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Japanese Book News

Recent Trends in Publishing
Japanese Books Abroad
New Titles/Events and Trends

Number of Japanese Publishers, 1955-91



The Japan Foundation

Japanese Book News is published quarterly by the Japan Foundation mainly to apprise publishers, editors, translators, scholars and libraries of the latest trends in Japanese publishing and list selected new titles accompanied by short descriptions of the content. Articles and information included provide a window for Japanese books that contribute to the reservoir of human knowledge and the advancement of mutual understanding between Japan and the rest of the world. New book titles are chosen for annotation by members of the advisory board from among notable current publications for their potential interest to readers in other countries, insight into Japanese society, institutions, attitudes, and culture, and perspective on issues and topics of Japanese as well as universal concern. The opinions and views expressed in the essays and new title summaries are not necessarily those of the Japan Foundation or the advisory board.

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From the Editor

In the 1990s, Japan faces two major tasks: to clarify its role in international society and cultivate an international perspective among its people. World events since 1990 have shown that economic power alone cannot earn respect in international society, and Japanese have been made keenly aware that although their industrial products are well known throughout the world the human faces behind them are largely unseen. New endeavors in both the public and private sectors in Japan are taking up the challenges of better communication across cultures, of sharing experience, of lifting barriers of all kinds.

In this inaugural issue we focus on the imbalance in the flow of information between Japan and the rest of the world. With a tremendous amount coming in and only a bare trickle going out of Japan, stereotypes abroad are hard to combat and misunderstanding is unavoidable. One of the biggest barriers is linguistic: the great differences between Japanese and other languages present special difficulties for translation and especially for publishing Japanese works overseas, and the history of translation from Japanese into other languages is still very short. Another stumbling block is cultural taste. To what extent will reading matter popular in Japan have interest for readers elsewhere? Can Japanese books offer something fresh in terms of subject matter? Aesthetic appeal? Perspective on human or world affairs?

Testing the waters as we set out to try to answer these questions are 24 recent titles representing a wide range of topics that have been very successful among Japanese readers, including non-fiction works on business, history, the media, culture, society, and personalities as well as a sampling of fiction by contemporary writers.

Additional articles introduce topics of current interest in the world of Japanese publishing and comments by publishers of Japanese books abroad; miscellaneous content includes a list of currently best-selling titles and news of events in the publishing world. As we strive to make this bulletin a sustained source of reliable information on books in Japan, we welcome your comments and suggestions.

The Information Imbalance

Asao Shin'ichirō

The role of the printed word has not diminished today, despite the worldwide spread and advanced technology of television and other communications media. No less important than the newer media producing the flood of instant and ephemeral information that propels modern societies is the enduring profession of publishing. It sustains our endeavor to understand the complexities of history, humanity, and the world.

Every year, a vast number of foreign books are translated and published in Japan, while the number of Japanese works introduced abroad in foreign languages remains exceedingly small. The number of copyrights obtained by Japan abroad is said to be 20 to 30 times that obtained by other countries from Japan, and this figure barely hints at the immense imbalance in the quantity of information in printed form passing between Japan and the rest of the world.

Translation and publication of Japanese books for readers of other languages has not expanded mainly for two reasons. The first is economic. The market for translated publications—which tend to be of very specialized content—is limited, so that introduction of Japanese titles is difficult to carry out on a self-sustaining basis. Fees for translation are low and highly qualified translators are hard to find. The Japan Foundation has sought to ameliorate the situation through its programs for publishing and translation assistance, although this support has been by no means adequate.

The second reason for the imbalance is the paucity of information about what is being written and published in Japan. Very few people in publishing houses overseas can read Japanese, preventing them from knowing what kind of books are coming out in Japan and whether they include content of interest to an international audience. By making available in English the latest information on book publishing in Japan on a regular basis, it is hoped that *Japanese Book News* can help to remedy the shortage of data, and in the long run promote translation and publication of works written by Japanese as well as better inform publishers abroad about trends and topics among readers in this country. The titles chosen are not confined to works of academic appeal for Japan specialists but represent a wide spectrum of general-interest publications currently read by university students and informed people in Japan.

For the selection of titles presented in each issue and editorial guidance we are fortunate for the cooperation of an advisory board made up of individuals with broad knowledge of the worlds of writing and publishing in Japan. We hope, through these pages, it is possible to open up the diverse and prolific world of Japanese books to interested readers, thereby strengthening the fabric of mutual understanding and contributing to the enrichment of international publishing as a whole.

(Asao Shin'ichirō is president of the Japan Foundation.)

Books for the World

Kida Jun'ichirō

Each year more than 40,000 books are published in Japan. Notable titles are invariably introduced in the book review sections of newspapers and magazines and especially outstanding works may be recipients of the more than 300 awards and prizes sponsored by literary societies, publishing houses, or other organizations. While Japan is among the countries where publishing is flourishing most in the world, only the barest glimmer of this literary ferment is felt or shared abroad. Presumably, people of other countries have little idea what kind of books Japanese are reading and what sort of issues are being addressed in our society through the printed word. Among the flood of books that appear each year, there are those that reach beyond issues of domestic concern, treating universal themes and holding potential for interest outside Japan. Many deserve to be translated and made accessible to readers of other languages. We can only feel regret about the linguistic barriers that prevent these works from entering the international arena of publishing.

A large number of Japanese books have been published in translation, it is true, although so far somewhat skewed in favor of literature. What we need to do is to find a way to broaden appreciation overseas of the kind of books Japanese value, and to introduce works whose message extends beyond the specific concerns of Japanese or that present information we feel ought to be transmitted overseas. This quarterly bulletin was conceived to achieve these aims by listing a selection of titles suggested by advisory board members from among recent publications. Each is accompanied by a brief synopsis, and it is our hope that the comments therein will effectively reflect the perspective and insight of Japanese writers.

The criteria for selection naturally include quality of research and originality in treatment of themes, but perhaps most importantly, the potential interest of a book for non-Japanese readers. We have placed greater emphasis on subject-matter of international appeal than on content that is peculiarly Japanese. Until very recently, thanks to a huge and relatively affluent national readership, editors and publishers in Japan have not considered foreign readers as a factor in the publishing process. If publication of this bulletin can open up the possibility for books to reach beyond that small world, it may provide a healthy catalyst for change. Even this measure of exposure to the international publishing world may stimulate writers to treat their subjects with greater depth, sophistication, and diversity of perspective. We believe this is the only way Japanese publishing can become truly international in scope as well as contribute to the needs of readers in other countries. (Kida Jun'ichirō is a media critic and member of the advisory board of Japanese Book News.)

