

National ID card in Manchukuo

Identification Technologies and Biometric Power: A Transition from Occupied China to Post-World War II Japan

THURSDAY,
MARCH 21, 2019
4:00 - 6:00 PM

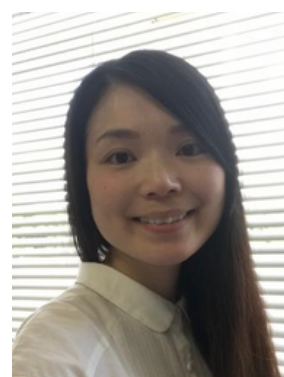
Room 208N,
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THE INVENTION OF IDENTIFICATION TECHNOLOGIES is deeply connected with the surveillance of colonial populations. Fingerprinting, the forerunner of biometrics, was created by the British police in colonial India in 1897, and was also employed in Manchuria and Northeast China under Japanese occupation from the 1920's to 1945. Why did fingerprint identification attract the Japanese imperialist power, and how effectively was it practiced? We examine narratives surrounding the Japanese identification systems in Manchuria, especially regarding Chinese workers who were placed under severe surveillance, and discuss how a similar scheme survived the lost war and was actually legitimated in post-World War II Japan. The expansion and transformation of biometric power can be seen in the Japanese government's repeated attempts to establish "perfect" identification systems. Surveillance has spread from ex-colonial populations to foreign workers and to citizens, culminated in recent legislative changes concerning enhanced technologies.



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ASAKO TAKANO is an Associate Professor at Meiji Pharmaceutical University in Tokyo, Japan. She received her Ph.D. in Social Sciences from Hitotsubashi University, and published her book in Japan in 2016, *Fingerprints and Modernity*.

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<https://uoft.me/IdentificationTechnologies>

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