

Songs of Japanese Prisoners of War in the Soviet Union after World War II

Clara Momoko Geber

Abstract

The Second World War ended with Japan's capitulation after the disastrous nuclear bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Subsequently, approximately 700,000 Japanese soldiers were selected as captives to undertake physical labour in Soviet prison camps. After returning to Japan, some of them wrote about their lives in the Soviet Union, drew pictures about their experiences, or wrote about their favourite songs that they had sung during their imprisonment.

My study of various reports of Japanese prisoners of war (POWs) after the Second World War surprisingly revealed that not only traumatic conditions during forced labour were published, but also social interactions in the form of joint artistic activities such as making music, producing theatre plays, and staging sports competitions. The prisoners have often retrospectively described these as strikingly positive events during their years of internment in the Soviet Union. This article analyses a total of thirty-four songs sung and composed by Japanese POWs during captivity on a lyrical level (text analysis). In doing so, I adopt a new approach to interpreting the social conditions during the imprisonment of Japanese soldiers in the Soviet Union.

Keywords: World War II, Japanese Prisoners of War, history of Japan, historical warfare, Soviet Union



Geber, Clara Momoko. 2019. "Songs of Japanese Prisoners of War in the Soviet Union after World War II" *Vienna Journal of East Asian Studies*, 11, pp. 179–211.
<https://doi.org/10.2478/vjeas-2019-0007>

This research was supported by a short-term international scholarship (*Kurzfristige wissenschaftliche Auslandsstipendien*) from the University of Vienna.

Introduction

Surprisingly, the imprisonment of Japanese soldiers after the Second World War is not well researched, even though more than 2,000 memoirs of Japanese prisoners of war had been published by 2003 (Dähler 2003: 285). In particular, songs composed during imprisonment have been almost completely neglected by historians (and other academics). However, various researchers (Dähler 2006: 158; Klause 2014: 529; Nagase 2013: 303) have observed that songs composed and sung by Japanese prisoners of war were an important part of the joint artistic activities in forced labour camps. Through music and lyrics, soldiers were able to express their emotions and deal with the circumstances of captivity in Soviet prisons. The analysis of song lyrics is therefore as important as the examination of memoirs or pictures created by Japanese soldiers. To fill this gap, this article endeavours to examine a selection of thirty-four songs from a songbook by Japanese POWs that were composed and sung during captivity in Soviet camps. The purpose of this article is to study the lyrics in order to investigate the feelings and thoughts expressed by the Japanese prisoners of war in Soviet camps, thus introducing an entirely new perspective on the historical warfare research of Japan. Firstly, this article will outline the most crucial historical events that led to the imprisonment of Japanese soldiers in the Soviet Union after Japan's surrender and then highlight the significance of arts and cultural activities during captivity based on already existing secondary literature. In the second part, the analysis of the song lyrics and their interpretation will be thoroughly discussed.

The thirty-four songs under examination were published as a booklet titled *Shiberia kakyokusen: Yokuryūchū ni tsukurareta kakyoku* シベリア歌曲選: 抑留中に作られた歌曲 [Selection of Songs from Siberia: Songs Composed During Captivity]. Overall, the book includes the lyrics of sixteen songs without melody transcriptions and another eighteen lyrics with melody transcriptions. *Selection of Songs from Siberia* was compiled by Eguchi Toyochi 江口十四一 and published in 1998 by Takahashi Daiso 高橋大創 and Yamauchi Isao 山内伊三男, all of whom are members of an organisation called “Soren ni okeru nihonjin horyo no seikatsu taiken o kiroku suru kai ソ連における日本人捕虜の生活体験を記録する会 [Organisation that Documents the Experiences of Japanese Prisoners of War in the Soviet Union].” According to the publisher's preface, the booklet is a selection of the songs that were most popular at that time, selected from an estimated total of 252 songs composed by Japanese soldiers during their captivity in the Soviet Union (Takahashi and Yamauchi 1998: 3). However, it is mentioned that the exact number of songs composed and performed in the camps remains unclear since they were not documented during the time of imprisonment (Takahashi and Yamauchi 1998: 2–3). Due to the fact that some were only written down several years after imprisonment, the editors claim that the number of songs collected appears small, figuring that many are presumably forgotten (Takahashi and Yamauchi 1998: 2–3). Most of the songs in the booklet are

accompanied by additional information, like the place of origin, the name of the composer, and the year they were composed.

It remains unknown by which criteria the songs were chosen for publication. Thus, it is possible that the booklet is not a representative selection of all the songs composed during the captivity of Japanese soldiers. This article therefore does not attempt to generalise the study's findings. It rather aims at understanding the feelings and mental condition of prisoners of war as expressed in this particular—albeit small—sample. Consequently, all statements in this article refer exclusively to the analysed material. For this reason, the analysis is, however, embedded in a comprehensive historical context that is reconstructed through secondary literature and selected primary sources such as memoirs of Japanese soldiers.

Historical Background: Japanese Soldiers as Prisoners of War After 1945

This section of the article deals with the circumstances under which Japanese soldiers were brought to the Soviet Union where they lived as prisoners of war.

Imprisonment and Forced Labour

After Japan surrendered at the end of the Second World War, Stalin ordered authorities to select 500,000 Japanese soldiers as captives to undertake physical labour in Soviet prison camps (Dähler 2006: 52). The primary reason for the transfer of prisoners was the need for auxiliary troops to rebuild the Soviet Union. The war had claimed about twenty-three million victims, one in seven of whom was from the Soviet population (Barshay 2013). Therefore, young and potentially healthy men between the ages of eighteen and forty-five years were chosen (Dulatbekov 2014: 8). Although the exact number remains unclear due to poor documentation, it is estimated that the number of Japanese prisoners varied between 500,000 and 800,000 people (Ajitaka 2008: 4; Dähler 2006: 52; Kuznetsov 1997a: 32; Kuznetsov 1998: 187; Kuznetsov 2013; Nagase 2013: 80).

Initially, Japanese soldiers were convinced that they were travelling back to Japan while instead they were actually transferred to the Soviet Union in covered freight wagons (Ajitaka 2008: 9). Many died on the way due to fatigue and malnourishment (Ajitaka 2008: 10). After eight months of travelling, the captives finally arrived at their final destination (Barshay 2013). As soon as the soldiers realised that they had been transferred to the Soviet Union and not to their homeland, despair spread. It soon became clear that their daily lives in captivity would be characterised by forced labour, lack of sanitary measures, and hunger (Dähler 2001: 18–19; Barshay 2013). The soldiers lived in so-called “camps,” which were strictly guarded by Soviet camp

personnel. Every camp was constructed differently to meet its respective purpose. However, most of them were poorly organised, particularly at the outset of captivity. Due to the lack of infrastructure, prisoners often slept in tented camps, wooden barracks, and unused buildings (Dähler 2001: 25). The exact number of forced labour camps in the Soviet Union is as unclear as their geographic locations or the total number of prisoners. Transfers to other camp locations were common, mostly because of health reasons such as typhoid outbreaks (Ajikata 2008: 13). Through an analysis of Soviet prison documents, Karner (1994: 460) shows that Japanese soldiers were usually assigned to their own camps and only rarely interacted with prisoners of war from other nations.

The physical as well as mental health of Japanese prisoners deteriorated immensely because of the psychological burden of war experiences, captivity in a foreign country, and the geographical distance to their home (Ajikata 2008: 21). Due to the poor organisation within the camps, the portion size of the food was distributed unfairly. It was not until 1948 that a unified system for food distribution was introduced in prisoners' camps in the Soviet Union (Zhumadilova 2014: 16). In addition to malnutrition, another dangerous threat was the cold Siberian winters, as minus forty degrees Celsius was common. In many barracks, coal-fired ovens were used, which were referred to as "*pechka*" печька (Ajikata 2008: 13). If the soldiers worked in coalmines and therefore had access to coal, they were able to heat those ovens.

As previously mentioned, the prisoners were forced to perform heavy physical labour. Many of them were assigned to work in railway construction, mining, and building construction (Ajikata 2008: 24). The most difficult and life-threatening activities were reportedly coal and iron mining during night shifts (Nagase 2013: 231–232). Punishments for poor work performance such as a reduction in food rations were also feared: if the so-called "work norm" (*norma* норма) was not fulfilled, various methods of punishment were imposed (Dähler 2001: 30). As a result, there was immense pressure to perform well at work, which was a significant burden for the POWs and reflected in their poor mental health (Ajikata 2008: 23).

According to Kuznetsov, about 548,380 Japanese captives eventually returned to their homeland, which means that about ten per cent of prisoners died primarily of hunger, cold, and poor sanitary conditions (Kuznetsov 1997a: 32; Tomita 2013: 6). However, the Japanese Foreign Ministry estimates that more than 1,000 soldiers remained in the Soviet Union voluntarily and did not return to Japan (Sugio 2017). It is also noteworthy that there has never been any form of compensation for the individuals who spent years as forced labourers—by the Soviet Union, Russia, or the Japanese government (Underwood 2013: 118).

Art and Cultural Activities of Japanese Prisoners of War in the Soviet Union

This section discusses the different art and cultural activities in prisoners of war camps and the political background leading to this development.

Cultural Education Measures in Soviet Camps

Previous historical research has shown that the Soviet Union sought to replace the punishment system in prison camps with “educational measures” from the 1930s onwards in the form of art and cultural activities (Klause 2014: 247). While these measures served to improve the mental state of detainees in prison camps with the aid of fun and creative engagement, they were also implemented to discipline the prisoners and to increase their labour productivity. The “Cultural Education Centre” was even established as a new department within the OGPU (*Gossudarstvennoje politicheskoe upravlenije*, United State Political Directorate), the secret police being responsible for the coordination of these creative activities in all prisons (Klause 2007: 303). The results and progress achieved through these activities had to be documented, although these data were likely falsified to meet requirements in many instances (Klause 2014: 249). Kuznetsov (1997) defends the view that the Soviet Union pursued the political indoctrination of Japanese prisoners of war through these measures, which led to a wealth of artistic and creative joint activities in the prison camps (Kuznetsov 1997b: 87). Soviet officials attempted to raise doubts about the imperialist ideologies preached to detainees in Japan since elementary school (Kuznetsov 1997b: 89). Cultural activities and events were actively promoted by Soviet authorities as they sought to “alleviate the hatred of Japanese soldiers against the Soviet Union and its system” (Kuznetsov 1997: 88).