Recent Trends in Publishing

Ueda Yasuo

The number of new books being published in Japan has been increasing steadily since 1987, when 37,010 titles were published. In 1988, the figure rose to 38,297 and in 1989 to 39,698; it passed the 40,000 mark in 1990, and according to the 1992 edition of *Shuppan nenkan* [Publishers Yearbook] (Shuppan News Sha), a total of 42,345 new titles came out in Japan in 1991, an increase by 1,769 over the previous year.

One of the most pronounced trends in non-fiction publishing in 1991-92 is the proliferation of books on psychology games. A book based on a popular Nippon Television (NTV) program *Soreike × kokoroji* [Let's Try Psychology] (Seishun Shuppansha) was among many that have become best-sellers. These books sell well partly because they are a hot topic of conversation and partly because, like horoscopes, they show how anyone can practice self-analysis or learn to be a better judge of character, both of which are currently the focus of great interest among young people.

The latest wave of new religions in Japan is led by Kōfuku no Kagaku ("Science of Happiness") and Ōmu Shinrikyō ("Om Faith of Truth"). A large number of books, particularly authored by Kōfuku no Kagaku founder Ōkawa Ryūhō, dominate bookstore shelves. The appeal of these new groups and the publications they produce may be interpreted as a reflection of people's search for spiritual guidance in a time of material affluence and in a society where individuals are often isolated and experience a feeling of alienation.

A related trend is the increase in titles on Japanese history. Among them is *Nihon zenshi: Japan kuronikku* [Japanese Complete History: Chronicle of Japan] (Kōdansha), a single-volume illustrated history compiled in the form of a chronology which sold more than 200,000 copies. Multi-volume works on Japanese history have also been well received. In this post-industrial age of affluence, the interest in history appears to reflect the *fin de siècle* mood marked by the search for individual and national identity in a rapidly changing world.

Since 1991 marked the fiftieth year of Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor, a spate of World War II-related titles appeared, along with numerous works on the Persian Gulf war which also broke out that year. Books on the sixteenth-century astrologer Nostradamus, topical from a few years ago because of his prediction centuries ago that the world would come to end in 1999 and for forecasting that a major war would break out in the Middle East, as it did in 1991, also became best sellers.

Much ado has been made over the need for Japan—its institutions, culture, and values—to "internationalize," and in response to this consciousness, the publishing world has turned more attention to international affairs. The fact that Ōmae Ken'ichi's *Sekai no mikata kangakata* [How to Understand the World] (Kōdansha) became a best-seller testifies to this trend.

Economic conditions in Japan fluctuated drastically in 1991-92. The explosive economic boom fueled by stock and land speculation—known in Japan as the "bubble economy"—collapsed and recession has set in. A rash of books on financial scandals seeks to reveal where the economy went wrong. Titles like Koiso Akio's *Fuji ginkōin no kiroku* [Account of a Fuji Bank Employee] (Banseisha), an insider's story of the grueling work schedule and profits-first management of one of Japan's largest metropolitan banks, became best sellers. The business slump caused when the "bubble" burst is critically analyzed as a totally new type of recession in *Fukugō fukyō* [Compound Recession] (Chūō Kōron Sha) by Miyazaki Giichi. This book, published in 1992, has sold over 200,000 copies and is widely read even among white-collar workers and junior executives.

As if in reaction to the speculation and money games that preceded the recession, books about successful industrialists have been popular. An example is a biography about the recently deceased founder of the Honda Motor Company, *Waga tomo Honda Sōichirō* [My Friend Honda Sōichirō] (Goma Shobō) by Sony Corporation's honorary chairman Ibuka Masaru. No doubt Honda's perfectionist pursuit of technology and international outlook offers fresh inspiration to readers disenchanted with recent tendencies in Japanese business.

In the genre of fiction, there have not been any really big sellers in the past one or two years. Winners of literary prizes have not attracted much attention, either, although Ogawa Yōko's *Ninshin karendā* [Diary of a Pregnancy] (Bungei Shunjū), winner of the 104th Akutagawa Prize, sold well among young women. The 1991 Naoki Prize-winning novels were also mildly successful. One was an autobiographical novel by Ashihara Sunao called *Seishun dendeke dekedede* [Youth, Chang-a-Chang-Chang] (Kawade Shobō Shinsha) about high school students who form a rock group in the late 1960s.

Well-received works by veteran writers include Chin Shunshin's *Shokatsu Kōmei* [Zhu-ge Liang (prime minister of the Shu dynasty of 3rd-century China)] (Chūō Kōron Sha) and Yamazaki Toyoko's 3-volume novel *Daichi no ko* [Child of the Earth] depicting the tumultuous years of China's Cultural Revolution and the struggle of a Japanese orphan abandoned in the wake of the retreat of the Kwangtung Army in northeast China at the end of World War II (Bungei Shunjū).

In entertainment reading, period fiction and historical novels have drawn considerable attention, including a story about 16th-century general Oda Nobunaga, *Kessen no toki* [Day of the Decisive Battle] (Kōdansha) by Endō Shūsaku, known overseas for his novel about Christianity in medieval Japan, *Silence* (trans. 1969). Mysteries are big sellers, like the series featuring private detective Asami Mitsuhiro by writer Uchida Yasuo, which sold over 200,000 copies, and the works of best-selling writer Nishimura Kyōtarō, whose specialty is homicide cases solved using railway timetables. Mysteries are so popular that they account for the majority of the top best-selling 20 fiction titles. More than 500 new titles are published each year and an additional 300 titles are translated from other languages; counting titles in print, well over 1,000 titles are published annually. In

addition to ordinary detective stories, there are many hard-boiled mysteries and adventure stories.

Photo and essay collections have sold very well. One notable essay collection is *Kono kuni no katachi* [Forms of This Country] (Bungei Shunjū) by the popular historical novelist Shiba Ryōtarō. Wit and light essays written by popular television personalities are also big sellers, among them *Dakara watashi wa kira wareru* [That's Why People Hate Me] (Shinchōsha) by comedian Beat Takeshi, *Momo no kanzume* [Canned Peaches] (Shūeisha) by Sakura Momoko, author of the million-selling comic series *Chibi Maruko-chan*, and *Mukatsuku ze* [What Makes Me Sick Is...] (Magazine House) by actress Muroi Shigeru.

