

## 2. The Navy

### 29) Interview with Lieutenant Commander Terasaki Takaharu (寺崎隆治), Captain of the gunboat *Seta*

In 1937, Lieutenant Commander Terasaki Takaharu was an instructor at the Naval War College. On August 13, as the second Shanghai-Incident broke out, Lieutenant Commander Terasaki asked Deputy Head Rear Admiral Sato Ichiro (佐藤市郎) [the oldest brother of former prime ministers Kishi Nobusuke and Sato Eisaku] to allow him to go China and in October he was appointed captain of the gunboat *Seta*.

In the Shanghai area, the Third Fleet, headed by Vice Admiral Hasegawa Kiyoshi (長谷川清), was deployed and the *Seta* belonged to the 11<sup>th</sup> Squadron under the Third Fleet.

– Before reaching Nanjing, were you heavily attacked from both shores?

On December 9, we were attacked by the Chinese army by the Guishan (龜山) Battery, which was situated downstream near Zhenjiang (鎮江). There was fierce shelling and the *Seta* was hit by three shells, but without taking casualties. So we withdrew and then bombed the battery by airplane.

Next, after the battle of Guishan Battery subsided, we were attacked from Doutianmiyao (都天廟), which was in front of us--fierce shooting and bombardment began, fire from machine guns and rifles from both sides continued until we reached Nanjing. In addition, a number of underwater mines lay in the water, which made navigation very difficult.

In the evening of 11<sup>th</sup>, as we broke into Zhenjiang, the *Seta* had no fuel and we quickly pulled up to the enemy's wharf to take on coal and continued up river.

– Where was Rear Admiral Kondo Eijiro (近藤英次郎), Commander of the 11<sup>th</sup> Squadron, at the time?

Commander Kondo was on board the *Ataka*, 10 miles to the rear in the Fleet, and commanding the Fleet.

On the 12<sup>th</sup>, we underwent a fierce attack from an artillery battery at Mt. Wulong (烏龍) in Nanjing, as well from Liu Zikou (劉子口), from the opposite shore, and we encountered a choke point right before Mt. Wulong. The choke point was made by 12 sunken ships that were tied to each other with wires. At 11 p.m., the demolition team, guarded by the *Seta*, dismantled the wires, and, at 3 a.m. on the 13<sup>th</sup>, opened the waterway.

At 10 a.m. on the 13<sup>th</sup>, the *Seta* initially navigated the waterway opened by the demolition. After confirming passage, 100 meters behind the *Hodu*, the *Seta* advanced to Nanjing. The *Hodu's* captain, Lieutenant Commander Ueda Mitsuhiro (上田光浩), was five grades above me, so the *Hodu* went ahead of us.

The Yangtze River separated into two streams before Nanjing and we took the left stream. Heavy attacks by Chinese soldiers from both shores continued. Around that time, we found a number of Chinese soldiers floating on junks and rafts, and their numbers gradually increased over time. The *Seta* had 4 sets of 25 mm machine guns and we shot at them as they moved.

– Were they Chinese soldiers who had fled from Nanjing?

Yes. It was the 13<sup>th</sup> when the Army entered Nanjing, so I assumed that Chinese soldiers tried to escape down the Yangtze River by junks and rafts.

– Didn't they think that Japanese troops would come upstream?

At first, they tried to escape to Pukou (浦口), on the opposite bank, but Japanese troops soon arrived at Pukou, so they had no choice but to either flee up or down the Yangtze.

As we neared Nanjing, we found Chinese soldiers using not only junks and rafts, but also clinging to doors; the Yangtze River became full of Chinese soldiers. They never expected the Japanese fleet from downstream.

– How many people were on board a junk?

Around 100 people, I think.

– How many Chinese soldiers tried to escape by junk or raft?

Several thousands. The *Seta* shot at them as went by, and the ships in convoy shot at them as well. There were approximately 20 junks and rafts in total. We just happened to encounter them.



In the Jiangnan Grand Canal near Danyang, civilians fled in junks in order to avoid gunfire.  
(December 2, 1937)

– When did you arrive at Nanjing?

It was at 3:15 p.m. on the 13<sup>th</sup>. As we reached Zhongxing (中興) Wharf, we saw the Japanese Army waving *hinomaru* flags. We were ordered by the Commander to make contact with the Army when we arrived at Nanjing. Therefore, we sent a message to the *Hodu* that the *Seta* was going to go Zhongxing Wharf for that purpose, but the *Hodu*, which was in the vanguard, quickly moved into Zhongxing Wharf before us. So as a result, the *Seta* became the lead and headed for the next wharf, Xiaguan (下関).