According to the analysis of Soviet prison reports conducted by the Russian historian Kuznetsov (1997b: 87), Japanese captives valued these art and cultural leisure activities. Many published memoirs and interviews by Japanese POWs mention the joy they found in joint activities such as theatre performances, singing, or board games, which were a great source of entertainment. Moreover, for prisoners of various countries, they also enhanced mutual cultural understanding (Dähler 2006: 249; Hamai 2000; Kiuchi 1996). Nagase Ryōji 長勢良治, who researches Japanese imprisonment in the Soviet Union and translates primary sources, also refers to similar activities among Japanese POWs and concludes that “joy and comfort existed [through these activities] even in hell with coldness, hunger, forced labour, dirt, death and fear” (Nagase 2013: 303).

In March 1947, the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Soviet Union introduced the system of “cultural education work,” which heavily affected the activities of the prisoners of war. This included measures such as the acquisition of literacy, lectures, talks,

readings, further education, film screenings, concerts, and stage plays (Klause 2014: 263). As a result, the prisoners were given non-working hours at noon and in the evenings as well as days off. In their free time, detainees could pursue artistic activities, initially only under the supervision of Soviet soldiers (Klause 2014: 264). At the time these measures were taken, the Japanese soldiers were already in a poor mental state: they were imprisoned in a foreign country, suffering from physically demanding work in the unfamiliar Siberian cold. Returning to their homeland also appeared unrealistic, which is why the ideological re-education of the prisoners advanced continuously (Kuznetsov 1997b: 89). The first step of indoctrination was a critical examination of the imperialist system in Japan. Discussion groups were set up to promote pro-democracy and anti-imperialist views. The greatest benefit of membership in such discussion groups was that it usually provided a simple way of receiving better quality food and being spared unpleasant working shifts (Kuznetsov 1997b: 90). According to Russian documents, more than 21,000 Japanese internees participated in such propaganda activities in forced labour camps (Muminov 2017: 431).

In addition to the discussion groups, activities like Japanese card games (*hanafuda* 花札), movie screenings, baseball games, reading sessions, and study groups were popular among Japanese POWs. Even larger festivities such as concerts and sports competitions became normal within a few years. Japanese language theatre (*rakugo* 落語) and comic drawing (*manga* 漫画) were popular as well. Furthermore, a *haiku* 俳句 group was founded in the camp in Alma-Ata (Kazakhstan) and a baseball club was established in the labour camp in Karaganda (Kazakhstan). Additionally, wooden pieces were used for board games such as *Gō* 豪 and *Mah-Jongg* 麻雀 (Ajikata 2008: 27).

Music as Part of Prison Life

Joint activities—particularly making music (e.g. singing and playing instruments together)—helped to ensure that the inmates did not lose hope when the brutal circumstances of Soviet camps tested their limits of endurance (Klause 2007: 634). Regardless of the intentions of camp authorities in the Soviet Union, the camps developed a variety of art and cultural activities that offered the prisoners consolation. In many cases, it was also a welcome diversion for them to be able to distance themselves from their duties within the camps, which were unpleasant due to the cold and food shortages. Concerts provided the camp personnel with a way to express repressed feelings such as compassion and sadness as they were also able to participate actively (Klause 2014: 634). The possibility to escape mentally through music is an often-cited aspect that benefited not only the prisoners but also everyone in the forced labour camps (Dähler 2006: 249; Kiuchi 1996; Klause 2014: 634–636; Nagase 2013: 303). The findings of Nagase Ryōji complement those of earlier studies. He confirms that the

precarious situation and the hopelessness of forced labour caused people to strive for creative expression of their feelings and emotions (Nagase 2013: 303).

The establishment of “cultural education work” made it possible for prisoners to attend concerts and thereby avoid heavy physical work. It was even possible to be promoted to a more privileged status within the prison hierarchy because of excellent musical talent (Klause 2014: 635). Research also shows that music played an important role for detainees to find a “meaning in life” and escape the physically arduous daily life in the camp for some time. Klause writes that “active, self-determined acting on stage helped musicians to preserve or regain their individual identity and humanity, which threatened to collapse under the conditions of the camp” (Klause 2014: 635).

The effect of musical activity was not only positive for the participating imprisoned soldiers but also for Soviet civilians. Through musical performances, the audience could escape from their own worries for a short time, and the civilian population’s acceptance of the prisoners increased. Over time, the Soviet population associated the prisoners with positive experiences, and it became normal to communicate with camp inmates (Dähler 2003; Klause 2014: 636). When the Japanese were given salaries in addition to some free time, the interest in participating in artistic and other cultural activities further increased (Ajikata 2008: 25). It is assumed that more than thirty-five Japanese choirs existed, composing and performing their own works (Nagase 2013: 303). Often, instruments were built or repaired with wood the prisoners found near the camps. As a result, concerts, ballet pieces, or plays were performed, which led to the establishment of bonds between the soldiers of different nationalities (Shinnomiya 2014). Especially popular was the choir “*Novyi golos*” *Новый голос* (“New Voices”), which was active in Camp No. 7 in the Irkutsk region. Moreover, Nagase (2013: 303) confirms that the most important and sometimes most popular activity was singing in choirs, and often singers of different nationalities played music together.

Dähler also reports that artistic events in the prison camps resulted in positive social cohesion between different groups (i.e. Japanese soldiers, soldiers of different nationalities, captives, and camp personnel). Not only the prisoners of war engaged in creative or athletic activities in groups; Soviet soldiers as well as the Soviet population also experienced this as a welcome change of scene and enrichment of their lives (Dähler 2006: 155). However, the extent and quality of these activities depended on the resources available and on individuals, therefore differing from camp to camp. Prisoners handcrafted items necessary to carry out their musical activities. Music and theatre performances were often presented, and stages and costumes were made with great effort. Dähler states that music in particular had a positive effect on the interpersonal relationships throughout the camp (Dähler 2006: 158).

There were also significant differences in the ways soldiers from different countries interned in the same camp dealt with Soviet music traditions. For example, Wakatsuki Yasuo 若槻泰雄, who was in Soviet captivity, writes in his monograph

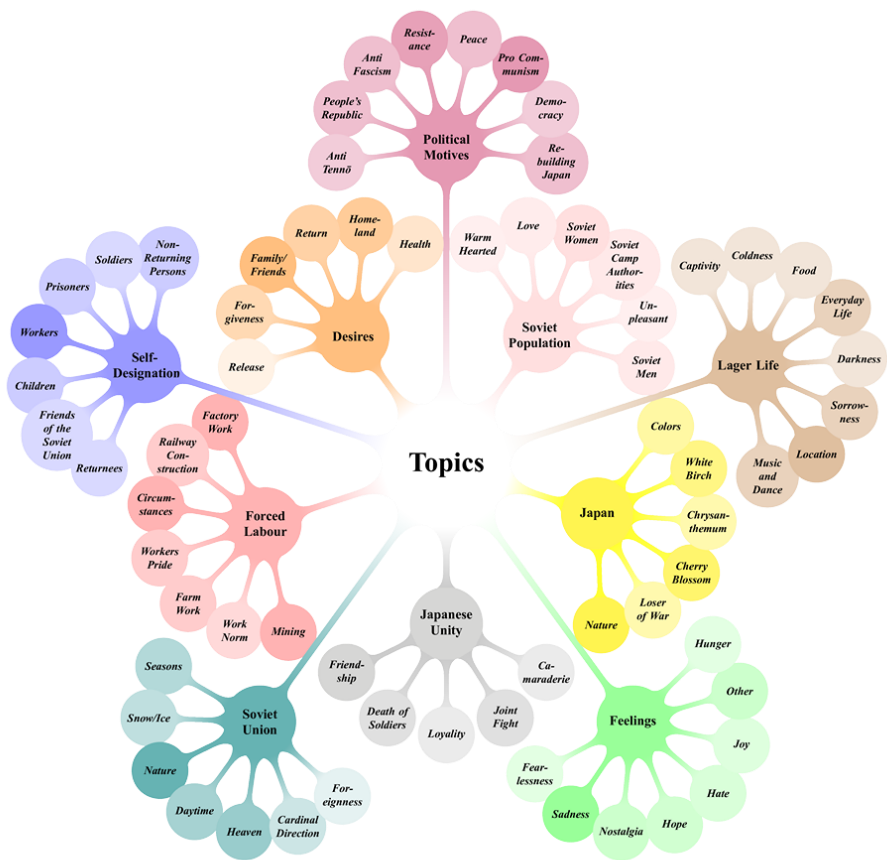
Shiberia horyo shūyōjo シベリア捕虜収容所 [Report of a Japanese Contemporary Witness] that German soldiers never sang Soviet songs (Wakatsuki 1979: 225). In contrast, the Japanese were respected for not only performing songs from their own nation, but also the songs of other countries (Wakatsuki 1979: 225). Yamashita Shizuo 山下静夫 also mentions in his memoirs on forced labor in the Soviet Union that the aspect of music played a major role during his captivity. He recalls that Soviet soldiers sang almost permanently, despite the cold and physical strain. He respected the complexity of the spontaneously improvised melodies and reported that he felt a certain affinity through the music (Yamashita 2007: 430).