Among photo collections, photographer Shinoyama

Kishin's *Water Fruit* and *Santa Fe* (both published by Asahi Shuppan Sha) drew widespread attention in the media partly because the models (Higuchi Kanako and Miyazawa Rie, respectively) are well-known actresses and partly because the timing coincided with debate over the controversial issue of whether pubic hair should be shown. Aside from nude photo collections, many unique photo collections have been published, which especially are popular among young women. This is a relatively unexploited genre of publishing in Japan with considerable growth potential. (Ueda Yasuo is professor at Sophia University, Tokyo)

Best Sellers

General

1. *Sore ike × kokorōjii* [Let's Try Psychology], 2 vols., edited by Sore Ike! Kokorōjii. (Seishun Shuppansha, ¥1,100 each)
2. *Waga tomo Honda Sōichirō* [My Friend Honda Sōichirō], by Ibuka Masaru. (Goma Shobō, ¥1,100)
3. *Majikaru zunō pawā I* [Magical Brain Power, I], edited by Nippon Television. (Nippon Television Network Corporation, ¥780)
4. *Mayonaka wa betsu no kao* (2 vols., translation by Tenma Ryūkō, et al. of Sidney Sheldon's *The Other Side of Midnight*) (Academy Shuppan, ¥650, ¥750)
5. *Seikimatsu kuizu* [Fin de Siècle Quiz Games], 3 vols., edited by Waratte Iitomo. (Published by the Fuji Television Shuppan, and sold by Fusōsha, ¥700 each)
6. *Urutoraman kenkyū josetsu* [An Introduction to the Study of Ultraman], by Super String and Sāfuraidā 21. (Chūkei Shuppan, ¥1,400)
7. *Romanshingu saga* [Romancing Saga], 3 vols., edited by Kyarameru Mama. (NTT Shuppan, ¥750, ¥700, ¥750.)
8. *VOW MEGA-MIX!!?*, edited by the Editorial Staff of *Takarajima* Magazine. (JICC Shuppankyoku, ¥900)
9. *Shittete shiranai karada jōshiki* [Basic Knowledge about the Human Body], by Matsubara Eita. (Seishun Shuppansha, ¥760)
10. *Yappari watashi wa kirawareru* [People Hate Me After All], by Beat Takeshi. (Shinchōsha, ¥1,000)
11. *Sōryūden* [Legend of the Birth of the Dragon], vol. 8, by Tanaka Yoshiki. (Kōdansha, ¥740)
12. *Kono kuni no katachi* [Forms of This Country], vol. 3, by Shiba Ryōtarō. (Bungei Shunjū, ¥1,000)
13. *Amerika o hōmutta otoko* (translation by Ochiai Nobuhiko of Sam & Chuck Giancana's *W Cross*) (Kōbunsha, ¥1,800)
14. *Machigai darake no kuruma erabi '92 nen-ban* [Mistakes You Can Make in Choosing A Car, 1992], by Tokudaiji Arisune. (Sōshisha, ¥1,300)
15. *Taikei-betsu kantan ryōri de oishiku yaseru* [How to Lose Weight through Easy Cooking, by Type of Physique], by Tobiishi Nagisa. (Asahi Shuppansha, ¥980)

Business, Hardcover

1. *Gekidō no sekai seikimatsu eno hasshin* [Our Turbulent World: Toward the End of the Century], by Ochiai Nobuhiko. (Shūeisha, ¥1,200)
2. *Hamidashi ginkō man no kinban nikki* [Work Diary of a Misfit Bank Employee], by Yokota Hamao. (OS Shuppan, ¥1,200)

3. *Wotchi za wārudo* [Watch the World], by Ochiai Nobuhiko. (Shūeisha, ¥1,200)
4. *1992 Hasegawa Keitarō no sekai wa kō kawaru* [Hasegawa Keitarō Tells How the World Will Change, 1992], by Hasegawa Keitarō. (Tokuma Shoten, ¥1,500)
5. *Rekishi no owari* (2 vols., translation by Watanabe Shōichi of Francis Fukuyama's *The End of History and the Last Man*) (Mikasa Shobō, ¥2,000 each)
6. *Te ni toru yō ni keizai no koto ga wakaruru hon* [A Handbook for Economics Made Easy], edited by the Kanki Shuppan Editorial Staff. (Kanki Shuppan, ¥1,300)
7. *Chiteki seisansei kōjō shisutemu DIPS* [The DIPS System for Improving Intellectual Productivity], by Kobayashi Tadatsugu. (Daiamond Sha, ¥1,500)
8. *Kaze to honoo to* [Gales and Blazes], by Sakaiya Taichi. (Published by Sankei Shimbunsha, and sold by Fusōsha, ¥1,400)
9. *Kokusai zunō o motte iru ka* [Do You Have an International Mind?], by Hasegawa Keitarō. (Seishun Shuppansha, ¥1,400)
10. *Ginkōman no tsumatachi wa ima* [What the Wives of Bank Employees Are Today], by Yokota Hamao. (OS Shuppan, ¥1,200)

Hardcover Fiction

1. *Anata dake mie nai* [I Can See Everyone But You], 2 vols., by Yoshimoto Masahiro. (Wani Books, ¥1,200 each)
2. *Hana no shigashū, hayasa no chigau tokei* [Collected Flower Poems and Pictures: Clocks Running at Different Speeds], by Hoshino Tomihiro. (Kaiseisha, ¥1,400)
3. *Ibisa* [Ibisa Island], by Murakami Ryū. (Kadokawa Shoten, ¥1,300)
4. *Akai kioku* [Scarlet Memory], by Takahashi Katsuhiko. (Bungei Shunjū, ¥1,300)
5. *Nagasaki Oranda mura* [The Dutch Village in Nagasaki], by Murakami Ryū. (Kōdansha, ¥1,200)
6. *Haha* [Mother], by Miura Ayako. (Kadokawa Shoten, ¥1,100)
7. *Ōkami bugyō* [The Wolf Town Commissioner], by Takahashi Yoshio. (Bungei Shunjū, ¥1,100.)
8. *24 • 7*, by Yamada Eimi. (Kadokawa Shoten, ¥1,200.)
9. *Abatōn* [The Sanctuary], by Matsumura Eiko. (Fukutake Shoten, ¥1,000)
10. *Kita no kuni kara '92 sudachi* [From a Northern Land: Leaving the Nest], by Kuramoto Sō. (Rironsha, ¥1,500)

(Based on wholesale book distributor Tohan Corporation lists, January-June 1992)

Publishing in Translation

Fujino Yukio

Books about Japan began to appear in other countries from the time of the Meiji period (1868-1912), but it was not until after World War II that Japanese studies became an academic focus within the formal structures of research and education, beginning mainly at colleges and universities in the United States and Great Britain. Translation of Japanese books gained momentum as substantive research progressed, and in the latter half of the 1950s translations of Japanese novels (by Mishima Yukio, Kawabata Yasunari, and Tanizaki Jun'ichirō) were published in the United States. From the 1960s the number of Japanese studying abroad and obtaining degrees at American universities increased.