As we reached Xiaguan Wharf, we saw a number of soldiers waving at us. I used a pair of binoculars and saw that they were Chinese soldiers. The Chinese soldiers did not expect that the Japanese fleet would come so quickly and thought that we were a Chinese fleet. We shot at them with 25 mm machine guns as we moved into the wharf.

– How many Chinese soldiers were there?

We saw around 500 and there were many in the rear. We were shooting as we reached the wharf, so the Chinese soldiers in the rear escaped upstream.

The *Seta* entered Nanjing in the vanguard, so I sent a telegram: “We broke through Nanjing 1515”. Using code would take about half an hour, so I sent it un-coded. Right away, the telegram was received by Commander Kondo of the Third Fleet, the Naval General Staff, and the Ministry of the Navy.

– After the 14<sup>th</sup>, what did you do?

The *Panay* Incident (a mistaken attack by a Japanese plane on a US gunboat), occurred before the Nanjing Attack. The *Hodu* was tasked for rescue and the *Seta* remained in Nanjing.

– According to the *New York Times*, the *Seta* left Nanjing, headed for Shanghai, with foreign reporters on board, on the 15<sup>th</sup>.

No, this did not occur. I never saw any foreign reporters. We didn't leave Nanjing until the entrance ceremony on the 17<sup>th</sup>.

– According to the *New York Times*, when foreign reporters, who remained in Nanjing, boarded the *Seta*, they saw Japanese soldiers execute 300 prisoners on the quay.

We stayed at Xiaguan, but I never saw anything like that.

– What was the situation in Nanjing?

There was a senior officer on the *Seta*, Lieutenant Sekiguchi Kozo (関口鑛造), who was a relative, and I sent him to inspect Nanjing on the 14<sup>th</sup>. He reported to me that Nanjing was calm, that there were no special incidents. Later on, there was nothing special to report.

– When did you enter Nanjing?

The *Seta* remained at Xiaguan and, under orders, we captured an ammonium sulfate factory, which was on the shore opposite from us.

Once, Captain Okamura Motoharu (岡村基晴), a combat aircraft veteran, who was in the same graduating class as me, came to Nanjing, and we lit candles and gave a toast at Xiaguan.

The day I entered Nanjing for the first time was the 17<sup>th</sup>, the day of the entrance ceremony, I think. I attended the ceremony which was held in the square of the Nationalist Party Government, and together with General Matsui and Vice Admiral Hasegawa Kiyoshi, we made a *banzai-sansho*, or three cheers. Next to me, Commander Doi Shinji (土井申二) was there and Mr. Doi gave me a Chinese poem which he wrote.

Guided by the Army, I visited Mt. Zijing and China Gate but no corpses were found there. I saw bodies only at the shore of the Yangtze, that is, around Xiaguan and Pukou.

– How many bodies did you see on the shores of the Yangtze?

I think 4,000 to 5,000.

– What bodies did you see?

As Chinese troops tried to escape the Yangtze, the Japanese Navy stopped them and as they tried to escape to Pukou, the Japanese Army stopped them. The bodies were result from these battles.

– Was this the basis of a “massacre”?

They started to call it a “massacre” at the War Trial after the War. At the time there was a war, therefore, we shot Chinese soldiers in the ensuing chaos and some citizens and residents who were struggling to escape or fight against us might have been included. It was a consequence of war. I believe they called those casualties of war, resulting under such circumstances, “massacre” victims. China is a propaganda expert--they used their style of exaggeration, *hakuhatu sanzen-jo*.

To my knowledge, it was totally impossible to massacre 300,000 in the small confines of Nanjing Castle.

Lieutenant General Tani Hisao (谷寿夫), Commander of the 6<sup>th</sup> Division, was executed in Nanjing. Lieutenant General Tani was a man with international thinking and familiar with international law--such a person would not have ordered a massacre.

After the War Trial, China stopped making claims. Nevertheless, some Japanese visited China, 40 years since the end of the War, for the opportunity to blame ourselves for igniting the Nanjing Incident. That's why China has started to make these claims.

– How long did you stay in Nanjing?

I stayed Nanjing until July 1938. I often met with Army personnel. I was given a consolation gift from Lieutenant General Prince Asaka-no-miya, the Commander of the Shanghai Expeditionary Army.

In the New Year, 1938, I was in Zhenjiang, where Major General Uchiyama Eitaro (内山英太郎), Commander of a Artillery Brigade, was deployed. We exchanged visits, Major General Uchiyama visited the *Seta* several times.

In those days, Captain Onishi Hajime was a staff officer in the Shanghai Expeditionary Army and served as the liaison officer between the Army and the Navy. Later, he was appointed to Chief of the Special Service Agency, so Mr. Onishi knew the most about matters concerning Nanjing.