Lyrical Analysis

This chapter discusses thirty-four songs by Japanese POWs which were sung and composed during captivity. The lyrical analysis is based on two different methods—one qualitative and one quantitative. After the translation of the song lyrics, the subject matter expressed in the lyrics was broken down line by line in a multilevel process in order to identify the most frequent keywords and topics. This method is based on content analysis as suggested by Philip Mayring (2015). The subsequent fine-scaled analysis of the lyrics is based on the model of wide reading established by Vera Nünning (2010: 296). The purpose of wide reading is not only to analyse the text lines themselves, but also includes a wide variety of other different sources of information such as cultural or historical documents. In this particular case, I also include documents like memoirs of Japanese prisoners of war, pictures, and various academic articles. This should guarantee a wide spectrum of information to interpret the song lyrics accurately in the context of historical events.

The following graph shows the results of my quantitative analysis of the thirty-four songs recorded in the *Selection of Songs from Siberia: Songs Composed During Captivity* songbook. More frequently appearing themes are shown in a more intense colour, whereas the less frequently occurring themes are coloured less intensely.

Figure 1: Themes of song lyrics



Source: Geber 2019: 50

In the thirty-four sets of lyrics analysed, a total of 595 keywords were identified. In a multilevel abstraction process, the following eleven topics were identified:

Table 1: Topics sorted by frequency (compiled by the author)

Topic	Count
Soviet Union	196
Desires	88
Life in prison camps	85
Forced labour	66

Feelings	51
Political motives	28
Unity of the Japanese	19
Japan	22
Soviet population	15
Self-designation	17
Other symbols	8

As shown in Table 1, the songs often portrayed the Soviet Union by referring to nature (seasons, snow, ice, sky, stars, etc.). This includes mentions of rivers, mountains, animals, the sky, the moon, or various landscapes. It is noticeable that the lyrics often begin with a description of the landscape, the season, or the area. The Siberian winter, which was deadly for the soldiers due to very low temperatures, is also mentioned often. Apart from the landscape, the desires of Japanese soldiers are frequently addressed: while the captives (titled as “I” *boku/ore* 僕/俺, “we” *bokutachi/wareware* 僕たち/我々, “prisoners” *horyo* 捕虜, and “workers” *rōdōsha* 労働者) hope to be released and return to Japan as soon as possible, they worry about their family and friends. Interestingly, the everyday lives of the prisoners as well as the circumstances of captivity are also described. Forced labour tasks are also mentioned to some extent. It is salient that the POWs relate to their individual places of work, but hardly express their thoughts and feelings regarding the conditions of forced labour. Furthermore, numerous work tools (a sickle, shovel, and wheelbarrow) are named.

Apart from the desires of Japanese inmates (release, returning to Japan, and being reunited with their families), feelings are rarely expressed. There are a few exceptions, however, which are grief (expressed in the description of flowing tears and worries), hope, and joy. Contrary to what might be expected, negative feelings are rarely expressed, despite the severity of the circumstances. Surprisingly, political statements are quite commonplace; however, they diverge strongly. The positive representation of Soviet communism—expressed through lyrics praising the Communist Party, glorifying the Soviet flag, and expressing a commitment to friendship with the Soviet Union—is striking. Moreover, the reconstruction of Japan is mentioned, which is accompanied by a call to topple the *tennō* 天皇 system. The lyrics imply a sense of solidarity among a group of Japanese soldiers that has been strengthened by years of forced labour. As a result, they are called “brothers” (兄弟 *kyōdai*) (Daisō and Isao 1998: 29, 36), “friends” (友 *tomo*) (ibid: 31, 45, 46, 48, 49), or “wartime comrades” (戦友 *senyū*) (ibid: 37, 39, 44, 48). Solidarity is also expressed through certain rituals for deceased comrades as a proper burial was often not possible.

In contrast to the frequent mentions of the Soviet Union, Japan is scarcely addressed. However, it is most interesting that the lyrics also refer to Japan using descriptions of nature, including the Japanese cherry blossom, white birch, and blue sky.

Additionally, the portrayal of the chrysanthemum, which is considered a well-known symbol of Japan, can be regarded as a clear reference to the soldiers' homeland.

Besides the fact that the Soviet Union is very often referred to as a country, comments about the Soviet population are rare. However, some positive comments about Soviet women can be found in the lyrics (ibid: 41). In contrast, Soviet men are depicted primarily as camp authorities (prison guards or camp commanders) and are called "king[s] of hell" (地獄の閻魔 *jigoku no enma*) (ibid: 46) or even "fools" (知れ者 *shiremono*) (ibid: 47). The prisoners are described by referring to their different roles in their work environment ("workers" *rōdōsha* 労働者) (ibid: 26, 34, 36, 47–48), or within a family context such as "unreliable son" (便りせぬ子 *tayorisenu ko*) (ibid: 43). "The one who does not return home" (帰らぬ僕 *kaeranu boku*) (ibid: 38) emphasises the suffering of their waiting families. Surprisingly, they are only called "prisoners" (捕虜 *horyo*) twice (ibid: 50). Each of the topics identified here will be analysed in further detail in the following subsections.

Desires

Overall, the analysis yielded seven themes related to desires that I have categorised as follows: return, release, home, family, friends, health, and forgiveness. As expected, the desire of captives to return to Japan is a common theme. In many cases, the topic of return is linked to the question of when the soldiers will finally be allowed to go back to Japan. Therefore, the soldiers' desires are usually expressed through sadness or nostalgic feelings. For instance, the lyrics of "Folk Song of Karaganda" point to the desire to be released with the question "when is the day when I can return?" (Daisō and Isao 1998: 30). The "Song of Return" is solely dedicated to the desire of the soldiers to return to Japan; the lyrics describe their great relief when they hear that they will be released ("finally we are able [to] return to our homeland") (ibid: 35). Although the return is eagerly awaited, the following passage implies that important relationships have been established during captivity:

Give me your hand, we will shake it
 Now we are going home
 In my home country, my five children are waiting
 Again, we will let them bloom in Japan
 The cherry blossoms that adorn the mountain fields

What happened, did you cry?
 These tears are reflecting once
 The blue sky of return
 As smiling morning dew
 ("Song of Return," ibid: 35).

These lines demonstrate how emotionally charged the hope of being released one day was among detainees in Soviet prisons. The description of tears of joy as “smiling morning dew” emphasises the elation of the soldiers. Friendship with fellow prisoners of other nations is also recognisable here as the released Japanese wish to shake hands with others—not a customary act in Japanese culture (Kracht 1998: 25–27). Despite the imagined joy of returning home, it is made clear that the captives have suffered unforgettable trauma: “The marks of labour are carved into our hearts; we see them, even when we return” (Daisō and Isao 1998: 35). The return to Japan is also addressed in a way that expresses the bonds formed between prisoners of war during captivity. The song “Imprisoned Travellers,” for example, describes how the soldiers promise each other to survive imprisonment and travel back together. The following passage is about Japanese comrades who lost their lives before they could embark on their journey home but had already joyfully anticipated their arrival in Japan: “The friends who talked about their pleasant anticipation to return have already passed away; they only left frozen hair, in the prison at night” (ibid: 44).

The desire to return home as soon as possible is also associated with the pressure to perform well in forced labour camps. For example, “Melodies of the Bukachacha Coal Mine” describes the activities of prisoners of war as miners. Imagining the day of return appears to be a source of motivation for the hard-working prisoners: “Pass them, transport them, the black diamonds; when they come up, the day of our return is coming closer” (ibid: 48). In the “Song of Hope,” the idea of returning evidently gives the Japanese soldiers strength. Although the life-threatening circumstances of the Siberian winter are portrayed in a relatively negative light, the prisoners attempt to gain hope as they think about Japan:

Even if the snow falls heavily to the desertedness
Spring will for sure come to us
Live strong, survive in the crowd
Until we arrive safely in Japan
 (“Song of Hope,” ibid: 45).

The song “Scores of Homesickness” mentions Japan enthusiastically as the “land of cherry blossoms” and the “land of the rising sun” (ibid: 48). “We dream about the day of return” (ibid: 48) is the last sentence of the song, which highlights the desire to be released.

The country of Japan is discussed in different ways and used as a synonym for the soldiers’ wish to travel home. Japan is portrayed as “distant” (遠い *tōi*) (ibid: 35), which may be used to express the precarious emotional state of the soldiers as prisoners of the Soviet Union. In the lyrics, the nostalgic representation of Japan is usually articulated by referring to nature (e.g. cherry blossoms, chrysanthemums, or Japanese white birches). The “Mourning Song of the Prison Camp” emphasises the distance from their home by highlighting that Japan feels like “about a thousand stars away”

(ibid: 50). Furthermore, homesickness is expressed at the sight of the moon, since the prisoners can see “the [Japanese] moon of the homeland” (ibid: 46) despite the fact that they are in the Soviet Union. This passage suggests that the soldiers experienced feelings of closeness and solidarity as Japanese internees in the Soviet Union were able to see the same moon as their family and friends in Japan. However, as stated earlier, the homeland of the Japanese soldiers was also described as far away.

“Lamentation of Prisoners of War” describes how the soldiers remember their homeland during work. The lyrics address the Japanese cherry blossoms that flower there, expressing the prisoners’ desire to return home with the following line: “I remember our homeland where the cherry blossoms bloomed” (ibid: 49). This passage appears to imply that the soldiers can gain hope and strength by thinking of cherry blossoms in spite of their actual precarious circumstances. The metaphor of the cherry blossom is used as a synonym for Japan, as becomes clear in the following line: “[their] dream is the Japanese cherry blossom” (ibid: 49). The lyrics describe the situation of prisoners who were initially told that they could depart for Japan. The Soviet commanders used the phrase “*skoro damoi*” скоро домой (promising the Japanese captives would be “home soon”) to obtain their obedience, even though they were actually transferred to the Soviet Union. “Siberian Sounds of Music” addresses this deceit by accusingly repeating “home, home, they deceived us” (ibid: 46). This passage clearly reveals how great the feeling of betrayal must have been for the Japanese prisoners.

