so-called memorial books, along with photographs; such maps are found “among East European Jewish survivors of the Holocaust, among Armenian survivors of the 1915–20 genocide by Ottoman Turkey, as well as in German-speaking communities in Eastern Europe uprooted after World War II, and among Palestinians transformed into refugees by the establishment of the State of Israel” (ibid.:1–2). Memory maps in this book, however, are not intended to be visual for the very reason I have already discussed: one cannot easily visualize the (Japanese) state. Instead, memory maps in this book serve to organize, in terms of time and space, the narratives of those who remember, and they reveal complex interactions between “the present” and “the past.” In other words, these maps are the voices of people. While I will create four such memory maps (in the four chapters that follow), I will first discuss several ideas on memory that memory maps purport to reflect.

First, memory maps reflect the idea that memory never exists in isolation from historical, social, geographical, and cultural contexts and that the memory of a particular event in the past varies depending on who remembers and when, where, for whom, and how he or she remembers. Thus, in each memory map, the interviewees (who provide oral memories) or authors (who provide written memories or memoirs) do not “speak to us pure and neat, unmediated by intellectual reflection” (Das 1995:175). They have thought ahead of time about what, for whom, and how to remember, and they have then narrated their memories. In addition, since our profession often transforms how individuals remember, their memo-
ries are relative to our queries and desires. In these respects, memory maps are not dissimilar to what Pierre Nora has called les lieux de mémoire, or “sites of memory.” This concept, according to Nora, is based on the assumption that milieux de mémoire, or “real environments of memory,” no longer exist, for historians have already entered such environments, pushing memory (the present) into history (the past) while simultaneously creating sites of memory (1989:18). Here we might even say that each historian has become a site of memory. Nonetheless, we should not lament the loss of the milieux de mémoire. Rather, we should consider as valuable the role of historians, who transform what is remembered (and what is forgotten) into “something that can be conceived.” In other words, it is historians who make personal memories “knowable” for others (Le Goff 1992:xii).

Second, memory maps reflect the idea that memory is not only individual but also inter-subjective (Boyarin 1994b:23; Fentress and Wickham 1992:7). Memory is social because people speak and/or write their memories. This means that people can remember the past that they did not directly experience through the medium of memory. On this nature of memory, Rubie Watson writes, “Many Americans ‘remember’ the American Civil War and many Jews ‘remember’ the Nazi Holocaust, but not because they personally experienced those events or because they have read master narratives written by professional historians detailing the great battles or the sufferings in the camps. Rather, they ‘remember’ because they share with others sets of images that have been passed down to them through the media of memory—through paintings, architecture, monuments, ritual, storytelling, poetry, music, photos, and film” (1994:8). Restated, the past to be remembered does not cover only facts; it also covers the images into which those facts have already been transformed. Hence the facts that do not fit in such images may have been forgotten. Here I add to Watson’s insight by arguing that memory is also about “those enduring sentiments and sensibilities that cast a much longer shadow over people’s lives and what they choose to remember and tell about them” (Stoler and Strassler 2000:8).

The inter-subjectivity of memory also means that it is collective. Maurice Halbwachs, whose works on collective memory made him a major figure in the history of sociology, argued that “no memory is possible outside frameworks used by people living in society to determine and retrieve their collections” (1992:43; see also Halbwachs 1980). Nevertheless, Halbwachs, who has often been criticized for having neglected individual memory, was never oblivious of the fact that it is the individual who remembers. To stress the inseparability of individual and collective memories, scholars later replaced collective memory with other terms. James Fentress and Chris Wickham, for example, opt for social memory in order to avoid the image of Jungian collective unconsciousness inherent in collec-
tive memory (1992). James Young relies on collected memory to emphasize “the many discrete memories that are gathered into common memorial spaces and assigned common meaning” (1993:xii).

Last, memory maps reject the idea that memory is a repository of alternative histories and subaltern truths. I am quite aware that this idea is still quite popular among scholars, however much many of them have already discredited the idea of memory as a container of truths. The strength of this model lies in the fact that memory constitutes one of the “weapons of the weak” (see Scott 1985). Nevertheless, as Stoler and Strassler have argued, presenting subaltern memory against official memory (or state-managed historiography) is less useful for the following reasons. First, a commitment to write a counter-history privileges some memories over others. Second, such a commitment merely assumes that it is the subaltern memory that represents the truth (2000:8). Thus, in the memory maps I am about to draw, I have no intention of negating Japan’s state-sanctioned history by presenting the memories of Japanese, Japanese-Chinese, and Chinese groups of people. Note, however, that official history has also changed since 1945, and it has always been presented in multiple, often mutually conflicting, views. These memory maps will present instead the complex relationship between what is remembered and what is forgotten. After all, the people whose voices we will hear in this book remembered for the present so that they could make their past meaningful for the present. Nonetheless, we should also keep in mind that memory does not always constitute a functional response to the needs of the present; by remembering, people invariably examine not just the past but their own interpretation of that past as well.32

Memory map 1 (Chapter 2) presents oral memories of the farmers who emigrated from Nagano to Manchuria between 1932 and 1945 and returned to Nagano between 1946 and 1949. “The present” in this map refers to various moments over a twenty-five-year period between 1971 and 1996, when a Japanese historian (Yamada Shōji) and I solicited the farmers’ oral memories in Nagano. Hence the geographical location of this map is Nagano, Japan. Since we asked our interviewees to remember the colonization of Manchuria, “the past” in this map refers to the age of empire.