Mr. Onishi was a student at the Military Academy at the time I was a student at Naval Academy, and we had done an orienteering exercise together. He has a strong sense of justice and is an honest man. He never pays lip service and I am sure he is a highly reliable person. Many things have been said about the Nanjing massacre, I really want to reveal the truth.

Mr. Terasaki was born in November 1900. When he attacked Nanjing, he was 37 years old. After the Yangtze Operation, he joined the Canton-Hainan Island Operation as a staff officer in the Fifth Fleet. In the Greater East Asian War, he participated in the Malayan Campaign as a staff officer in the Southern Expeditionary Fleet, then served as staff officer in the Second Aviation Squadron, then as staff officer in the Combined Fleet. At the end of the War, he was a captain.

I interviewed Mr. Terasaki in February 1986--he was 85 years old. Even at his age he was very busy, studying war history, meetings with *Suikokai*, a Japanese naval officers' organization, and meeting with a service memorial society honoring the *Tokkotai*, the special attack units. He spared time out of his busy day for me. During the interview, he spoke of dates and years without any trouble. I was surprised by his clear memory, and at times, when I encountered unfamiliar Chinese places, he wrote the names down for me.

### **30) Interview with Commander Doi Shinji (土井申二), Captain of the Gunboat *Hira***

As the Marco Polo Bridge Incident broke out in 1937, the Third Fleet headed for Shanghai in order to protect Japanese residents there and to secure Japanese interests. The 11<sup>th</sup> Squadron, which had guard duty in the Yangtze River, started withdrawing Japanese residents who lived all across China, including Chongqing (重慶), Yichang (宜昌), Shashi (沙市), and Hankou (漢口). The gunboat *Hira* boarded Japanese people from Chongqing and returned to Shanghai, that was its last departure from Chongqing. Mr. Doi Shinji was the Captain of the *Hira*. The *Hira* left Chongqing on August 1 and arrived in Shanghai on August 8. A couple of days later, 52 Japanese who fled Hankou were unable to reach Shanghai and made it as far as Nanjing.

On August 13, five days after the *Hira* arrived at Shanghai, the Japanese Naval Landing Force clashed with the Chinese Army in Shanghai, which turned into a full-scale war.

In the middle of November, as Japanese Troops captured most of Shanghai, the 11<sup>th</sup> Squadron, including the *Hira*, started to open the waterway of the Huangpu (黃埔) River, then headed for the Yangtze River.

On December 1, the 11<sup>th</sup> Squadron, commanded by Rear Admiral, Kondo Eijirou, consisted of 24 gunboats and mine sweepers, moved up the Yangtze for Nanjing.

China already gave notice of the closure of the Yangtze to foreign countries. They sunk ships to obstruct passage in key areas, and laid underwater mines to close the Yangtze River completely. In addition, they had several fortresses along the shores of the Yangtze, including Jiangyin (江陰), Zhenjiang (鎮江) and Mt. Wulong. Under such conditions, the 11<sup>th</sup> Squadron advanced up the Yangtze for Nanjing.

I interviewed Mr. Doi Shinji in January 1986, he was over 89 years old. He had no health problem in particular, and spent his life creating his favorite *kanshi*, classical Chinese poetry. Also, he has no problem getting around and attended meetings of the Suikokai.

In Mr. Doi's room, there were photos of him during his years in the navy, as a naval



ensign, and a photo of the Emperor and Empress. Furthermore, his bookshelves were full of books and documents relating to the Navy. He spends all of his time surrounded by these things, so he is aware of these times, but that was, after all, a long time ago; some of his recollections were not entirely clear.

Mr. Doi was born in 1896 and graduated from the 45<sup>th</sup> class of the Naval Academy. While he served as a Lieutenant Junior Grade, and then as a Lieutenant, he was assigned to garrison duty in China, and in January 1937, he was appointed captain of the gunboat *Hira*.

He worked to protect Japanese residents mainly in Changsha (長沙), Yichang, and Chongqing, and then he joined the Nanjing Attack. In February 1938, he returned to Tokyo as a temporary on-active-duty instructor, but in 1939, he went China again to participate in the Southern China Operation as captain of the gunboat *Saga*.

“Biographies of China-Related Persons in the Imperial Japanese Navy” – this was a booklet composed by Mr. Okino Matao (沖野亦男), a China expert in the Navy who served as an assistant officer to the resident military officer in China. Mr. Doi was included in the list of China-related Navy personnel who loved China, and he was described as follows; “Mr. Doi served 5 years in Chang Jiang and his soul was kindled by the beautiful scenery of South and Central China that resulted in him becoming an aesthetic poet.”

At the end of the War, Mr. Doi had the rank of captain.

– You moved up the Yangtze heading for Nanjing?

