



Kurodahan Press would like to present for your review:

## Rivers

Miyamoto Teru

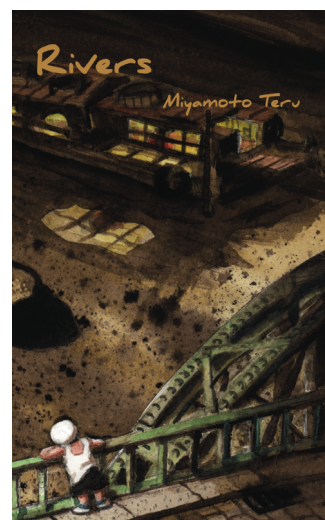
Translated by Roger K. Thomas and Ralph McCarthy

ISBN: 978-4-902075-59-5

Pages: v + 257

Size: 5" x 8" (127mm x 203mm), softcover

List Price: US\$24.00



Miyamoto Teru has established a considerable and devoted following in Japan, and is rapidly building a devoted readership in other Asian countries and parts of Europe as his fiction is translated into various languages. With only a few of his works currently available in English, however, Anglophone readers have for the most part been unaware of the "Teru" literary phenomenon. This book brings together his most famous work, the superlative Rivers Sequence: "Muddy River," which was published in 1977 and won the 78th Akutagawa Prize; "River of Fireflies," published the following year and promptly winning the 13th Dazai Osamu Prize; and "River of Lights," also published in 1978 but later extensively rewritten and expanded into a novel. All three works have been released as major films in Japan.

The will to live, karma, and death are themes developed through the lives of Miyamoto's fictional characters, who struggle to achieve closure with their respective pasts and in their often difficult relations with others. The comments of Washington Times writer Anna Chambers in her review of *Kinshu: Autumn Brocade* aptly apply to the works presented here as well: "... existential crisis after existential crisis force the characters to question whether one can shape one's own karma—rather than construct one's own soul, as a Western reader might have put it. And herein lies the Westerner's entree into the book as more than an observer of Japanese culture." And like *Kinshu*, the stories in the present collection provide "a satisfying taste of what it means to grapple with fate at the intersection of modernity and tradition."

Miyamoto deftly weaves his tales using scenes and settings from his native Kansai region, and all are flavored with the language of western Japan. Like the depressed areas described in much of his fiction, his characters too are "left behind" by post-war Japan's rapid economic growth, by unexpected changes in their lives, or by the deaths of loved ones. His heroes are ordinary people who, as he puts it, "are trying to lift themselves up, who are struggling to live," and who achieve quiet triumphs.

A copy of your review to the below address would be greatly appreciated.

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