As the ranks of researchers in both countries grew and the quality of their work rose, the scope of study expanded from language, linguistics, and literature to history and the social sciences. The publication of research works as well as translations of works by Japanese authors has produced a growing body of literature on Japan. An early landmark publication was the five-volume series based on papers written by Japanese and American researchers for the Conference on Modern Japan which was put out by Princeton University Press.

In the 1970s, titles by psychologist Minami Hiroshi and cultural anthropologist Nakane Chie, among others, were translated and published in English, and the University of Tokyo Press joined the American university presses in introducing scholarly works by Japanese into the field of Japanology. Kodansha International, Weatherhill, and other publishers of English works in Japan also began to bring out English translations of Japanese works in the 1970s. Translation of literature continued to progress. Almost all the leading works of Meiji period novelist Natsume Sōseki, for example, became available in English in the late 1960s and 1970s, and the number of authors translated into foreign languages expanded steadily to include postwar writers. The body of classical literature available in translation, from the *Man'yōshū* (oldest extant collection of *waka* poems composed in the 5th-8th centuries) to the stories of Ihara Saikaku (1642-93), gradually grew. In fields such as economics and law, there was a fair amount of original research by non-Japanese specialists but few books by Japanese authors were translated into other languages. In the area of culture and society, by contrast, a wide range of scholarly writing was introduced overseas in book and journal article form, from the writings of folklorist Yanagita Kunio to essays by scholar of comparative culture Kuwabara Takeo starting in the 1970s.

In Germany and France the number of Japan specialists began to grow in the 1970s. German interest developed especially in the field of Japanese intellectual history, and French interest focused on modern literature. A project aimed at introducing the latter genre in

French by University of Paris scholars in collaboration with Japanese specialists begun in the 1980s opened up a new era in translation publishing.

In Russia, many young Japan specialists were trained in the Center for Japanese Research in the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Academy of Sciences, but their research progressed virtually in isolation until contact with Japanese researchers was established in the early 1980s. The works they translated were confined to proletarian literature and the writings of leftist social scientists. After that, research began to diversify and the number of translations and works in the field of history increased. In the Ukraine, too, study of Japan has been vigorous, especially among specialists in modern literature. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, publishing activities are very hard pressed, and outside assistance is needed.

In northern and eastern Europe as well, Japan studies specialists have become active since the 1980s, and publication of translated works especially in the field of literature has begun. There has also been a boom in Finnish translation of Japanese literature recently.

In South Korea, translation of Japanese works was banned during the Syngman Rhee administration (1948-60), but burgeoned in the 1960s, resulting in more than 200 publications annually for a while, but the number was partly inflated because South Korea was then not a member of the international copyright conventions. In literature, most of the titles translated were popular novels or mysteries. A wide range of Japanese works in other fields were also translated and published, but recently the wave has tended to subside.

In China, with which Japan normalized diplomatic relations in 1972, translation of Japanese publications ranging from fiction to the nonfiction writings of businessmen, began in the latter half of the 1970s. The relative abundance of translations of Japanese works in South Korea and China can be attributed to the presence of many Japanese translators as well as considerable demand among readers for general-interest books.

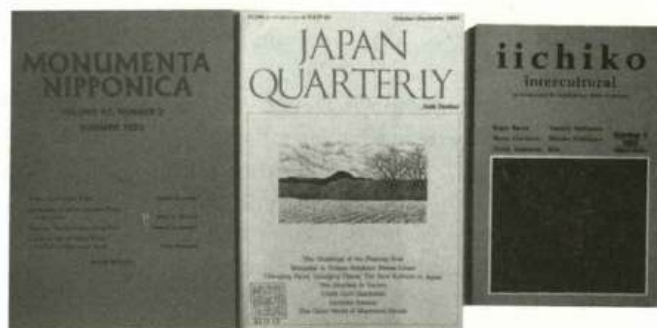
Overall, one of the most readily perceivable trends in recent overseas publishing of Japanese works is the much broader range of languages into which they are translated. While some have been rendered from a third language, many books by Japanese are now available in Greek, Turkish and many other languages. The titles thus introduced abroad represent numerous fields. Translation of Japanese writing used to lean heavily toward literature, but the focus today is turning toward works on contemporary themes, especially on Japan as an industrialized society and the culture and human relationships of that society. Works in literature too are more diverse, now including original children's stories and mystery writing. Translation of nonfiction, too, extends to historical accounts of the postwar period, autobiographies by novelists, and other authoritative or long-established works. Even current works are being translated and published. These trends are clearly reflected in grant applications submitted to Japanese foundations by publishers overseas for translation and publication of Japanese books.

In Japan, the University of Tokyo Press and Kodan-

sha International publish good-quality English translations, but their print runs are small, meaning that the price per copy is relatively high and circulation limited. One journal devoted to translation and publication in English of scholarly essays in the social sciences and humanities and research papers, *The Japan Interpreter*, ceased publication in 1980. Only a few similar periodicals remain: *Monumenta Nipponica*, published by Sophia University, specializes in scholarly articles on history and culture, and the Asahi Shimbunsha's *Japan Quarterly* is made up mainly of journalistic reports on contemporary affairs and culture. Sources for funding of academic journals have largely run dry. Flourishing in their place are a handful of information-oriented periodicals backed by Japanese institutes or corporations, such as *Ichiko International* and *PHP Intersect*.

Other leading genres representing contemporary Japanese culture include cartoons (*manga*, from short humorous sketches to long or serial narrative works) have been exported in large numbers in recent years. These

works originate outside the printed media, however, so save for those published in book or magazine form, information is difficult to obtain. It may be desirable to study optimal ways for preserving the entire spectrum of information media including visual materials (video and films) as databases. (*Fujino Yukio is Professor at the University of Library and Information Science.*)



Further information about the titles in the New Titles section starting on page 8 may be obtained by contacting the following publishers and agencies.