Yes. Around November 10, we started work to open the Huangpu River, and then went up the Yangtze, it was December 1, I think. On the way, we landed at Jiangyin. Then, we advanced to Zhenjiang, where our *Hira* remained for several days, in order to cover the river crossing operation by the Amagaya Brigade. In the meantime, the *Hodu* and the *Seta* continued up the River.

– When the *Seta* attacked Nanjing on the 13<sup>th</sup>, was your *Hira* still in Zhenjiang?

I don't remember the date well, but when the *Seta* went to Nanjing we stayed in Zhenjiang. The *Hira* arrived in Nanjing a day or two before the entrance ceremony.

– Did you arrive at Xiaguan?

No, a little bit downstream of Xiaguan, at a place called Zhongxing Wharf. It might have been Xiaguan but we didn't call it Xiaguan; we called it Zhongxing Wharf. I think the *Seta* arrived up-stream of Xiaguan.

– What was the situation at Zhongxing Wharf?

The area was called Pagoda Bridge Town, which was used as the Chinese army's military materials base. There were a lot of military materials and railroad siding was installed for carrying such materials.

At the Paul Temple I saw 6,000 to 7,000 refugees.

– At Pagoda Bridge Town, only the Navy was there?

No, the Army already arrived, though not so many.

– Did you see any corpses in Pagoda Bridge Town?

The battle had started when the Army went in the town, so naturally I saw some war casualties. And they said they shot thieves who were trying to steal--there were 10 or so bodies.

– Were you at the entrance ceremony on the 17<sup>th</sup>?

I attended the ceremony.

– What was the situation in Nanjing then?

The inside of Nanjing was almost clean.

– It is said there were bodies around Xiaguan.

When I was headed for the entrance ceremony, we went from Xiaguan to Yi Jiang Gate, where I saw 5 to 6 bodies near the gate.

At the entrance ceremony, I suggested to Commander Kondo Eijiro that Pagoda Bridge Town must be organized and secured. He gave me permission to do so, therefore I returned to Zhongxing Warf on the 26<sup>th</sup> and started to organize Pagoda Bridge Town.

– Until when did you stay in Pagoda Bridge Town?

I stayed until the 28<sup>th</sup>, when I departed to rescue Minesweeper No. 1 which sank off the shores of Mt. Wulong.

Before I left Pagoda Bridge Town, we worked to rebuild the town by clearing the streets and reconstructing the bridges. A man called Chen Hansen (陳漢森) of the Red Swastika Society was head of the refugee camp, so I enlisted him to bury bodies.

Also, we tried to return the refugees to their homes. While we were there, the town seemed well-settled, and I ordered Chen Hansen to change the name Pagoda Bridge Town to *Heiwagai*, or Peace Town.

– What role did Chen Hansen play in the Red Swastika Society?

He was the president, or the chairman. He called himself the director of the Nanjing Branch of the World Red Swastika Society.

I rescued injured sailors from Minesweeper No. 1 and went back to Shanghai. Then I went to Third Fleet Headquarters to tell the Commander that I could not allow Pagoda Bridge Town to be neglected, from a humanitarian point of view. Commander Hasegawa Kiyoshi was pleased to hear what we had done in Pagoda Bridge Town and provided us with medicines and food for the people. I quickly headed for Pagoda Bridge Town and on New Year's Day, 1938, we arrived at Zhongxing Wharf again. That time, the citizens

as well as Chen Hansen welcomed us with firecrackers. The next day, Chen Hansen visited me and gave me a letter of gratitude.

After Peace Town became calm, the *Hira* was ordered to guard Wuhu and left Zhongxing Wharf. Chen Hansen gave me another letter of gratitude and we kept correspondence with each other until the end of the War. I admire his gratitude.

Mr. Doi kept personal letters, thank-you letters, receipts, and so on that Chen Hansen sent him. In addition, a large calligraphy, the size of one tatami mat, sent by Chen Hansen, was mounted and displayed in his room.

**Copy of a letter of gratitude to Commander Doi,  
with Mr. Chen Hansen's  
signature and stamp.**



“As the flames of war spread over Eastern Asia and engulf the Continent, warships are going back and forth on the Yangtze River, and now, heading a fleet, Your Excellency arrived in Nanjing. Under such circumstances, a number of refugees from Nanjing and Shanghai gathered here. In order to help these refugees, a branch of the International Red Swastika Society was established at Baokuo (保国寺)

Temple, and I, humbly, was appointed to the head of the branch. When you anchored your battleship at Jiangbinfu (江滨府), Your Excellency understood the

people's need for food and gave us bags of flour and cooking oil that saved a number of people's lives. Also, you ordered maintenance work for roads and construction of bridges and took command yourself. Later you named the town Peace (平和) and made a poem for the occasion. The meaning of the poem is warm like incoming spring sunlight. Soon, you will go back to Japan to report and before that you gave us a photo of yourself. We displayed the photo on a wall and always admire your greatness and are praying for the friendship between neighboring countries, Japan and China. The sea between the two countries, Japan and China, is not so wide that fishes and birds always come and go freely, but unfortunately I am not able to cross the sea to visit you, I can do nothing but give a sigh upon seeing the ocean. Consequently, I write you this humble letter for our recollection.