In addition to the desire to return to their home country, the songs often mention the soldiers’ hope to be reunited with their families and friends. This is often illustrated through the description of different people appearing in the thoughts or even dreams of the soldiers. Moreover, concerns and worries about these people are vocalised on several occasions. “Evening Music on the River Angren,” for example, describes the Soviet Union from the perspective of the soldiers who are resting and smoking cigarettes by the campfire after a day of wearying labour. They talk about their parents and nostalgically remember their lives before imprisonment. “Song in Memory of Mother” reflects the soldiers’ desire to see their mothers. This song suggests that the detainees feel guilty as they keep their families in Japan waiting. “Lamentation of the Prisoner” partially refers to the concern of the soldiers about the well-being of their mothers. “Song in Memory of Mother” also expresses the prisoners’ hope that their mothers remain healthy until they return (“Mother, until I can return, stay healthy, stay alive”) (ibid: 38). In addition to worries about their mothers, concerns about the health of their wives and children are articulated (e.g. in “The Northern European Forest”). The question of their own well-being appears to emerge from the concern that they keep their relatives waiting and cannot provide for them. This concern is the central issue when musing about the soldiers’ families and friends as the following lines illustrate:

My wife, my children, are you healthy?
 The unfamiliarity of the morning break
 Even now, they appear before my eyes
 I hope you are well
 To the starry sky, to which I pray from the heart
 Ah, the moon in the forest in Northern Europe
 ("The Northern European Forest," *ibid*: 43).

The strong desire to be reunited with their wives is also evident in the description of their appearances in the prisoners' dreams (e.g. in "Balkhash-Elegy"). The song "Siberian Sounds" mentions "parents and brothers" (*ibid*: 46) who are—again—expected to wait for the POWs in their home country. In "Imprisoned Travelers," the yearning for the prisoners' families is illustrated with the words "I long to see my beloved child" (*ibid*: 46). Regarding family and friends, the soldiers also wish that they are healthy ("friends, brothers, stay healthy until I get home") (*ibid*: 49).

Another aspect of health addressed in the lyrics is the promise to other soldiers to recover together. "Wasteland in the Snow" states that the soldiers' health suffered from forced labour. Furthermore, the lyrics point out that the deaths of other soldiers strongly affected the survivors: "Here I dig in your bones, the person I promised to get well together" (*ibid*: 42). This passage implies in-group solidarity among the Japanese soldiers. Moreover, it suggests that members supported each other and—as motivation for recovery—promised to survive together.

Political Motives

The political system of the imperial monarchy in Japan is criticised twice in the thirty-four songs. The "Work Song" portrays forced labour as a highly motivating and fulfilling task. In this context, the following political statement is made:

In the morning, the waving red flag is shining
 We work until our blood starts to dance
 You should beat it with a crash, the cross of steel
 Let's get it out with the shovels, scoop it out, oh yes!
 ("Work Song," Daisō and Isao 1998: 34)

It appears likely that the glorification of the waving red flag implies the detainees' positive attitude towards the Soviet Union. "The blood starts to dance" may be interpreted as the belligerent mood of the prisoners. Moreover, the description of the work activity ("you should beat it with a crash") suggests that the soldiers are prepared for combat. This passage is followed by the phrase "crash the cruelty, the *tennō* system" (*ibid*: 34). This section ultimately seems to express that the prisoners wish to revolutionise the imperial monarchy of Japan. The "Song of Demonstration" also communicates approval of Soviet communism. Sympathy towards the Soviet government is

again illustrated by its flag: “Look, the red flag calls, let’s unite our forces” (ibid: 36). Furthermore, a desire for change in the social system of Japan is markedly indicated by the statement “we will topple the bourgeoisie and the *tennō* system” (ibid: 36). In contrast, the song “Protect the Peace” directly praises the political system of the Soviet Union. The lyrics suggest that the soldiers intend to protect world peace by freeing themselves from “subjugating handcuffs” (ibid: 40). “Wasteland in the Snow” again addresses the task of burning a Japanese white birch, which can be interpreted as an act of revolt as this tree can be understood as a representative symbol of Japan. Mention of the soldiers’ “rebirth in Siberia” (ibid: 42) is also striking and may point to the political reorientation of Japanese prisoners during their captivity in the Soviet Union.

The reconstruction of Japan after its defeat is another theme that is addressed (e.g. in “The Northern European Forest”). Japanese soldiers request their brothers and sisters build a “strong Japan” (ibid: 43) together. In “March of Prisoners of War,” Japan is described as “torn” and “broken” (敗れている *yabureteiru*) (ibid: 50–51). This description depicts Japan as the clear loser of the war. Requesting the Japanese homeland to “stand firm,” the song calls for Japan and its population not to perish despite the absence of the imprisoned former soldiers. The song “Cognisance,” on the other hand, focuses on the reconstruction of Japan as it is announced that “[the imprisoned former soldiers] will crush the cockroaches of the world and build a bright Japan” (ibid: 29). However, there is no evidence to indicate to whom the “cockroaches of the world” refer.

Forced Labour

Although forced labour is often described in the songs, expressions of feelings or thoughts towards labour are rare. The Japanese inmates obviously tended to avoid voicing personal opinions about the circumstances in the prisons. One exception is the song “Mourning Song of the Prison Camp,” which describes the daily work of the prisoners as cumbersome and sad. In this particular song, the labour is referred to as the “duty of the soldiers to ruler and homeland” (Daisō and Isao 1998: 50). Here, a feeling of helplessness may loom behind the sense of duty addressed. The lyrics also mention that “you can do nothing against the bitter complaints except to endure [and to fold your hands]” (ibid: 49), which clarifies that the prisoners had no self-determination to change the situation.

Interestingly, auditory signals are frequently utilised to portray the labour. “Howling” and “droning” factories are often addressed. For instance, in the “Khor’s Short Song,” the loud noise near the river is ascribed to a sawmill and a vodka factory (ibid: 41). At the same time, the factories in this particular song hint at the physically exhausting labour; forced labour is described as very satisfying and is not connoted with any negative feelings. However, it is reported with relief that the soldiers were able to finish their work without injuries (ibid: 41), which points to the likelihood that the

tasks were physically strenuous and dangerous. It is also reported that the Soviet population worked together with Japanese soldiers (ibid: 30). According to the lyrics, young people were involved in the labour, as younger girls (娘 *musume*) at work are referenced (ibid: 30).

In a song called “Siberian Sounds,” the circumstances of forced labour are equated with the image of “hell.” Here, the commander of the prison camp—who functioned as supervisor—is portrayed as the “king of hell:”

Here we are
Here we are at the end of Siberian hell
Brick-burning stoves, the cooking pot of hell
Burn, hand of fire, oh yes!
Without burning the body, oh yes!

In the morning
In the morning we are expelled early
‘Go, go’, says the king of hell
Work, work oh yes!
The day goes by, oh yes!
 (“Siberian sounds,” ibid: 46).

According to these lyrics, the soldiers had to work very early morning shifts and were under pressure from Soviet commanders to achieve the expected results. In contrast, the joy of working in railway construction is emphasised in the song “With Sweat,” as labour is performed with “admiration” and “boiling joy” (ibid: 26). The lyrics imply the soldiers’ hope to build their “own world” (ibid: 26), which suggests that the work activity may have empowered some captives in a certain sense.

It is repeatedly stated that work norm requirements put soldiers in forced labour camps under great psychological pressure. After 1945, the word “norm” was used in Soviet labour camps to define a minimum of measurable work success that had to be fulfilled in order to escape punishment. As expected, this rule is perceived negatively and presented as a psychological burden to the soldiers in the analysed lyrics. For example, “The Freezing Hard Mongolian Night” addresses forced labour which had to be carried out under extreme temperature conditions of minus thirty degrees Celsius. Given not all captives could meet the work norm, some comrades had to continue working in the cold and eventually died “while waiting for the dawn” (ibid: 44). Japanese detainees thus mourn fallen friends who lost their lives due to forced labour and the demands of the work norm:

Tears of the blood of those friends of war, who came together with us
Tonight, their light was extinguished in the cold
In the Mongolian night that freezes cold

The work norm could not be fulfilled by the war friends
In the bitter cold of minus 30 degrees

They died while waiting for the dawn
In the Mongolian night that freezes cold
("The Freezing Hard Mongolian Night," *ibid*: 44).

However, the results of forced labour are also associated with pride in some instances. In the song "Fruit Harvest," the physically and psychologically demanding work is portrayed as strikingly rewarding. As the portrayal of beads of sweat as gems indicates (*ibid*: 44–45), soldiers appear to have thought of their work as rewarding and precious. Furthermore, the song "Evening Music on the River Angren" evidently shows that forced labour was also linked to a sense of achievement. In the lyrics, this is described as follows: "In the past months and days, over the two years, we have successfully built new roads, water towers and apartments" (*ibid*: 27).

Unity of the Japanese

In the songs, other Japanese soldiers are often referred to as "friends," "friends of war," or even "fighting friends." The song "Scores of the Desire to Go Home" depicts friendship as immensely helpful during the period of captivity in the Soviet Union:

Together we endure the spring
The falling snow gathers near the window
The snow covers the clematis, how high is it now?
Friends, let's talk next to the stove
Ah, ah
The nocturnal wind burns on the body
("Scores of the Desire to Go Home," Daisō and Isao 1998: 48).

The importance of the bonds of friendship while imprisoned becomes even clearer when considering references to death during captivity. Descriptions of deceased soldiers are usually expressed through memories:

We, as war friends, promised to survive and return
The chrysanthemum withered in front of the grave
The pale moon sorrowfully illuminates the lakeshore Balkhash
("Balkhash-Elegy," *ibid*: 39).