Memory map 2 (chapter 3) presents written memories—memoirs of the former agrarian settlers in Manchuria who returned to various corners of Japan between 1946 and 1949. (Known as hikiage-mono in Japanese, they are a subcategory of autobiographies.) This is therefore a national map of Japan. At many points between the 1970s and the early twenty-first century, which constitutes “the present” in this map, they wrote and published autobiographies. Such autobiographies, however,
do not represent the entire life histories of their authors. Rather, the writers remember only their journeys of repatriation. Thus “the past” in this map refers to the period from the Soviet invasion of Manchuria on August 9, 1945, to sometime between 1946 and 1949, when the authors finally reached the entry ports to Japan. In spatial terms, then, memory map 2 refers to the space between Manchuria and Japan.

Memory map 3 (chapter 4), titled “Orphans’ Memories,” examines the oral and written memories of the children of Japanese agrarian settlers who were left behind in China in the aftermath of the war but returned to Japan after the mid-1970s. From the late 1970s to 2004, which constitutes “the present” in this map, I heard and read their narratives in my fieldwork sites of Nagano (1996) and Tokyo (between 1998 and 2004). I also included in the group of interviewees several children of these children—that is, Japanese-Chinese who were born in China but later joined their Japanese parents in Japan. In this memory map, the past refers to the life courses of these children from their births in the 1930s and ’40s to the present.

Memory map 4 (chapter 5), “Chinese People’s Memories,” presents the memories of the Chinese who lived the age of empire in Manchuria. This map also includes the memories of Chinese couples who adopted children of the Japanese agrarian settlers, as well as those of the adopted children who, having renounced their Japanese nationality, chose to stay in China as Chinese nationals. The present in this map, which in geographical terms is Northeast China, refers to the period between the 1980s and the early twenty-first century, when members of the CCP and Chinese and Japanese scholars listened to the memories of these Chinese people. The past of this map covers the age of empire. Yet for the Chinese adoptive parents and their adopted children, the past covers their entire life courses from the age of empire to the present. In the final chapter, I will consider the theoretical questions of “the state” and the relationship among place, voice, and nostalgia. In addition, since these memory maps, which often produce sub- or local-memory maps, are by no means mutually exclusive but overlap, I try to integrate these four memory maps in the transnational space covering Japan and China.

Facing this proliferation of memories, can we scholars still retain the will to historicize? It is true that today we live in an age when history and memory diverge and are in conflict in many ways. Thus Arif Dirlik argues, “We may view the proliferation of memory as an indication of the impossibility of history. We may also view it as the proliferation of histories: many histories do not cohere, and have no hope of doing so, which may be the price to be paid for ‘the democratization of social memory’” (2000:49). I too am aware of this obvious political consequence of the proliferation of memories. Yet our obligation, I believe, is to maintain a dialogue between us and those who lived in the past, be-
tween the historian’s construction of the past and the way that the past was or is constructed by those who lived it. Here, then, following LeGoff, “let us act in such a way that collective memory may serve the liberation and not the enslavement of human beings” (1992:99).

Following Japanese custom, I have cited Japanese names surname first throughout. Except for those who have authored and published their autobiographies, the names of my informants in my fieldwork sites in Nagano and Tokyo are all first-name pseudonyms to protect their identities. Some of these informants, however, authored short essays for alumni magazines and women’s groups magazines. Even when I quote from these essays, however, I continue to use the pseudonyms I created for the authors. Most Japanese, including the repatriates from China, customarily read Chinese place names in Japanese ways. For example, the Japanese pronounce the place name of Chongqing (in Chinese) Jûkei (in Japanese). In addition, during the age of empire, the Japanese, ignoring the Chinese place names, gave such places Japanese names. This is particularly notable in the Japanese naming of agrarian colonies. Thus, in table 2 (in chapter 3), I have hyphenated the Japanese and Chinese place names for each agrarian colony—for example, Ôhinata-Sijiafang. This means that the Japanese settlers built the branch village of Ôhinata in the place that the locals called Sijiafang. To mitigate the complexity of place names, I have adopted the following policies:

(1) In principle, I use the Chinese place names throughout this text.
(2) When my informants and the authors of autobiographies refer to certain places in China in Japanese, I honor those names but add their Chinese names in parentheses wherever possible.
(3) When only the Japanese names are available, I add “J” in parentheses after such names, as in Koshiro (J).

Throughout this book, I honor the pinyin system of transliteration for Chinese words. However, for certain proper and personal names—the Guandong Army, Jiang Jieshi, and Sun Zhongshan—I bend the rule and used instead the Kwantung Army, Chiang Kai-shek, and Sun Yat-sen, with which the students of Japan are more familiar. Translations throughout this book are mine except for those specifically noted.