“To Commander Doi, the former Captain of the Gunboat *Hira*

Chen Hanssen,  
the head of the Nanjing Branch of the International Red Swastika Society”

– It is said there was massacre in Nanjing.

I don't believe there was a massacre. It was battlefield, therefore, corpses were present, but I didn't see the bodies of a massacre. As shown in the letter of gratitude, which I got from the Chinese, the Chinese people tend to express things in an exaggerated way.

Before I published his statement I sent him the manuscript for his confirmation. Surprisingly, his family told me he died a month after I met with him. When I met him, he looked very fine; I am truly remorseful.

### **31) Interview with Lieutenant Shigemura Minoru (重村実), Member of the Japanese Navy Press Bureau, Shanghai Military Office**

Since the summer of 1936, Lieutenant Shigemura Minoru served as Gunnery Lieutenant on the destroyer *Fumiduki*, then as the Squad Leader on the Light Cruiser *Tenryu* for garrison duty in Shanghai and the Qingdao area. Then he was transferred to Japan to serve

as Squad Leader of the Heavy Cruiser *Mikuma*, but on July 8, 1937, the day after the Marco Polo Bridge Incident, he was moved to the Military Office of the Navy in Shanghai. The title of the official appointment was: Staff of the Imperial Japanese Navy General Staff Office and Staff of the Office of the Commander of the Third Fleet in Shanghai.

Lieutenant Shigemura arrived at his office in Shanghai, and was given a room on the second floor of the Military Office. In the city of Shanghai, a number of wild rumors were in the air and people were panic-stricken. In an area that was usually guarded by a Chinese peace keeping force, soldiers of the Chinese regular army inconspicuously appeared. Soon thereafter, surrounding the International Settlement, sandbagged trenches were being conspicuously built.

Soon, Japanese people withdrew from the upper Yangtze and Japanese residents from several areas gathered and landed at Shanghai. In the Military Office, there were many new faces, of military officers who withdrew from various areas in China. In addition, Dr. Shinobu Junpei (信夫淳平), an international law expert, was invited from Japan by Fleet Headquarters and stayed for several days. It was a time of turmoil.

In the afternoon of August 9, Fleet Headquarters got a call from adjutant Chin at Guard Headquarters in Songhu (松滬), "Something happened." Assistant officer Okino (沖野), adjutant Chin, and Lieutenant Shigemura rushed to the place and found the body of Lieutenant Junior Grade Oyama Isao (大山勇夫), machine-gunned to death, on a road that was on the Extension of the International Settlement. This was the so-called Oyama Incident.

That night, when Lieutenant Shigemura was to lead a group of Naval Landing Force sailors in order to examine and collect the bodies, he invited Japanese and foreign reporters and correspondents to accompany them. Since then, he has been involved in public relations. In those times, even within the Ministry of the Navy, a press bureau did not exist--it was called the military affairs publicity section.

Since August 13, which was the day after funerals for Lieutenant Junior Grade Oyama

and Seaman Apprentice Saito Yozo (齐藤与藏) were held, Shanghai was turning into a battlefield. On the 14<sup>th</sup>, Chinese attacks increased, and when Lieutenant Shigemura went back to his Military Office he found it that it was burned down from the shooting. The Military Office was moved into the International Settlement and Lieutenant Shigemura lived in the Pierce Apartments in the International Settlement.

– When did you go to Nanjing?

On December 17, from Yangshupu (楊樹浦), by airplane. I think I was with Rear Admiral Honda Tadao (本田忠雄), a resident officer.

– Did you go to Nanjing for the entrance ceremony?

Yes, I stood in line and received General Matsui Iwane and Vice Admiral Hasegawa.

– How long did you stay in Nanjing?

I left there that day by airplane, so I didn't attend the memorial service, which was held the next day.

– What was the situation in Nanjing?

As far as I could see, there was nothing out of the ordinary. From the airfield, which was located outside of the Castle, I went to the ceremony by car and I didn't see any corpses on the way. Inside of Nanjing, maybe it was already cleaned, it looked to be in order.

– Do you have any special recollection of Nanjing?

It was the outside Nanjing, near the airfield, where I found several Chinese entering private homes to steal. It looked like they stole anything, whatever they found--one of them carried a stool for a toilet. One of my colleagues jokingly said that it might be toilet stool of Soong May-ling, Chiang Kai-shek's wife.

– It is said that Japanese soldiers had performed acts of cruelty.