These passages indicate tremendous mourning for the loss of comrades. As a symbol of Japan, the withered chrysanthemum can also be interpreted as representative of the desire to return—a hope no longer possible given the soldiers had died. As previously mentioned, the promise to return to Japan together and inability to provide an appropriate funeral are central themes in this context. The line "we go together with the deceased war comrades" (*ibid*: 49) implies that the Japanese prisoners of war intended to take care of the corpses of their friends and colleagues. A similar motif can be found in the "Lamentation of Prisoners of War" which refers to fellow Japanese prisoners

as “hungry and cold friends” (ibid). In this context, a yearning for forgiveness is mentioned once:

Deceased friends, forgive me for a while
Even flowers are not allowed
We cry in our heart, ask for forgiveness
Waiting for a joyful funeral
 (“Song of Hope,” ibid: 45).

Here, a sense of guilt is indicated as the prisoners were unable to arrange appropriate funerals for their colleagues during captivity. Funerals played no major role in the Soviet Union since deceased people were said to have been “nothing more than objects to be disposed of” (Dähler 2006: 140). This stands in stark contrast to the Japanese custom according to which the dead are cremated and honoured, and funerals constitute a very important tradition. This custom is obligatory for relatives as they must care for the graves of family members and organise rites performed by priests (Kawano 2010: 12). However, this song suggests that carrying out this tradition was not possible or even permitted due to the ideological differences and the scarcity of resources during captivity (Dähler 2006: 140).

Narrative Perspective: The Lyrical “I”

As mentioned previously, the songs written from the narrative perspective of the “workers” often describe the situation as forced labourers in surprisingly positive ways. This may imply that the Japanese detainees predominantly defined themselves by their different work tasks in forced labour camps. The statements “we are the working group in mines” or “we are the miners” from “Tunes of the Bukachacha Coal Mine” confirm that labour was crucial for the identification of prisoners of war (Daisō and Isao 1998: 47–48). The “Song of Workers” also starts with a proud announcement that the lyrical perspective is that of “workers and peasants” (ibid: 34) who, through different work activities, are “brothers” who “share their blood” (ibid). These lines prove another important aspect of the division of labour: it not only helped to form new identities as workers in the Soviet Union but also created different groups with a sense of cohesiveness. It may be the case that different work tasks helped Japanese prisoners to distract themselves from their situation as imprisoned soldiers after the loss of the war and to gain a new perspective on their lives in a different country by identifying as workers rather than citizens of a nation state (Japan). The lyrical “I” calls itself and its comrades “friends of the Soviet Union” (ibid: 50) once, which can be read in the context of anti-fascism and understood as praise for the communist ideology of the Soviet Union (“The Freedom March of the Young Independence Movement of the Russian Nation”) (ibid: 50).

Some song lyrics are narratives about the families of Japanese prisoners. In the course of addressing the desire to be reunited with their families in Japan, the “lyrical I” is referred to as an “unreliable son” (ibid: 43) who makes his parents wait at home. The lyrics of the song “The Northern European Forest” imply a similar sense of guilt. It can therefore be concluded that the former soldiers’ worries about their families and friends are distinctly expressed in the songs analysed here. Similar feelings caused by the absence of loved ones are also elaborated upon in the following lines:

The evening rain that drops on the leaves
I want to see my mother’s face
She lives lonely in our distant home
How many times has spring returned?

Lonely waiting for me, who does not return home
The aging body admirably
Working because of poverty
The fateful summer as a test
 (“Song in Memory of Mother,” ibid: 38).

As becomes apparent here, the “I” in this song is referred to as a person who “does not return home,” emphasising the loneliness of the mother who has to work because of poverty and the absence of her son.

The representation as a soldier is another often-used motif. For example, the “Mourning Song of the Prison Camp” describes captivity in the Soviet Union as a “duty to [the] rulers and [their] homeland as soldiers” (ibid: 50). At the same time, however, the reasons behind the detainees’ grievous situation are questioned:

We, who work, for whom do we do that?
For whom did we get rid of our weapons?
Our dream is the Japanese cherry blossom
 (“Mourning Song of the Prison Camp,” ibid: 49).

This passage questions the meaning behind the POW’s captivity and their tasks. Furthermore, mentioning the fact that the soldiers surrendered and “got rid of their weapons” can be viewed as critical of the Japanese government’s strict orders to never surrender or end up in captivity.

Interestingly, the former Japanese soldiers are rarely referred to as “prisoners.” The only exceptions are the songs “March of the Prisoners of War” and “Lamentation of Prisoners of War.” The song “Depth” describes the conditions of the POW camps and expresses the suffering of the Japanese as prisoners of the Soviet Union:

Many people here are suffering
There is a distant desire of liberation in war, which overturns the world
The people who deeply sketch their dreams in their heart

That the prisoners will survive
 ("Depth," *ibid*: 46-47).

The Soviet Population

Dähler states in his dissertation that Japanese prisoners of war reported particularly positive incidents that included Soviet women (Dähler 2006: 253). A similar pattern can also be observed in songs addressing Soviet women or girls. The lyrics consistently portray a positive, often even romantically charged image of the female population:

On the hill a red flower is blooming
 I pick it and adorn my chest
 Let's go water scooping today as well
 I am an Uzbek village daughter

At the beautiful river that flows through the hill
 With fine hair and light make-up
 She crosses the hill where the donkey is screaming
 Let her meet him, the person she loves
 ("The Uzbek Village Daughter," Daisō and Isao 1998: 28).

Two central aspects of these paragraphs are of particular interest. First, the lines depict a romanticised version of the everyday life of an Uzbek woman from her own point of view, which stands in great contrast to the description of forced labour or the camp life of prisoners of war. Second, after a change of perspective, the (presumably Japanese) observer wishes the girl to meet the person she loves ("let her meet him, the person she loves"), which emphasises the friendly attitude towards this woman. The song expresses awareness that the Soviet people had a better life than the Japanese prisoners did, but it also conveys positive feelings towards the regional population. In addition, the "Short Dorff Song" describes Russian women's daily lives, including "Katyusha songs" and "singing on sledges" (*ibid*: 37). Singing and dancing women are also described in the "Khor Short Song," and it is stated that the Soviet "choir of the girls" awakens memories of the Japanese prisoners' own girlfriends back in Japan. These observations regarding Soviet women's lives and work suggest a certain closeness between Japanese prisoners of war and the Soviet population.

Japanese detainees' contact with Soviet women in the workplace is described in the "Folk Song of Karaganda" in which prisoners observe a young girl at a construction site:

The coal of the work norm is good
 We are here in the Siberian Karaganda
 Hazy chimneys, near the iron factory

In the shadow of the arrested steering wheels and belts
 For some strange reason, I see a lonely girl at the age of 20 years
 Tomorrow this girl will come again
 ("Folk Song of Karaganda," *ibid*: 30).

According to an explanatory note, the "lonely girl at the age of 20" was in fact a Soviet girl in captivity. However, the editors of the songbook do not provide further information.

Soviet women are associated with the topic of love on several occasions. In the "Khor Short Song," for example, the city of Khor is described as the "city of love" (*ibid*: 41). Here, singing women fishing at the river are described. In addition, it is stated that the soldiers experience the "love of foreign women" (*ibid*: 41). This description points to the probability of romantic relationships between Japanese prisoners and the Soviet population. Despite this clear reference to intimate relationships, the song ends with the statement that the Japanese prisoners have completed forced labour and are waiting for "the autumn of return" (*ibid*: 41).

Notably, Soviet men rarely appear in the song lyrics. If Soviet men are mentioned, they are authorities working in the prisons. In contrast to the positive, romantic representation of women, Soviet men are portrayed as "unpleasant" or even "malignant" (*ibid*: 49). As already mentioned, the lyrics of "Siberian Sounds" refer to one member of the camp personnel as the "king of hell" (*ibid*: 46). The song "Depth" depicts a similar scenario in which the camp authorities "disrupt the silence" (*ibid*: 46–47) and awaken the Japanese inmates. In another section of the song, the camp guard is described as the "guardian of the prison" (*ibid*: 47) and even as a "fool who keeps his eyes open" (*ibid*: 47) to maintain a close watch. These passages unveil a strong hierarchy; Soviet camp guards are called "kings," referencing the manner in which they commanded. In "Lamentation of Prisoners of War," it is reported that the Japanese captives were "incited by unpleasant Russians" (*ibid*: 50–51). Prisoners of war exclusively maintained contact with Soviet camp authorities, especially at the beginning of captivity. One can thus theorise that they were primarily singing about their feelings towards prison personnel rather than Soviet civilians. It seems likely that Japanese prisoners felt psychologically pressured by Soviet soldiers, as the song "March of the Prisoners of War" indicates:

How can I show my weakness?
 When I stand before the Russians?
 Behind the smile shown on my face
 I cry tears of unhappiness
 ("March of the Prisoners of War," *ibid*: 50–51).

Apparently, detainees could not show their true feelings, particularly in the presence of Soviet soldiers.

Feelings

Japanese detainees' negative feelings are barely mentioned in the songs. In rare cases, however, emotions and feelings are expressed through different descriptions of situations, primarily the cold in Siberia and the dreadful labour. Furthermore, sadness is often represented and usually accompanied by the mention of the soldiers' tears. In the "Song of the Mining Group in the Kuznetsk Basin," the grief of the prisoners of war is phrased as follows:

There is no way to express it in words
 The inexhaustible tears hidden inside the heart
 See how the sky of dawn lights up
 The clouds of hope are not clearing
 ("Song of the Mining Group in the Kuznetsk Basin," Daisō and Isao 1998: 32).