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Bungei Shunjū, Ltd.
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Tel: (03) 3265-1211 Fax: (03) 3264-4810

Chōbun-sha
Seiwa Bldg., 3-31-1 Hongo, Bunkyo-ku, Tokyo 113
Tel: (03) 3814-5072 Fax: (03) 3814-7159

Chūō Kōron Sha, Inc.
2-8-7 Kyobashi, Chuo-ku, Tokyo 104
Tel: (03) 3563-1261 Fax: (03) 3561-5920

Gakusei-sha
3-27-14 Shikahama, Adachi-ku, Tokyo 123
Tel: (03) 3857-3035 Fax: (03) 3857-3037

Goma Shobō
2-27-6 Hongo, Bunkyo-ku, Tokyo 113
Tel: (03) 5689-0510 Fax: (03) 5689-0570

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Japanese Books Abroad: France

Philippe Picquier

Over the last few years, a change seems to have taken place in French publications of Japanese literature—a change which can only be attributed to its readers. As they embraced the world of foreign literature, readers gradually encouraged publishers to take on exceedingly difficult translations with a bit more punch. “Small-time” publishing houses quickly took root in a field abandoned by major publishing companies that reluctantly, and at arm’s length, maintained prestigious but highly unprofitable collections. Publishing houses such as Rivages or Actes Sud were thus groundbreaking; for the past decade, gaining both readership and celebrity in the whirlwind of literary tastes and trends, they succeeded in bringing authors from countries throughout the world to the forefront.

Seven years ago, Philippe Picquier publishers took on the task of conquering this readership. Despite the pioneering efforts of Presses Orientalistes de France and the Gallimard “Connaissance de l’Orient” collection, Japanese literature remained remote and tucked away on dusty library shelves, until it encountered its first popular success through the Kawabata-Tanizaki-Mishima phenomenon. Prior to this event, Japanese literature was considered the privileged domain of researchers and specialists—or at best elicited the somewhat bemused curiosity of the fans of exoticism. Publishers long fed into this misunderstanding by catering to the public’s taste for geisha and cherry blossoms. That sort of negative assessment is what led me to the idea of creating a publishing house that would offer some alternatives. At the time, I was working in publishing and was frequently meeting with Orientalist scholars, for whom Japanese authors had the same clearcut significance as the most well-known English, German, or Italian authors. It was contemporary Japan that interested me the most—which meant that some interesting surprises were in store for readers.

First of all, however, we had to provide readers with a context and reshape their tastes. We therefore incorporated the enthusiastic and informative advice of a new generation of French Japan specialists (who also turned out to be top-notch translators) to form the “Kirin” research group at the University of Paris-Jussieu. We quickly produced a three-volume anthology of Japanese writing in translation which constituted a coherent, thorough and representative compilation of the best of Japanese literature since 1910. However obvious it may seem, this was an affirmation of Japanese literature’s history and universal impact. Title by title, author by author, our catalog increased in size and diversity, until we were able to slip in even the reputedly more difficult authors. In spite of the ambitiousness of our desire to consistently heighten the reader’s curiosity, the readership surprisingly followed our course. Our next step was to introduce, defend and promote authors who were

particularly important to us, and to convince them to come to France to launch their books. For authors such as Nosaka Akiyuki and Inoue Yasushi, this meant gaining recognition. Whether “pure” (as they say in Japan) or popular literature, the creation of new collections such as the Japanese detective novel series brought forth yet more new readers, which leads us to believe that today we can hope to open France to Japanese literature in its most diverse and varied forms.

We now publish Natsume Sōseki and Matsumoto Seichō, Edogawa Rampo and Miyamoto Teru, Kaikō Takeshi and Nagai Kafū, Inoue Yasushi and Furui Yoshikichi, Ōoka Shōhei and Nosaka Akiyuki, and Yokomizo Seishi and Ishikawa Jun together in the same catalog. Recently we published authors not yet known in France, such as Mizukami Tsutomu and Yamada Eimi.

Part of what supports this catalog are the advisors, friends, and especially the remarkable translators who share this passion, and whose prodigious advice, reading, comments and suggestions help me to decide. After all, nothing is more difficult—and at times more risky—than importing books and authors from a country that is also a giant producer of literature and best-sellers.

But one has to make discoveries and above all share and persuade. That’s still the role of a publisher. What thrills me is the process of transformation, that essential *savoir-faire* that starts with the search for a text and ends with the “staging” of a book. Finally, being a “small-time” publisher is also knowing how to establish a solid reputation through a catalog, to make it profitable while others “resist” such endeavors, just as any company would when faced with the current economic and strategic constraints of industrial production. (*The author is president of Editions Philippe Picquier, Paris, France.*)



Totto-chan in Thailand

Bhusdee Navavichit

The Thai translation of Kuroyanagi Tetsuko's *Totto-chan: The Little Girl at the Window* was published in 1984. I had encountered this remarkable little book years earlier in its English edition in a Japanese bookstore in Bangkok. I mentioned to a Japanese member of the staff of the Japan Foundation-sponsored Asian Traditional Performing Arts program that I wanted to translate the book, and he advised me to work from the original Japanese rather than from the English and later sent me a copy of the original from Japan. I obtained an introduction to Kuroyanagi and received her permission for translation and publication in Thai. She kindly explained to me many details of the book.

The translation was serialized starting in September 1984 in the women's magazine *Carat*, and appeared in book form in December. I was surprised at the many letters I received from readers, and the one that moved me most said "Thank you for translating this wonderful book!" It was from a university student.

Indeed, *Totto-chan* became vastly popular. One of my friend's children declared she wanted to go to Totto-chan's Tomoe Gakuen, and spent most of her first day at school playing in the playground (perhaps dreaming that it was Tomoe Gakuen, which she had learned to love while listening to her mother read *Totto-chan* to her). That young lady is now a junior high school student and along with her regular school work, she is hard at work studying Japanese.

Totto-chan was turned into a play and performed at the high school affiliated with Chiangmai University with Queen Sirikit as guest of honor. The Thai edition has been made a reader in school language classes as well as in university-level psychology courses. The Thai edition of *Totto-chan* has been reprinted 10 times and sold more than 48,000 copies. The main sources of the book's appeal, I believe, lie in the story of a school where classes are held in renovated railway cars in a

flexible and enjoyable way and in the character of headmaster Kobayashi Sōsaku, the kind of teacher who thoroughly understands the psychology of children, as well as in the delightful illustrations by Iwasaki Chihiro. Some readers buy a new copy every time a reprint comes out, others give it to their friends. One popular singer told of receiving a copy from a fan. Among young people, *Totto-chan* has been a topic of conversation since it first came out nine years ago. It's not as if you feel a complete outsider if you haven't read the book, but it is true that a lot of people have read it. A famous Thai soccer player I met recently told me he is a fan of *Totto-chan* too.

