



Abandoned Japanese in Postwar Manchuria: The Lives of War Orphans and Wives in Two Countries (Japan Anthropology Workshop Series)

Yeeshan Chan

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This book relates the experiences of the *zanryu-hojin* - the Japanese civilians, mostly women and children, who were abandoned in Manchuria after the end of the Second World War when Japan's puppet state in Manchuria ended, and when most Japanese who has been based there returned to Japan. Many *zanryu-hojin* survived in Chinese peasant families, often as wives or adopted children; the Chinese government estimated that there were around 13,000 survivors in 1959, at the time when over 30,000 "missing" people were deleted from Japanese family registers as "war dead".

Since 1972 the *zanryu-hojin* have been gradually repatriated to Japan, often along with several generations of their extended Chinese families, the group in Japan now numbering around 100,000 people. Besides outlining the *zanryu-hojin*'s experiences, the book explores the related issues of war memories and war guilt which resurfaced during the 1980s, the more recent court case brought by *zanryu-hojin* against the Japanese government in which they accuse the Japanese government of abandoning them, and the impact on the towns in northeast China from which the *zanryu-hojin* were repatriated and which now benefit hugely from overseas remittances from their former residents. Overall, the book deepens our understanding of Japanese society and its anti-war social movements, besides providing vivid and colourful sketches of individuals' worldviews, motivations, behaviours, strategies and difficulties.

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