In this particular song, the indescribability of the situation emphasises the overwhelmingly negative feelings of the Japanese prisoners of war. The "inexhaustible tears" — and the information they concealed—implies that there were few opportunities for soldiers to express their feelings. Although titled "Song of Grief," no concrete feelings are mentioned; the misery of the prisoners is solely illustrated through the Soviet natural environment. Such passages nostalgically depict the "pale moon [that] illumines the shore of Balkhash" (ibid: 39). However, the lyrics of the songs "Siberian Sounds," "Imprisoned Travelers," and "Lamentation of Prisoners of War" mention the scattered or flowing tears of soldiers, which clearly implies the misery of the prisoners.

In addition to grief, the theme of hunger is frequently addressed. For instance, "The Mongolian Night that Freezes Hard" describes the cold temperatures of Mongolia in the late evening. The lyrics report that the prisoners "can finally caress their hungry bellies while sleeping" (ibid: 44) during the cold Mongolian night. These lines point to the strong possibility of Japanese soldiers suffering from stomach aches due to malnutrition. Food shortage was a frequent cause of death as mentioned in the "Lamentation of Prisoners of War." The song describes "friends that had fallen through the cold and hunger" (ibid: 49), rendering food shortages a constant of prison life worth mentioning in many songs.

The anger of captives is often described as suppressed emotion, including the "seething blood in the chest," which is "hidden" by prisoners (ibid: 32). Moreover, this emotion is aroused by the death of comrades:

The seething blood was hidden in the chest
 Together with the deceased war comrades, we continue
 We endure the thorny path that does not seem to end
 ("The Song of the Mining Group in the Kuznetsk Basin," ibid: 32).

In “March of Prisoners of War,” the circumstances of captivity in the Soviet Union are expressed through great anger. One passage—“there is no medication or medical precaution; I swallow my grudge and sink to the ground” (ibid: 50–51)—indicates that the soldiers were angry because of poor medical care, but they had no means to express themselves or change the situation. Moreover, in “Work Song,” several Japanese prisoners “hold the hammer with hate” during forced labour (ibid: 34).

Another negative feeling addressed is loneliness caused by the distance from Japan. Loneliness is mostly described through the natural environment of the Soviet Union, as demonstrated in the following passage:

The lonely wind is sobbing
The star sign of Ursa Major pictures clearly
We are the working group that gathers in the Siberian wilderness
(“The Song of the Mining Group in the Kuznetsk Basin,” ibid: 32).

Particularly noteworthy is the “lonely wind,” which implies a sense of foreignness and loneliness without directly relating to the prisoners of war themselves. In the “Short Dorff Song,” loneliness is also portrayed through references to nature since the call of the cuckoo leads to “the evening sun being lonely” (ibid: 37). Furthermore, the song “The Hope of Jelabuga” illustrates the feeling of loneliness in the city by suggesting that the golden cross of the city church must be “lonely” (ibid: 45).

While emotions are rarely expressed directly in the analysed songs, positive feelings are mentioned sporadically. Joy is described once in the song “Rock of Hope” in which prisoners of war sing and whistle together. After stating that their melodies reach their homeland, their hopes of returning soon are mentioned (ibid: 31). In this example, hope is described as “food in [our] heart” which sits “deeply in [our] chests” (ibid: 31). It is also stated “the hope of life swells up” due to forced labour in “With Sweat” (ibid: 26). A “burning feeling of hope” among Japanese prisoners is addressed in the “Song of Hope” which details their desire to return to Japan as follows:

Even if we have come to a place far away
It does not change our feelings
We as young people are burning for hope
(“Song of Hope,” ibid: 45).

The fearlessness of prisoners of war is mentioned only once when it is asserted that they “know no fear” in “The Song of the Freedom March of the Young Independence Movement of the Russian Nation” (ibid: 50).

Camp Life

Songs describing the living conditions of prisoners of war in the camps often include names of places in the Soviet Union. When camp life is illustrated, descriptions of the

cold dominate. The extent to which extreme temperatures affected the prisoners is expressed in the song “Lamentation of the Prisoners of War,” which defines the condition as follows: “the wind of dawn in the Siberian winter gets through the skin” (Daisō and Isao 1998: 49). Furthermore, a “sharp cold” in “Mourning Song of the Prison Camp” implies the harshness of winter (ibid: 50). Concern about snow and the dreary weather is also expressed in the following lines:

Spring comes early in our distant homeland
But here we are in the utmost North of Mongolia
Even if you say spring, it's just a term
Even today the evening dawns in a snowstorm
Tomorrow's weather is worrying
("Song of Hope," ibid: 45).

The comparison drawn between the Soviet Union and Japan is most interesting. This passage points out that spring approaches earlier in Japan, which casts a positive light on the country. In contrast, spring in northern Mongolia is “just a term” which implies that the Japanese were unfamiliar with such cold temperatures at that time of year.

In addition to the depiction of low temperatures, the darkness in prisons is frequently illustrated. The song “Depth” describes the darkness in the evenings and the circumstances in the prisons at night:

In the gloomy light of the dark lamp
The chest and arms are bare
Hugging the rags [blanket], you lie down on the floor
The prisoners' dreams are falling apart
("Depth," ibid: 46-47).

This passage highlights the poor living conditions in the prison camps. The soldiers' blankets are called “rags” and thus illustrate how little they received to protect themselves from the cold. The exposure of their “chest and arms” indicates that there was little to no clothing provided for the Japanese who had to sleep on the floor at night. In “Lamentation of the Prisoners of War,” the darkness is described as “dim light sink[ing] into the dark camp” (ibid: 49). Life in prison is portrayed very rarely—and if so, in extremely negative terms.

“Depth” labels the morning, with which everyday life in a camp begins, as “fights” (ibid: 46). The song subsequently describes prison life “truly, as in hell” (ibid: 47). The lyrics end with the statement “there are many people [t]here who suffer” (ibid). The Soviet prison is illustrated as follows:

I return to the dark prison
When you approach the window
You see the shadow of the iron bars
("Depth," ibid: 46-47).

The iron bars that cast a shadow onto the window can be interpreted as symbolic of the enforced confinement of the Japanese prisoners—a circumstance further accentuated by the lyrical “I’s” approach to the window which can be understood as a metaphor for freedom.

Food is another topic that played a significant role in the daily life of the camps. The task of cooking various meals together is described in the song “Lamentation of the Prisoners of War” in which soldiers prepare simple dishes with ingredients like red kaoliang (millet) and potatoes. The following lines imply that the prisoners of war tried to be carefree at dinner, happy that they were able to eat. However, the quoted passage highlights that this was in fact nearly impossible due to the difficult circumstances they faced:

In the evening
In the evening you can see the moon, the moon of our home
At the evening feast you try to be carefree
At some point, the tears, oh yes!
(“Siberian Sounds,” *ibid*: 46).

Despite the numerous challenges and restrictions upon Japanese prisoners of war’s lives in the Soviet Union camps, music and dance are considered as exceedingly positive factors as shown by previous research (Dähler 2006: 158; Klaus 2014: 529; Nagase 2013: 303). In “Song of Return,” singing in choirs is described as a positive, pain-relieving activity: “When we are singing together in a choir, no matter how far away; the long journey is not a misery” (*ibid*: 35). Moreover, according to the song “Rock of Hope,” the joyful singing and whistling of the soldiers appears to have strengthened their hope and formed positive memories. Additionally, there is clear evidence that Soviet people’s songs impressed Japanese detainees as confirmed by the following lines:

She sings and dances with the man until dawn
The flute of the vodka factory sounds
(“Khor Short Song,” *ibid*: 41).

Voices, singing the Katyusha song
The Russian girl flies with her sled
(“Short Dorff Song,” *ibid*: 37).

On the river in Khor, in the beam of the hot sun
The women are singing on rafts
(“Khor Short Song,” *ibid*: 41).

Such frequent mentions of Soviets singing clearly indicate that these foreign songs, sung by Soviet women, left an impression on the Japanese prisoners.

Conclusion

In this article, I analysed songs by Japanese prisoners of war—composed during internment in the Soviet Union—in a wider historical context. By drawing upon secondary literature, it became clear that art and cultural activities in the Soviet Union were specifically promoted for political purposes both inside and outside of prison camps. These measures sought to influence the Soviet population, Soviet prisoners, and foreign prisoners of war politically. It must be assumed that the Soviet government was aware of the strong impact of art and culture on the human condition long before the war. In the prison camps, the performance of these joint activities was controlled and coordinated by the Department of Cultural Education within the OGPU (United State Political Directorate) (Kuznetsov 1997b: 86). As discussed above, one purpose of art and cultural activities in prisons was to motivate the inmates to work harder; at the same time, they replaced punishment measures.

In the particular case of Japanese prisoners of war, research shows that the promotion of art and cultural activities primarily aimed to influence the detainees politically. This is also evident in the Soviets' attempts to impel Japanese captives to question the imperialist ideologies of the Japanese Empire (Kuznetsov 1997b: 89). Nonetheless, memoirs and paintings by prisoners confirm that detainees as well as the Soviet prison camp personnel thoroughly enjoyed and appreciated these cultural activities (Kiuchi 1996; Yamashita 2007: 430). They seem to have been a great distraction from the forced labour and an uncomplicated way of socially connecting with other internees. As the song lyrics analysis suggests, music was also a rewarding way to process emotions that could not be expressed inside the prison otherwise. As a result, the ideological re-education of detainees spread quickly (Kuznetsov 1997b: 89). Besides, singing songs from different nations can be interpreted as a gesture of appreciation since the activity allowed them to express respect for different cultures (Wakatsuki 1979: 225).

Because of its simplicity, singing in choirs was particularly popular in prisons. As Dähler and Nagase mention, there were several choirs in which Japanese inmates and captives from other nations frequently sung together (Dähler 2006: 158; Nagase 2013: 303). This implies that singing in Soviet prison camps had two central meanings for Japanese prisoners of war: it helped them to process the precarious living conditions emotionally and strengthened interpersonal relations inside the prisons.