Last year at a UNESCO-sponsored reading campaign seminar on reading held in Bangkok, a representative from Laos said that Kuroyanagi's book had been translated into Laotian from the Thai edition and was appearing in serial form in a literary journal. This prompted a donation-collection campaign led by Thai university faculty and illustrators to help publish books in Laos where publishing currently labors under great difficulties. They have visited Laos three times and held workshops on writing, illustration and editing for Laotian picturebooks. After a final workshop on publishing held in Bangkok 10 new Laotian picturebooks, including folktales, were completed. These are the very first picture books created by Laotians themselves in the history of Laos, where children up until now have had only French picture books to read. The manuscripts and illustrations created during the workshops include enough for another 20 titles; all that has to be done is to raise the money to produce and publish them.

When I translated *Totto-chan* into Thai, I never dreamed that so many people would read the book, yet when we see how long a seller it has been, we can see how strongly Thais are attracted to the ideal of free and creative education depicted in the story. It is truly gratifying to think that the Thai edition was read and enjoyed not only in Thailand but in neighboring countries. We can only thank Kuroyanagi Tetsuko for sharing with us a wonderful and inspiring story. (*The author is a professional interpreter and translator and editor for Carat.*)



New Titles

MEDIA

Nichi-Bei "kiki" to hōdō [Japan-U.S. "Crises" and the Media]. Suzuki Kenji. Iwanami Shoten, 1992. 182 × 128 mm. 246 pp. ¥2,100. ISBN 4-00-001693-8. With the collapse of the Cold War structure, the relationship between Japan and the United States is undergoing major changes, one dimension of which is the shift in bilateral frictions from the economic to the cultural sphere. With the deepening of interdependence, both anti-Japanese sentiment in the United States (the feeling after the disappearance of the Soviet threat that Japan posed the greatest threat to the United States) and the "aversion to America" (*ken-Bei*) in Japan have heightened. Through an analysis of the mechanisms of crisis, the author, who is editorial writer for the leading national daily *Mainichi Shimbun*, demonstrates how tensions are often inflated by the synergy of government/media interaction and popular reaction.

A genuinely critical situation may in fact exist, but Japanese perceptions are formed from a combination of 1) a manipulations of the mass media by politicians to exaggerate or "create" a crisis (such as was done to evoke "external pressure" at the time of the Persian Gulf War or the Japan-U.S. structural impediments initiative (SII) talks); 2) a crisis fanned by the mass media or jointly with the government (as in the case of the FSX affair, when both Japanese and U.S. mass media exaggerated disagreement over joint development of Japan's experimental support fighters); and 3) the people's own sense of crisis that gets out of control (a historical example is the wave of national paranoia that led to Japan's naval attack on Pearl Harbor).

To prevent such falsely perpetrated crises from escalating into real ones, Suzuki calls on the Japanese media to rise above passive journalism that is overly reliant on government-provided information, reproaching reporters and editorial staff alike for insufficient background research. The big-business mentality of media organizations in siding with the authorities is a problem of urgent concern resulting in sensationalization of issues, closed press clubs, and other obstacles to accurate and balanced reporting, he says.

Jikokuhyō no kuritōku [A Critique of Information Iconography]. Shiomi Sen'ichirō. Ochanomizu Shobō, 1992. 182 × 128 mm. 218 pp. ¥2,472. ISBN 4-275-01468-5.

The difference between Japanese and English racetrack newspapers, one cultural anthropologist has observed, is in the way information is organized in a limited amount of space. Those of Japan, with their neatly vertical columns—like so many "rabbit hutches"—packed with data on the horses, jockeys and so forth so succinctly expressed in the ideographic writing system, represent a distinctive iconography.

When the flood of information generated daily by society is organized, condensed, arranged, and squeezed into a fixed framework, the words and figures that make up the data do come to resemble icons, and Japan today, often described as awash in language phenomena, is even more remarkable for its flood of "information icons."

This book focuses on a genre of publishing that is mostly ignored: monthly published train schedule books, some of more than 1,000 pages, telephone books, 3-inches thick and in multiple volumes, published by Nippon Telephone and Telegraph (NTT) of more than 300 types (of which a total of 130 million copies are printed annually), the job information magazines of 700-odd pages printed daily and sold for a mere ¥100, and housing information bulletins. The author analyzes these "information icons," a unique product of modern Japan's consumer culture, in terms of forms of expression, media theory, and iconography.

The appeal of this book derives from its approach, combining historical perspective—viewing the groundwork laid for the Japanese media environment in the context of a continuity beginning with the Meiji education system through the postwar spread of television into every household in Japan—with an analysis of rhetoric indexing functions. There is also a clear analysis of Nintendo television games.

The book may be read as a discourse on Japanese society in which the iconizing of information has reached a high art.



Cover: Motoyama Yoshiharu

A critical study of the role of the media in the so-called crises in Japan-U.S. relations.



Cover: Satō Toshio

Jikokuhyō no kuritōku studies the iconography of timetables and the evolution of Japan's consumer culture.

HISTORY



Cover: Anno Mitsumasa

Kazoku no ki records the cruelty of war and its grip on the lives of individuals and families on both sides of the Pacific.



Cover: Shin Nihon Shuppansha Editorial Staff

A documented account of a group of Japanese castaways stranded in 18th century Russia and their desperate attempt to get home.

Kazoku no ki [The Family Tree].

Sawachi Hisae. Bungei Shunjū, 1992. 182 × 128 mm. 230 pp. ¥1,200. ISBN 4-16-346490-5.

Author Sawachi is known for her documentary works depicting the lives of ordinary people of the Shōwa era (1926–1989). The meticulous research and copious interviews upon which her writing is based and firm conviction that the error of war must never be repeated have won her a wide readership. Her reputation grew largely from the publication of two books on the decisive naval battle of the Pacific War at Midway, *Umi yo nemure* [Sleep, Ye Oceans!], which it took her twelve years to write and sold 220,000 copies in its paperback edition, and *Kiroku Middouē kaisen* [Record of the Battle of Midway]. Sawachi traced the lives of some of the 3,057 Japanese and 362 American victims, piecing together detailed accounts to demonstrate the cruelty of war and the demonic nature of the state.

Kazoku no ki is the latest of Sawachi's Midway series. It consists of two stories, "Seikan" (Returning Alive), depicting what happened to Japanese men who became prisoners of war, and "*Kazoku no ki*" (The Family Tree), focusing on an American family of Italian origin. The latter is the moving story of the father, who joins the United States navy and dies in the Battle of Midway; the son who dies in the Vietnam War, and of family members who survive them. One serves in the recent Persian Gulf War but returns alive. In this way the author seeks to link the Battle of Midway with the present.

