Watching, Reading & Traveling

Clouds Above the Hill

Novels, Dramas, Films, Tourist Sites

The same contents (Russo-Japanese War): How do they differ in the novel, drama, film and tourist site formats?

Production
Identity
Regulation
Consumption
Representation

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Shiba Ryotaro

Shiba Ryotaro, 1923-1996

Clouds Above the Hill

Opening sequence.

Reading and Watching Clouds Above the Hill

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<th>Novel</th>
<th>Drama</th>
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<td>Dramatized history textbook</td>
<td>Character study of 3 main characters and other minor characters.</td>
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<td>Long sections of “narration”</td>
<td>Short sections of “narration”</td>
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<td>Shiki’s death a quarter of the way through the novel</td>
<td>Shiki’s death half way through the drama.</td>
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The Takeo Hirose Story

Takeo Hirose, 1868-1904

• Led the operations to block the entrance to Port Arthur.
• Died in March 1904.
• Small part in the novel (Part II pp. 101-149), but a major character in the drama (star of episodes 6 & 9).
• Let’s watch a little (1:11:00 to 1:18:00) and read the equivalent passage (pp. 148-149).

• One of Japan’s most prolific historical novelists.
• Born in Osaka, served in a tank unit during the war, and then became a journalist.
• Retired to become a full-time novelist.
• Published over 600 books selling 180 million copies.

Shiba Ryotaro, 1923-1996

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Excerpt from *Clouds Above the Hill*

- Let’s discuss the handout from last week.
- What do you think of this as a section from a novel?
- What do you think of its version of history?
- What do you think some of the issues are surrounding the “Shiba view of history”?

The “Shiba View of History”

“The novel is today recognized as a typical expression of Shiba shikan [the Shiba view of history]. This view is based on a clearly positive evaluation of the Meiji Era before the Russo-Japanese War and a negative estimation of the following period (Nakamura 1997). From this point of view, people of the Meiji Era were energetic, ambitious and encouraged to pursue the great purpose of overtaking Europe. Winning the war against Russia symbolized the realization of the spirit of Meiji. This brilliant era, according to the Shiba shikan, fell into ruin after the Portsmouth Treaty of 1905: Japan became self-centered, turned towards imperialism and militarism, and finally plunged into the disaster of the Asian-Pacific War.” (p. 258)


The “Abe (Shiba?) View of History”

More than one hundred years ago, vast colonies possessed mainly by the Western powers stretched out across the world. With their overwhelming superiority in technology, none of colonies compare toward the end of the 19th century. There is no doubt that the resultant sense of crisis driven Japan forward to achieve modernization. Japan built a constitutional government earlier than any other nation in Asia. The country preserved its independence throughout. The Japan-Russia War gave encouragement to many people under colonial rule from Asia to Shiba.

After World War I, which embroiled the world, the movement for self-determination gained momentum and put brakes on colonization that had been underway. It was a horrible war that claimed as many as ten million lives. With a strong desire for peace stirred in them, people founded the League of Nations and brought forth the General Treaty for Renunciation of War. There emerged in the international community a new tide of outlawing war and brakes on colonization that had been underway. It was a horrible war that claimed as many as ten million lives. With a strong desire for peace stirred in them, people founded the League of Nations and brought forth the General Treaty for Renunciation of War. There emerged in the international community a new tide of outlawing war and brakes on colonization that had been underway.

At the beginning, Japan, too, kept steps with other nations. However, with the Great Depression setting in and the Western powers launching economic blocs by involving colonial economies, Japan’s economy suffered a severe blow. It was humbled and a desire to overcome its diplomatic and economic deadlock through the use of force. Its domestic political system could not serve as a brake to stop such attempts. In this way, Japan lost sight of the overall trends in the world.

With the Manchurian Incident, followed by the withdrawal from the League of Nations, Japan gradually transformed itself into a challenger to the new international order that the international community sought to establish after tremendous sacrifices. Japan took the wrong course and advanced along the road to war.

Statement by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, 14 August 2015.

Critiquing the “Shiba View of History”

- Thoughts stemming from my previous research on Hokkaido and empire:
  - *Assertions about imperial history:* Challenging Shiba’s assertion (Vol. 2, p.52) that Japan had “no colonies” before 1895.
  - *Double standards:* You can’t have your cake and eat it (criticizing Western colonialism and then installing it as a “bright period”).

Critiquing the “Shiba View of History”

- *Nakatsu, Aiko, Yasueko Jumonji, Daiyo Nakatsuka.* *Questioning the Historical Views in *Clouds Above the Hill*.*
  - **Timing:** Why did NHK make this in 2009 (as close to the centenary of the annexation of Korea)?
  - **Production:** Why did NHK go against Shiba’s wishes that *Clouds Above the Hill* not be dramatized?
  - **Interpretation:** Are the idealized views of the Meiji period and main characters justified? Was the criticism of others (esp. Its Hirobumi and Onaga Mireike) justified?
  - **Content:** What was omitted from *Clouds Above the Hill* (e.g. Port Arthur Massacre of 1894?)

Statement by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, 14 August 2015.

Traveling *Clouds Above the Hill*
Heritage Tourism (Actual sites)

Heritage Tourism (Related sites)

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Tourist Numbers in Matsuyama

Shimanami Kaido boom
Clouds Above the Hill boom

Clouds Above the Hill Museum Visitor Numbers

A classic pattern of “contents tourism”

Shiki Museum Visitor Numbers

Less obvious, but nevertheless visible, pattern of “contents tourism”

Machizukuri Zones

The Battleship Mikasa

Panels explaining history on the Mikasa

Effectively the Shiba and Abe view …