Lyrical analysis of songs from *Selection of Songs from Siberia: Songs Composed During Captivity* suggests that the most common theme is the soldiers' desire to return to Japan. This is often associated with the fear of having to perform well in forced labour camps in order to be released. Another strong desire addressed in the examined songs is the reunion of Japanese soldiers with their families and friends. In the lyrics, this desire is associated with feelings of guilt towards their families: the soldiers did not want their parents to worry on the one hand, and felt the need to provide for their wives and children on the other. However, the lyrics also repeat the prisoners' desire

to rebuild their home country by constructing a “strong Japan” (ibid: 43) after their return. The songs also expressed a wish to transform the political system of Japan to maintain peace. It can be assumed that the Japanese prisoners of war felt a sense of obligation towards their home country and the capitulation led to strong feelings of guilt. Thus, the Japanese prisoners seem to have developed a desire to produce positive change in their home country to the benefit of the population after their return. I conclude that these prospects were vital because the Japanese soldiers were deprived of their initial goals and vocations due to losing the war. It was therefore important to create a new life purpose during captivity.

Surprisingly, a considerable number of political statements could be identified. This research demonstrates that symbols of communism were incorporated into the lyrics, and statements against the imperial monarchy of Japan were made. In particular, the Japanese government’s passive attitude after losing the war—which led to the capture of Japanese soldiers—is criticised. It is apparent that the Japanese inmates felt helpless or even abandoned by their government. Therefore, it can be assumed that feelings of neglect contributed to the Japanese prisoners’ sentiments against the Japanese government and, at the same time, facilitated a positive perception of the communist system. It seems likely that the Japanese prisoners regarded the Soviet Union as the starting point of a new life, thus developing a positive attitude towards it. It is also surprising that memories of war are not mentioned in the songs. The analysis also reveals that the natural environment of the Soviet Union left a particularly strong impression on the prisoners. With the exception of the life-threatening cold of Siberian winters, descriptions of the Soviet environment are overwhelmingly positive. It is also possible that the landscape served as a neutral, less emotional point of reference, helping the Japanese prisoners to distract themselves from forced labour. The songs therefore frequently refer to visual impressions of the landscape.

As previously mentioned, the government of the Soviet Union planned to reorient Japanese soldiers politically through cultural activities. A clear political statement towards the Soviet Union could not be identified in the songs analysed. However, Soviet authorities in the prison camps were described negatively in the lyrics; in particular, Soviet camp commanders are characterised as oppressors of the POWs. This can be accounted for as the Soviet soldiers’ told the captives they were travelling back to Japan yet transferred them to the Soviet Union instead. The phrase “*skoro damoi*” (“home soon”), which was repeated to reassure the soldiers during their transfer, often appeared in the song lyrics. This betrayal clearly influenced Japanese soldiers at the beginning of their captivity and possibly intensified their rejection of the prison personnel. This is reflected in the fact that the Soviet authorities and the prison personnel are exclusively depicted in a negative light in the songs. Soviet authorities were considered strict guards and rulers of the prisons. It seems that the Japanese soldiers transferred their negative experiences and feelings during captivity onto the Soviet prison personnel because they were in direct contact with them. In contrast, Soviet women

were frequently mentioned positively. Numerous passages describe the Japanese prisoners watching these women with admiration and curiosity. The lyrics imply that romantic relationships between Soviet women and prisoners of war were relatively common. Nonetheless, there is also evidence indicating that friendship or at least appreciative relations with Soviet prison authorities existed (Hamai 2000; Kiuchi 1996).

As previously stated, the songs do not express any negative views towards the political system of the Soviet Union; only Soviet camp personnel are depicted negatively. Thus, feelings of hatred are directed solely towards individual people and not the Soviet government. This—together with evidence from other sources and studies—leads me to the conclusion that the political indoctrination initiated by the Soviet government may have been successful, at least in individual cases. The lyrics point to the probability that the soldiers were defined by their different tasks, since the “lyrical I” often refers to itself as “miner” (ibid: 48) or “worker and farmer” (ibid: 36). Moreover, the pride associated with labour productivity clearly suggests that this led to a more positive attitude towards communism. Instead of calling them “prisoners” or “soldiers,” the song lyrics refer to the Japanese prisoners of war in terms of their work tasks. Forced labour thus seems to have functioned as a kind of catalyst, eventually getting the soldiers to focus more on their immediate circumstances during imprisonment than on their return to Japan.

It is particularly interesting that the lyrics analysed in this study express contradictory attitudes and feelings of Japanese prisoners towards the Soviet Union. On the one hand, the Soviet Union is described by referring to its beautiful natural environment, and the political system of communism is propagated. On the other hand, the country is portrayed negatively due to the cold winters and harsh climate. Furthermore, in several instances forced labour is described as fulfilling, and the pride of the soldiers emphasises their work ethos. However, forcible confinement is also addressed. Some lyrics suggest that the Soviet working norm, which had to be fulfilled during forced labour, played a very dominant role in the daily work routine, since the songs often mention the soldiers’ hope to be released after its fulfilment. The examined lyrics suggest that Japanese soldiers put significant effort into completing their tasks well as they directly linked their success at work to the prospect of return. The heterogeneity of statements regarding the Soviet Union may be explained by the individual views of the people who wrote the song lyrics or the different circumstances under which they lived which may have varied according to the locations of the respective prisons.

The negative aspects addressed in the lyrics notwithstanding, I conclude that the overall attitude towards the conditions of imprisonment—expressed in the songs of Japanese prisoners of war—is acceptance. Although it is evident that positive aspects existed during captivity and forced labour, the possibility that the songs were primarily used as a distraction from the difficult circumstances during imprisonment should not be neglected. Another explanation for the generally positive attitude of the

Japanese prisoners towards the Soviet Union expressed in the songs can—in part—be found in the “sense of coherence” psychological approach developed by Aaron Antonovsky (1997). This concept identifies three main components that ought to be well balanced in an individual: comprehensibility (the ability to perceive external influences as structured and comprehensible), manageability (the optimism to overcome challenges), and meaningfulness (the conviction that life and its turns are meaningful) (Antonovsky 1997: 34–35). Antonovsky assumes that all humans have “the capability to perceive that one can manage in any situation independent of whatever is happening in life” (Lindström and Ericsson 2006: 241). He concludes that there are individuals who are more resilient to external stressors and, therefore, have the capability of maintaining their mental health in spite of hardships. He attributes the source of their resilience to their respective “sense of coherence” which varies from person to person and allows for drastically diverging perceptions of their individual surroundings (Antonovsky 1997: 142). The more developed the sense of coherence, the healthier the individuals should be as they are able to see meaning in life. A strong sense of coherence thus helps people to respond to stress factors with flexibility and to manage precarious situations with greater ease than others (Bengel et al 2001: 30; Antonovsky 1997: 34). Whether a person has a strong sense of coherence or not depends on their social environment and upbringing. Although this ability to cope with external factors does not commonly change during adulthood, a range of radical shifts in the social and cultural environment can trigger its intensity (Bengel et al 2001: 37).

In the particular case of Japanese prisoners of war, it is quite possible that the hardships of Soviet imprisonment and forced labour were a factor that drastically modified their sense of coherence. The broad spectrum of the intensity of coherence can help to explain the different attitudes of Japanese prisoners towards their lives as internees. It can be assumed that interpreting forced labour as a crucial task that had to be fulfilled for them to be released from captivity allowed prisoners to see meaning in their hardship. Admiring the beauty of the Soviet natural environment and encountering friendly members of the Soviet population certainly also aided in coping with the stress triggered by war trauma and worries about the future.

Finally, I would like to draw attention to the limitations of this study. Since the number of analysed sets of lyrics is very limited and the songs were published under unspecified circumstances, it is not possible to draw conclusions concerning the reality of prison life for Japanese soldiers after the Second World War. It cannot be concluded that these lyrics directly express the thoughts and feelings of Japanese prisoners of war. It is rather highly probable that they may have served the purpose of creating a positive outlook on life in the difficult situation of imprisonment. Furthermore, it must be mentioned that it is possible that the different songs only express the feelings of the composer himself, or that they are about his individual experiences and desires, and thus only draw a limited picture of prison life and its consequences. It should also be mentioned that imaginary scenes were potentially used as the