The author's theme, that "history and politics are oblivious to the individual, while the individual bears the suffering they inflict," is vividly depicted in the saga of the woman, Marian. Her loss of her husband and the first-born son who follows in his footsteps epitomizes the meaning of war for Americans, says the author. That loss, she writes, is one Japanese mothers no longer have to face in Japan; and this is the precariously preserved fruit of the political choices made by postwar Japanese.

Kōdayū Oroshiya banashi [Russia as Seen by Kōdayū, an 18th-century Castaway]. Kurusu Yoshio. Shin Nihon Shuppansha, 1992. 182 × 128 mm. 206 pp. ¥1,500. ISBN 4-406-02067-5.

In 1782, the ship *Shinshō-maru*, with 17 Japanese led by trader Daikokuya Kōdayū, aboard, was carrying rice from Shiroko (an inlet at what is now Suzuka, Mie Prefecture) to Edo (now Tokyo), when it was caught in a storm near Suruga Bay. Its mast broken, it drifted over eight months to Amchitka Island, a Russian fur-trading post in the Aleutians. Some of the castaways died on board ship and on the island, and after a few years the survivors were taken to Kamchatka, and then to Irkutsk. In 1791 only five remained, and with the help of botanist Kiril Laxman, Kōdayū was granted an audience with Russian czarina Catherine II. He directly petitioned to be taken back to Japan, and the following year, he and two others were escorted to Japan's northern island of Hokkaido by Russia's first envoy to Japan, Adam Laxman (Kiril's son).

A readable and engrossing narrative, the book depicts the eight months of struggle for survival on the high seas before drifting to the Aleutians, the warm friendship offered by the Russian furriers on the island, the difficulties of mastering the Russian language, the journey across Siberia in the dead of winter, the death one after another of the original crew members, their intense homesickness, and the sentimental return to Japan.

The year 1992 marks the 200th anniversary of Adam Laxman's arrival in Hokkaido. Publication of this historical account of a castaway Japanese trader stranded in Russia, along with the release of a film, *Oroshiya-koku suimutan* [Castaways in Russia: Voyage of a Dream], also based on the story of Daikokuya Kōdayū, has done much to help bring Japan-Russia relations out of the musty tomes of history and into the consciousness of contemporary Japanese. It helps to broaden popular perspective on a relationship that has tended in recent years to be framed only in the context of return of the northern islands occupied by the Soviet Union after World War II.

Nihon ga tsukuru shinbunmei [The Emerging Civilization Japonica]. Irie Takanori. Kōdansha, 1992. 194 × 131 mm. 270 pp. ¥1,600. ISBN 4-06-206061-2. Existing literature on civilizations takes for granted that the world is spacious enough to accommodate anything and everything human society might create. Irie Takanori reverses the perspective: the world is very small, and getting smaller with the development of world-girdling transportation systems and communication networks. A literary critic and historian, Irie argues that in the coming space age, the framework for analysis of civilizations will shift from power based on military capability to control terrestrial territory to capacity for space management. His concern is not so much domination of space itself as management of world affairs on the planet and what Japan's role will be.

England on the eve of the age of European expansion turned to new frontiers over uncharted seas, and its crowning achievement was nineteenth century *Pax Britannica*. In the twentieth century, power shifted to the United States and *Pax Americana*. Today its power is weakening. Will the nation that succeeds the United States in leading the world be another sea power?

The author thinks not, since there is little frontier left any more whether on land or sea; interference with any part of the earth by any power can cause serious disturbances. The new world power should be one that knows how to govern in a frontierless world as we enter the space age. How can a country be a "good" power in such a small world? Irie offers as a model the Japan of the Tokugawa period (1603-1867) which exhibited successful management of a microcosm. Isolated from the rest of the world, it had no frontier. During the ensuing period of peace, the population increased and the economy grew. Technology that respected nature and promoted "recycling" of available resources was highly prized. The author calls for a renaissance of the best of the Tokugawa heritage. Japan should strive, he says, to become a peace-oriented world power capable of tackling global problems such as preservation of the earth's environment.

Bijin kontesuto hyakunenshi [A Hundred-Year History of Beauty Contests]. Inoue Shōichi. Shinchōsha, 1992. 182 × 128 mm. 226 pp. ¥1,200. ISBN 4-10-385001-9.

When and how did beauty contests begin? The author's investigations led him as far back as medieval festivals celebrating the Virgin Mary in Europe; in Japan they began to be held toward the end of the Meiji period (1868-1912) under American influence. The first competitions featured professional beauties, the geisha: based on their skills in dancing, singing, conversation, as well as their looks. Later non-professionals came to participate in beauty contests, starting in 1907 when the *Jiji shimpō* newspaper called for photographs of beautiful women from all over the country. At first what counted most was facial beauty, but gradually attractive physical proportions became the dominant consideration, and the concept of a beautiful woman was defined as one with a small head and long legs (i.e., the Western prototype of a 1:8 ratio of head to body). Today hundreds of beauty contests are held every year in Japan, perhaps thousands counting local or small-scale contests sponsored by companies.

The author (b. 1955) is assistant professor at the International Research Center for Japanese Studies specializing in the history of culture and architecture. A previously published work, *Bijinron* [A Study of Beautiful Women] (1991), presented his examination of the reasons attraction to female beauty is considered shameful among Japanese men and his conclusions that it was a product of the ethics that prevailed in modern Japan. The present work, based on a voluminous collection of newspaper and magazine articles on beauty contests held in Japan over the last century, demonstrates how contests procedures and format, the attitudes of those participating, the ways society views the contests and participants have changed over time. It also gives an incisive analysis of how the image of the beautiful woman has evolved over a tumultuous century of Japanese history, accompanied by ample photographs and illustrations.



Cover: Kurata Akinori

In a small book tackling a big topic, Irie examines past civilizations and ponders the nature of power in the space age.



Cover: Nakagawa Keiji

The history of beauty contests in modern Japan is a study in evolving social values and attitudes.



Cover: Nihon Editor School Shuppanbu

Amino's history emphasizes the heterogeneous, maritime aspects of Japanese society in the medieval period.



Cover: Shibunkaku Shuppan Editorial Staff

A historian's critical study of firearms in Japan from their introduction to the Meiji Restoration.