I doubt it. I stayed only a day but I didn't see anything.

– Did you hear any rumors?

I heard a story that, in Nanjing, an amazing number of uniforms were found which were abandoned by Chinese soldiers. This meant that the remnants of the Chinese army sneaked into the civilian population. Therefore, Japanese soldiers caught plain-clothed soldiers and killed them; that's what I heard later. To identify a suspect, whether he was a soldier or a civilian, the Japanese soldiers used Chinese people to point them out. At times, wives of men who were pointed out as a soldier desperately denied such a charge. Also, I heard from a reporter that a Chinese who was hired by his newspaper company was taken away by the Japanese military police so the reporter went to the military police and narrowly saved the Chinese in time. I am afraid that on occasion there were arrests made without substantial evidence.

While I was in Shanghai I saw an incident: a Japanese Army soldier caught a Chinese and I asked him what he was going to do to him. The soldier said, "If this man is suspicious, I will kill him." I asked him how he could tell whether the Chinese was suspicious or not. He said he knew based on the man's look.

On the other hand; during the first Shanghai-Incident, I was serving as platoon leader in the landing force, and I caught a Chinese man for scrutiny and told him to raise his hands. It was winter and the Chinese man wore heavy Chinese clothes, and as soon as he lowered his hands, a pistol fell out from his clothes. There were many incidents like that from the first Shanghai-Incident, so Japanese soldiers must have experienced many difficulties in the second Shanghai-Incident.

– Did you receive any questions about Nanjing from reporters?

I do not recall being asked questions.

– Some of the reporters said that there were atrocities committed by the Japanese soldiers,



such as Imai, from the *Asahi Shimbun*.

“Reporter Imai” refers to Mr. Imai Seigo (今井正剛), I think. He is a fine writer, and I knew him. But I do not remember hearing such a story from him. Mr. Imai came to Shanghai from Tokyo and I met him often in Shanghai. He was one of the best writers at the *Asahi*.

There was an episode: The newspaper usually made a special article for the New Year and for the New Year of 1947 or 1948, he was selected as one of the writers to report the news from the north-end of Japan and the south-end of Japan. In those days, the southern most end of Japan was Yakushima and he wrote about Yakushima. Yakushima is a wonderful place where you can catch a lot of fish. In the end, he quit the *Asahi* company to start a business in Yakushima, which ended unsuccessfully. Then he worked in Hyogo Prefecture as director of public affairs under Mayor Sakamoto Masaru. During the Hyogo period he wrote a lot about Hyogo Prefecture--they were wonderful writings. Mr. Imai and I were friendly after the War, too, but I have never heard about a massacre from him.

– Who else did you know at the *Asahi*?

Other than Mr. Imai, Mr. Nakamura Shogo (中村正吾), who was firm, handsome man. I met Mr. Imai and Mr. Nakamura at the entrance ceremony in Nanjing. Mr. Nakamura stayed in Shanghai and when the 10<sup>th</sup> Army was going to land at Hangzhou Bay, he went there and followed the 10<sup>th</sup> Army to Nanjing.

The *Asahi* branch office was headed by Mr. Shirakawa Ikai (白川威海), and staff members included Mr. Moriyama Takashi (森山喬) and Mr. Saito Torao (齊藤寅郎). Among the Shanghai branch offices of newspaper companies, the *Asahi* boasted the largest number of staff and cars – they had a solid system.

One day, Hayashi Kenichi (林謙一), a reporter from the *Mainichi Newspaper*, suggested that we view a Chinese anti-Japan movie. I guessed that Mr. Hayashi was asked by the intelligence sector to watch the movie – Mr. Hayashi had a wide range of acquaintances and someone in the intelligence sector who knew Mr. Hayashi thought that it would be better to ask him rather than members of the Japanese Embassy to see the movie. Thus, the two of us went to a movie theater over the Garden Bridge. In those times, the theaters over the Garden Bridge frequently played such movies.

The inside of the theater was surrounded by an eerie atmosphere. Shortly, on the screen, the character for “KILL” (殺) appeared, which became bigger and bigger. A man, supposedly Japanese, but we Japanese did not see him as Japanese, cut off the head of a Chinese with one blow. That was the kind of movie it was, definitely not a documentary. In those days, these kinds of movies were often made to incite anti-Japan feelings and after the War, similar pictures were often used as so-called evidence of cruel acts committed by the Japanese army.

In the *Yomiuri Shimbun*, they called their Shanghai branch the “*Daitoa* branch” or “Great Eastern Asia branch”, but, as a matter of fact, the branch actually was managed by Mr. Tanaka Yukitosh (田中幸利) alone and later, after the flames of battle extended to Shanghai, two more staff, Mr. Hara Shiro (原四郎) and Mr. Furuta Tokujiro (古田徳二郎) were additionally dispatched.

