

(5) Omissions: the author quotes various examples of omissions; for example, passages unworthy to be referred to the emperor as “son of Heaven.”

(6) Semantic differences: these often referred to horses, for which the Manchu language was richer and more colorful than the Chinese—for instance, a Manchu *jerde morin* (“sorrel horse”) became in Chinese a mere *chi ma* (“red horse”).

(7) Explanations: here syntactical questions are tackled, mainly aiming to make Manchu terms and concepts more comprehensible to the Chinese reader.

(8) Wrong translations: these are mainly the result of superficial and hasty work, and a proof that the translation was not successively checked against the Manchu original. One has to ask, however, if giving the price of a camel at thirty ounces in the Manchu version, but at twenty ounces in the Chinese one (as in the example on p. 146), is not a simple misprint.

With this very detailed and excellently documented study, the author dissipates all doubts—if any existed—about the value of original documents, on how they were changed and adapted to the needs of the official court historiography. Furthermore, he offers a deep inside look into the historiography of Qing China, highlighting in a very concrete way the importance of Manchu documents and sources. It is certainly not an exaggeration to state that further research in Qing history (at least until the Kangxi period but even later) should be carried out with the inclusion of Manchu sources too, whenever these are available.

In conclusion, I would like to add a minor critical remark, about the occasionally incorrect rendering of Manchu names, which sometimes are given in their right Manchu form, like Unda for Wen-da, but sometimes in Chinese transliteration only, for example, Luo-cha instead of Loca (p. 36).

GIOVANNI STARY
University of Venice

JAPAN

The Columbia Guide to Modern Japanese History. By GARY D. ALLINSON. New York: Columbia University Press, 1999. xiv, 259 pp. \$45.00.

The turn of a century and new challenges to Japan’s vaunted economic growth and social stability give occasion for a fresh assessment of the experience of Japan since 1850—the period commonly labeled “modern.” Gary D. Allinson, Ellen Bayard Weedon Professor of East Asian Studies at the University of Virginia, has written a compact volume that serves both as a highly readable survey and a scholar’s handbook. The readily accessible resource guide, which fills the second half of the volume, has descriptions of leading institutions and personalities; a topical, briefly annotated bibliography, including film and on-line resources; a chronology; and key documents. The author consciously avoids theoretical sparring, and writes with a degree of human interest that can hold the attention of a novice to Japanese history. While he incorporates innovative approaches in his telling of history, the basic lines of the story do not part from mainstream historiography.

The narrative section is distinguished by a chronological chapter arrangement that avoids conventional turning points. The four chapters break at 1889, 1931, and 1973, but Allinson's treatment conveys more flow than juncture. The Meiji Constitution, the Manchurian Incident, and the Arab Oil Crisis—which these dates imply—in fact receive little attention. The Meiji Restoration, the turn-of-the-century wars of imperialism, and the Pacific War are not treated as major epochs.

What does concern the author is the development of the modern Japanese economy and the ways in which economic change affected society, cultures, and lifestyles. Consistent with his interest in the commoner, Allinson addresses changes on the farm, in the small enterprise, in the suburban household, in entertainment districts, and in the lives of women at work and home. He notes what money people earn, what commodities they buy, what food they eat, and what popular literature they read. Statistics give poignancy to the trends he depicts. The phenomena of *mobo*, *moga*, new religions, and *burakumin* help illuminate the mainstream. He includes narrative sketches of hypothetical people and their daily concerns—a technique employed productively in his recent *Japan's Postwar History* (Cornell, 1997). Yet, this proletarian history is without a proletarian agenda, for Allinson does not take sides in the ever-present and sometimes raucous debates over the allocation of power throughout Japan's modern history.

Allinson's stated plan is to deal with five aspects of the historical record: external relations, domestic political affairs, economic development, social change, and cultural life. Certain frameworks stand out in the four narrative chapters. In the first, it is the alternating roles of state and private initiative in post-Restoration economic development. In the second, it is the immovability of a social and cultural orthodoxy despite incursions by alternative movements in the early twentieth century. In the third chapter, Allinson again emphasizes economic development in a turbulent context of depression, war, Occupation, and recovery. The final chapter focuses on social segmentation (breakdown) in the post-1960s era of affluence. At a time when our recent memory is dominated by Japanese economic boom and bust, it is instructive to learn from Allinson that prolonged recession has been a normal occurrence in Japan's modern history, and that the rate of economic growth in most bullish periods has been quite modest.

Within the space limitations of a concise volume, the author admirably delivers the comprehensiveness he intends. Some historians might call for greater weight to the heavy industrial development of the World War I years, whereas the book places the shift from light to heavy industry in the 1930s. Likewise, some would call for more treatment of Japan's war in China in the 1930s, and more space for the related discussion of evolving Japanese intellectual attitudes toward the mainland—in view of the prominent place of this subject in recent Japanese studies. Allegations of error can be made in matters of emphasis, nuance, and minor detail. It is misleading to say that Japanese army officers saw "action" in Europe during World War I (p. 72), and to say that Japanese control of two cities in the Liaodong Peninsula followed the Triple Intervention of 1895 (p. 68). But in the final analysis, the book is creatively organized, carefully written, journalistically superb, and historically sound.

In the *Columbia Guide*, Gary Allinson has given us an innovative and reliable narrative and usable reference tools for Japan's modern history. It has practical value as an introduction to the study of Japan and as a reference volume for Japanologists.

THOMAS W. BURKMAN
University at Buffalo, The State University of New York