foundation for the lyrics. In addition, it remains unclear if Soviet authorities had an interest in partially modifying the lyrics to fit their goal of influencing Japanese prisoners of war politically. It is unknown whether some of the Soviet authorities in different prisons were able to understand or speak Japanese. If there were individuals who were able to understand the Japanese language, it is highly probable that the Japanese prisoners had to adapt the lyrics and did not address specific topics for their own safety. On the other hand, the question remains unanswered if Soviet authorities were even interested in the censorship of lyrics. In addition to the varying sense of coherence among Japanese prisoners of war, the different circumstances of the songs' creation, the individual experiences of their anonymous composers, and the censorship of Soviet authorities may have influenced the thematic diversity found in the lyrics.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Ajikata, Shunsuke 味方俊介. 2008. *Kazafusutan ni okeru nihonjin yokuryūsha* カザフスタンにおける日本人抑留者 [Japanese Prisoners of War in Kazakhstan]. Tōkyō 東京: Tōyōshoten 東洋書店.
- Antonovsky, Aaron. 1997. *Salutogenesis: Demystifying the Health*. Tübingen: Dgvt-Verlagsgesellschaft.
- Barshay, Andrew E. 2013. *The Gods Left First: The Captivity and Repatriation of Japanese POWs in North Asia, 1945–1956*. Berkeley and California: University of California Press.
- Bengel, Jürgen, Regine Strittmatter, and Hildegard Willmann. 2001. *What Keeps People Healthy? Antonovsky's Model of Salutogenesis: Status of Discussion and Significance*. Köln: Bundeszentrale für gesundheitliche Aufklärung.
- Dähler, Richard. 2001. "Japanese Prisoners of War in Siberia 1945–1956: Reprocessing the Imprisonment as Paintings and Memoirs." M.A. thesis, University of Zurich, Switzerland.
- Dähler, Richard. 2003. "Japanese Prisoners of War in Siberia 1945–1956." *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, January 18, 2003; online: <https://www.nzz.ch/article8JE5S-1.200576> (accessed: November 17, 2018).
- Dähler, Richard. 2006. "Japanese and German Prisoners of War 1945–1956: Comparison of Memoirs." Ph.D. thesis, University of Zurich, Switzerland.
- Daisō, Takahashi 高橋大創 and Yamauchi Isao 山内勇夫. 1998. *Shiberia kakyokusen: Yokuryūchū ni tsukurareta kakyoku* シベリア歌曲選: 抑留中に作られた歌曲 [Selection of Songs From Siberia: Songs Composed During Captivity]. Tōkyō 東京: Heibunsha 平文社.
- Dulatbekov, Nurlan. 2014. "Kazafusutan no horyō – shuyō kara sōkan made カザフスタンの捕虜 – 収容から送還まで [POWs in Kazakhstan: From Their Detention to Their Repatriation]." In Nakagami Kōhaku 中神康博, ed., *Tokushū: Shiberia yokuryū no jittaikai e–motomerareru kuskai kōryū kanmin doryoku* 特集: シベリア抑留の実態解へ – 求められる国際交流官民努力 [Special Edition: The Situation of the Siberian Prisoners of War—The Demand for Government Efforts in International Exchange]. Tōkyō 東京: Center of Asian and Pacific Studies, Seikei University, pp. 7–10.
- Geber, Clara Momoko. "Melodien über die ferne Heimat: Lieder japanischer Kriegsgefangener in der Sowjetunion nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg." M.A. thesis, University of Vienna, Austria.

- Hamai, Jiueemon 濱井重右衛門. 2000. "Shiberia no omoide シベリアの思い出 [Memoirs of Siberia]." *Geocities*; online: <http://www.geocities.co.jp/Bookend-Kenji/3007/index.html> (accessed May 28, 2018).
- Karner, Stefan. 1994. "The Soviet Central Administration of Prisoners of War: An Interim Report." *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, 42 (3), pp. 447–471.
- Kawano, Satsuki 河野さつき. 2010. *Nature's Embrace: Japan's Aging Urbanites and New Death Rites*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Kiuchi, Nobuo 木内信夫. 1996. "Kyūso ren yokuryū gashū ~ moto rikugun hikōhei Kiuchi Nobuo 旧ソ連抑留画集～元陸軍飛行兵木内信夫 [Collection of Images of the Detention in the Former Soviet Union—Kiuchi Nobuo, Retired Air Corps]." Online: <http://kiuchi.jpn.org/nobindex.htm> (accessed: May 28, 2018).
- Klaue, Inna. 2007. "Music by Order." *Osteuropa*, 57 (6), pp. 303–313.
- Klaue, Inna. 2014. "The Sound of Gulag: Musicians of Soviet Internment Prisons of the 1920s to 1950s." Ph.D. thesis, Hanover University of Music, Drama and Media, Germany.
- Kracht, Klaus. 1998. "Decency and Etiquette in Japan: A Research Field I." *Japonica Humboldtiana*, 2, pp. 5–58.
- Kuznetsov, Sergey I. 1997a. *Japonzy v sibirskom plenu (1945–1956)* [Japanese in Siberian Captivity (1945–1956)]. Irkutsk: Centr mezhnatsionalnykh issledovaniy IGU.
- Kuznetsov, Sergey I. 1997b. "The Ideological Indoctrination of Japanese Prisoners of War in the Stalinist Camps of the Soviet Union (1945–1956)." *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies*, 10 (4), pp. 86–103.
- Kuznetsov, Sergey I. 1998. "Kwantung Army Generals in Soviet Prisons (1945–1956)." *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies*, 11 (3), pp. 187–199.
- Kuznetsov, Sergey I. 2013. "...Yet Still They Remember Times Spent in Siberia With Nostalgia." *The Siberian Times*, May 24, 2013; online: <https://siberiantimes.com/home/voice-of-siberia/yet-still-they-remember-times-spent-in-siberia-with-nostalgia/> (accessed: August 26, 2018).
- Lindström, Bengt and Monica Eriksson. 2006. "Contextualizing Salutogenesis and Antonovsky in Public Health Development." *Health Promotion International*, 21 (3), pp. 238–244.
- Mayring, Philipp. 2015. *Qualitative Content Analysis: Basics and Techniques*. Weinheim: Beltz.
- Muminov, Sherzod. 2017. "From Imperial Revenants to Cold War Victims: 'Red Repatriates' from the Soviet Union and the Making of the New Japan, 1949–1952." *Cold War History*, 17 (4), pp. 425–442.
- Nagase, Ryōji 長勢了治. 2013. *Shiberia yokuryū zenshi シベリア抑留全史* [The Complete Story of Prisoners in Siberia]. Tōkyō 東京: Harashobo 原書房.
- Nünning, Vera. 2010. *Methods of the Literary and Cultural Text Analysis: Approaches—Fundamentals—Model Analysis*. Stuttgart: Metzler.
- Shinnomiya, Ayu 新宮亜佑. 2014. "Kazafusutan nihonjin yokuryūsha ga mirai ni nokoshita mono カザフスタン日本人抑留者が未来に残したもの [The Legacy of Japanese Prisoners of War for the Future]." *Chikyū no arukikata 地球の歩き方* [The Way of Walking on Earth]; online: http://touhain.arukikata.co.jp/astana/2014/07/post_45.html (accessed: August 22, 2018).
- Sugio, Naoya 検索結果. 2017. "Japanese Survivor of Siberian Internment Camp Years to Return to Japan." *The Mainichi*, June 5, 2017; online: <https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20170605/p2a/00m/0na/015000c> (accessed: August 26, 2018).
- Tomita, Takeshi 富田武. 2013. "Shiberia yokuryū o megutte シベリア抑留をめぐって [About Japanese Prisoners of War in Siberia]." *The Center for Asian and Pacific Studies—Newsletter*, 120, pp. 6–9.
- Underwood, William. 2013. "The Aso Mining Company in World War II: History and Japan's Would-Be Premier." *Asia-Pacific Journal—Japan Focus*, 7, pp. 110–120.

Wakatsuki, Yasuo 若槻泰雄. 1979. *Shiberia horyo shūyōsho* シベリア捕虜収容所 [Siberian Internment Prisons]. Tōkyō 東京: Saimaru Shuppansha サイマル出版会.
 Yamashita Shizuo 山下静夫. 2007. *Shiberia yokuryū 1450 nichi* シベリア抑留1450日 [1450 Days in Siberian Captivity]. Tōkyō 東京: Tōkyōdō Shuppan 東京堂出版.

GLOSSARY

Balkhash	Балхаш	lake in Kazakhstan
<i>boku</i>	僕	“I”
<i>bokutachi</i>	僕たち	“we”
Bukachacha	Букача	village in Zabaykalsky Krai (Russia)
Dorff	Дорфф	village in Khurmuli (Russia)
Eguchi Toyochi	江口十四	Eguchi Toyochi
<i>gō</i>	豪	board game
<i>haiku</i>	俳句	form of Japanese short poetry
<i>hanafuda</i>	花札	Japanese card game
<i>horyo</i>	捕虜	prisoner
<i>jigoku no enma</i>	地獄の閻魔	king of hell
<i>kaeranu boku</i>	帰らぬ僕	the one who does not return home
Khor	Хор	river in Khabarovsk Krai (Russia)
<i>kyōdai</i>	兄弟	brothers
<i>ma-jan</i>	麻雀	Mah-Jongg
<i>manga</i>	漫画	Japanese comics
<i>musume</i>	娘	young girl
Nagase Ryōji	長勢良治	
<i>norma</i>	норма	Soviet work norm
<i>Novyi golos</i>	Новый голос	“New Voices” (choir)
<i>ore</i>	俺	“I” (male form, informal)
<i>pechka</i>	печка	stove
<i>rakugo</i>	落語	Japanese form of humorous verbal entertainment
<i>rōdōsha</i>	労働者	worker
<i>senyū</i>	戦友	“war comrades”
Shiberia	シベリア	Siberia
<i>Shiberia horyo shūyōjo</i>	シベリア捕虜収容所	Siberian Internment Prisons (report of a Japanese contemporary witness)
<i>Shiberia kakyokusen: Yokuryūchū ni tsukurareta kakyoku</i>	シベリア歌曲選: 抑留中に作られた歌曲	Selection of Songs from Siberia: Songs Composed During Captivity
<i>shiremono</i>	知れ者	fools
<i>skoro damoi</i>	Скоро домой	“soon home”
Soren	ソ連	Soviet Union

Soren ni okeru Nihonjin horyo no seikatsu taiken o kiroku suru kai	ソ連における日本人捕虜の生活体験を記録する会	Organisation That Documents the Experiences of Japanese Prisoners of War in the Soviet Union
Takahashi Daiso	高橋大創	member of “Soren ni okeru nihonjin horyo no seikatsu taiken o kiroku suru kai”
<i>tayorisenu ko</i>	便りせぬ子	unreliable son
<i>tennō</i>	天皇	Emperor of Japan
<i>tōi</i>	遠い	distant
<i>tomo</i>	友	friends
Wakatsuki Yasuo	若槻泰雄	former POW and author
<i>wareware</i>	我々	“we”
<i>yabureteiru</i>	敗れている	torn/broken
Yamashita Shizuo	山下静夫	former POW and author
Yamauchi Isao	山内伊三男	member of “Soren ni okeru nihonjin horyo no seikatsu taiken o kiroku suru kai”