The *Domei Tsushin* was headed by Mr. Matsumoto Shigeharu (松本重治) and his staff included Mr. Sakata Jiro (坂田二郎), Mr. Horiguchi Mizunori (堀口瑞典), Mr. Tonoki Keiichi (殿木圭一), and Mr. Maeda Yuji (前田雄二). Mr. Sakata came from the Navy’s reporters' club called Kuroshio kai, the Black Current Society. After the War, I found something in Mr. Sakata's book, which stated that there was massacre in Nanjing. He had a strong sense of justice and righteous indignation, if he had known about it then he must

have mentioned it – strangely enough I have never heard about this from him.

Mr. Matsumoto wrote things from those days in his book, *Shanghai Sojourn*, which nicely expressed the facts and the sentiment as a person involved in journalism.

– In *Shanghai Sojourn*, it said that General Matsui gave a sharp reprimand at the memorial service.

Yes. That time I was back to Shanghai already but I heard later that General Matsui gave an admonition at the memorial service.

– From whom did you hear this?

I don't remember well, but everyone knew this. I thought the troops had done something so bad--that's why General Matsui warned his troops. General Matsui said repeatedly that we should treat the Chinese with affection. The troops had done what he hated most.

– What do you mean by “so bad”?

I heard about the plain-clothed soldiers, so I thought the troops killed them. I thought “so bad” meant several hundred of them.

– It is said that there were hundreds and thousands.

After the War, people started to say “hundreds and thousands”, but if that were true, it was not just “so bad” but far from it. The thinking in those times was quite different from the thinking that existed after the War. It was true, as reported after the War, that the Navy shot Chinese soldiers with machine-guns at Xiaguan, but it was battle and there were not many casualties.

– Have you ever met General Matsui?

Once, in Shanghai. He was not a person to make boasts.

– Does this mean that General Matsui’s intentions were not conveyed to his subordinates?

We cannot say simply that the troops committed excesses. If you were not in battle, you cannot understand individual thinking under battlefield conditions. I will give you one example: it was in the first Shanghai-Incident, a petty officer in my platoon, who was a very brave man, was on sentinel duty after a battle, and one of his subordinates got injured. I ordered him to watch the operation on his subordinate. In the operating room, the petty officer, such a brave man on the battlefield, was pale and trembling.

In those days, the Navy had many volunteers who were trained well, organized in small groups, orders from the top were conveyed smoothly – they were professionals. But in the Army they were not professionals. The Army consisted mostly of draftees, the number of soldiers was too unwieldy, spread out over wide areas, orders from the top were not conveyed well, and showed their natural behaviors, as is. The Army men were typical Japanese; Japanese they were.

– Have you heard about Army staff officer Cho Isamu at the time?

I have never met him, but heard a rumor. The rumor was that he was like Ban Dan’emon, a boasting samurai, in a *kodan* story.

– Did foreign reporters ask something about Nanjing?

When the Lieutenant Junior Grade Oyama Incident happened, I brought along foreign reporters to the scene, and they understood it was not of our doing. Since then, it was decided that a position dedicated to foreign reporters was needed and Mr. Isobe Taro (磯部太郎), of the 31<sup>st</sup> class of the Naval Engineering College, was appointed to the position. Mr. Isobe and I lived at the Pierce Apartments and had dinner together every night unless we had special business. While we had dinner we chatted about things but I had never heard from him that he got questions from foreign reporters about Nanjing. If he had, he would have told me during our daily discussions.

– At the time, the accidental shooting incident of British Ambassador Knatchbull-Hugessen and the accidental sinking of the *Panay* occurred. How did you

handle these matters?

Such important matters were handled by Military Resident Officer Honda and the Third Fleet.

– How long did you stay in Shanghai?

I stayed there until March 1938, when I was transferred to Japan.

As I asked Mr. Shigemura for an interview, he declined my request at first, saying that he saw nothing particular, saying that he was not of any use. In those times, information on Nanjing flowed from Shanghai to Japan and to the rest of the world. To the Naval Press Bureau in Shanghai, where Mr. Shigemura worked, the information on Nanjing must have flowed to him. What kind of information on Nanjing did the Navy received? The information might have been different from the information that the Army received. In order to check this, I asked Mr. Shigemura for another interview. He accepted my third request. It was the end of December 1985.

After the War, Mr. Shigemura was actively engaged in the broadcast industry, including Nippon Hoso, Yamaguchi Hoso, and Radio Kanto.

### **32) Interview with Lieutenant Commander Genda Minoru (源田実), Staff Officer of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Combined Air Group**

Lieutenant Commander Genda Minoru, a staff officer of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Combined Air Group was involved in the Pearl Harbor Attack in 1941, then was a staff officer of the 1<sup>st</sup> Air Fleet, and in 1945 he was Commander of the 343rd Sky (Matsuyama) Naval Air Group, shooting down incoming B-29 in his fighter plane *Shidenkai* – he was well-known for this.

After the War, he served as the Chief of Staff of the Air Self-Defense Force, and then from 1962 to 1986 he served as a member of the House of Councilors.

I interviewed Mr. Genda in his office at the Diet Members' Hall.

On December 3, 1937, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Combined Air Group advanced its front base to Changzhou, in concert with the Army which started to attack Nanjing. The Group bombed Nanjing. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Combined Air Group attacked Nanjing everyday and on December 12, the 13<sup>th</sup> Air Group, under the 2<sup>nd</sup> Combined Air Group, accidentally struck the US gunboat *Panay* in the Yangtze.

– When the 2<sup>nd</sup> Combined Air Group moved its front base to Changzhou, did you move to Changzhou too?

No, I stayed in the Kunda (公大) base and visited Changzhou only when necessary. Air Rear Admiral Mitsunami Teizo (三並貞三), the Commander, remained at Kunda base as well.

– Upstream of Nanjing, the *Panay* Incident occurred.

The air corps mistook the *Panay* as a Chinese warship and accidentally attacked it--it was not intentional.

We never expected a US gunboat there. Nanjing was war zone and the US had many options to avoid it, like going further upstream. I felt that they stayed in Nanjing in order to provoke us, somehow.

The person who hit the *Panay* was Lieutenant Murata Shigeharu (村田重治), nicknamed Butsu. He was the leader of the thunderbolt corps, in the Pearl Harbor Attack. He was a great man.

– Did the 2<sup>nd</sup> Combined Air Group know that the *Panay* was in the Yangtze?

My guess is that they knew.

– It was a big diplomatic issue, wasn't it?

Yes, it surely was. Due to that the Commander Mitsunami was admonished.

– For the investigation of the incident, Lieutenant Colonel Nishi Yoshiaki (西義章) from the Army went to Nanjing. From the Navy, who went there?

No one in particular.

– On the next day, Nanjing fell. What did the Flying Corp do?

The Flying Corps was still in battle, so remained in Changzhou and after a week, we moved our base to an airfield in Nanjing. I also operated airplanes to go to Nanjing.

– Did you attend the entrance ceremony?

No, I didn't. I went to Nanjing after the ceremony was completed.

– What was the situation in Nanjing City?

We set the Headquarters near the airfield and I went to and fro every day, between the airfield and Headquarters, so I knew nothing about the city. Also, after we arrived at Nanjing, we started bombing Nanchang and Hankou, so we were very busy during those operations.

–The Shanghai Expeditionary Army and Navy gunboats came to Nanjing. Did you meet those people?

The Flying Corps was involved only in limited matters, which were related aviation, so I never met anyone who was not related with aviation.

– In those days, a “Nanjing massacre” was said to have occurred.

I knew nothing about this. As far as the Navy was concerned, such an act was against

Bushido, the samurai spirit, and this would never have happen.

– Did you hear any rumors?

Not at all.

– In the Army someone said it happened.

I don't know about Army. Generally speaking, in those days the Japanese people vividly remembered the earlier Nanjing-Incident, that is; in 1927, the Japanese Consulate in Nanjing was attacked and plundered. And Japan fought against China so we had hostile feelings toward Chinese. I myself called Chinese *Chankoro* then, it was such a time.

However, in the Navy, I warned my soldiers that we should not kill prisoners or anyone who could not resist, and if such things happened, then they would be punished heavily. At the Pearl Harbor attack, someone said we should attack the town as well, but I definitely said NO.

And after the attack on Pearl Harbor, the 1<sup>st</sup> Air Fleet attacked the British fleet in the Indian Ocean and at the eastern shore of Ceylon, sank the aircraft carrier *Hermes*. At that time we found an enemy soldier floating near the aircraft carrier *Akagi* and picked him up. In the course of battle, it was not easy to save a person at sea. It took time but, anyway, we saved him. Some of the sailors were furious with anger and tried to hit him. I stopped him and inspected the enemy myself. I found that he was a Canadian sailor. He troubled me at first by refusing to eat, but later he ate curry rice. Like that, some soldiers did not control themselves, but in the Navy, the treatment of prisoners was clearly defined.

– How long did you stay in Nanjing?

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Combined Air Group set its base in Nanjing for a while but I was appointed to Chief of the Yokosuka Flying Corps and went back to Japan in January. I operated planes to go back to Japan from Nanjing. So my stay in Nanjing was 3 weeks or so.

– What was the situation around the base in Nanjing?



I think there was no severe damage in the suburbs around the airfield. It looked ordinary and I met the New Year, 1938, in Nanjing quietly.