Umi to rettō no chūsei [Japan and the Sea in Medieval Times]. Amino Yoshihiko. Nihon Editor School Shuppanbu, 1992. 182 × 128 mm. 328 pp. ¥2,400. ISBN 4-88888-183-9.

An authority on the history of Japan's medieval period, the author is known for his criticism of orthodox scholarship that emphasizes Japanese insularity and exclusiveness. He refutes the belief pervading most historical research that the seas surrounding the Japanese archipelago acted to discourage and limit international contacts, arguing that the ocean served rather as a path connecting peoples and providing routes for vigorous exchange with the Chinese continent, the Korean peninsula, and other parts of Asia. There was even a Japanese voyage across the Pacific to reach Peru in South America in the early 17th century which was successful.

As for relations with China, Amino gives a lively account of the private-level exchange carried on through the many *tōjin*, or resident Chinese who lived in Japanese port towns, criticizing the tendency in historical research to examine only officially-sponsored exchange between the Japanese and Chinese governments. There is also mention of trade in the north between the Ainu in Hokkaido and the Okhotsk culture and in the south between the Ryukyu kingdom and China. It is also wrong, he says, to portray Japanese exclusively as a farming people, ignoring the fact that they were also a maritime people.

Amino (b. 1928) is professor of the Kanagawa University at the Institute for the Study of Japanese Folk Culture (Nihon Jōmin Bunka Kenkyūjo, founded by Shibusawa Keizō in 1925 and brought under the auspices of Kanagawa University in 1982). He has gathered historical material on fishing villages for many years, and published numerous books and essays on his findings. *Umi to rettō no chūsei* is a collection of lectures presenting his theory of the Japanese as a maritime people. It reexamines Japanese history and its people from the point of view of the sea, offering new insight on the social history of the Japanese archipelago.

Teppō—denrai to sono eikyō [Firearms: Their Introduction to and Impact on Japan]. Hora Tomio. Kyoto: Shibunkaku Shuppan, 1991. 182 × 128 mm. 520pp. ¥10,094. ISBN 4-7842-0657-4. The introduction of guns into Japan in the mid-sixteenth century (in 1543 by castaway Portuguese, it is generally believed) was an incident of such magnitude that it became a major watershed in Japanese history. It marked not only the first encounter with Western civilization for the archipelago, which had thus far only been influenced by East Asian civilization, but led to changes in traditional military tactics and strategies, castle-building techniques, and even the structure of society, thus contributing to the development of early modern Japan.

Many mysteries remain, however, regarding the introduction and spread of guns. Based on extensive scrutiny of past and recent research, historian Hora (born 1906 and taught at Waseda University 1944-77) illuminates exactly when and how guns were brought to Japan and why their use spread at a tremendous pace (in only half a century Japan was producing more firearms than any European country). He also argues that the first gun brought into Japan was probably Southeast Asian-made, and discusses the invention of firearms first in China, their transmission to the Islamic world, thence to Europe, then to Southeast Asia, and finally to Japan.

A work of careful scholarship, the book maintains a firmly critical perspective of Japan in the context of the world. Many new theories regarding firearms have been advanced, such as that it was the *wako* pirates who first brought guns to Japan; Hora examines each in turn and convincingly refutes them on the basis of his findings. The text is written with the general reader as well as the researcher in mind, with the scholarly discussion set off in smaller type and presented in an interesting debate style. Four basic references on the subject are appended at the end of the book, followed by a detailed index. Other works by Hora include *Tennō fushinsei no dentō* [The Tradition of Non-direct Imperial Rule] (Shinjusha, 1984).

PERSONALITIES

Waga tomo Honda Sōichirō [My Friend Honda Sōichirō]. Ibuka Masaru.

Goma Shobō, 1991. 190 × 112 mm. 216 pp. ¥1,100. ISBN 4-341-12005-0.

Honda Sōichirō, founder of Honda Motor Company, was well known for his untiring pursuit of new and better technologies. Reflecting on a 40-year friendship with Honda, honorary chairman of Sony Corporation Ibuka says they were amateurs when it came to both engineering and management and neither was much concerned with making money, but they shared big dreams when it came to inventions and the determination to realize them.

Many original and revolutionary innovations emerged under Honda, such as a high-velocity motorcycle engine far surpassing any previous model, and the CVCC self-cleaning, non-polluting car engine that revolutionized previous concepts of the automobile engine. He had little fondness for bookish learning and authority, declared that Honda Motors' "tradition" was in not having a tradition, and made "Start fresh every day" the company's motto. He told his employees that the important thing is to observe, listen, and above all try; "The worst thing you can do is do nothing for fear of making mistakes."

Honda Sōichirō enjoyed a wide range of hobbies including *nagauta* (lyrical songs accompanied on the shamisen), painting, and auto racing. On the subject of women, he used to say that only when men really understand women can they do good work. In his last dialogue with Ibuka, published for a magazine, Honda said, "Japan will grow even more competitive, but it is wrong to think everything will go fine as long as it manufactures good products. They have to incorporate the human element." He remained faithful to the principle of placing human beings first in the moral code of his management. Ibuka is founder and director of the Yōji Kaihatsu Kyōkai (Association for Childhood Development) and author of many books including *Yōchien de wa ososugiru* [By Kindergarten It's Too Late], and *Kosodate hahasodate* [Rearing Children, Rearing Mothers].

Ōshita Hiroshi: niji no shōgai [Rainbow Home Runs: The Life of Ōshita Hiroshi]. Henmi Jun. Shinchōsha, 1992.

182 × 128 mm. 406 pp. ¥1,600. ISBN 4-10-384601-1.

When Ōshita Hiroshi, sometimes called Japan's Babe Ruth, hit his first home run after professional baseball games resumed following World War II, the arc drawn by the ball seemed to Japanese like a rainbow. "It ignited a thrill of hope, glimpsed against the blue sky, among a people whose morale was weighted down by postwar deprivation and the occupation of their land by a foreign army."

This is a biography of the genius slugger whose career spanned the fourteen years beginning right after the end of the war when baseball rose from wartime inactivity and entered its first golden age. Born in 1922 in Kobe, Ōshita was known for his unpretentious, forthright, and independent character. The book is rich with outrageous episodes that match the chaotic, passionate tenor of the times as well as the eventful life of a national sports hero: the day he unabashedly pasted his autograph on a whorehouse wall, his dash into the baseball stadium with a gang of angry *yakuza* in hot pursuit, his grief at the loss of his beloved mother resulting from her addiction to heroin. To the Japanese masses scrambling to rebuild their country out of the devastation of war, Ōshita's home runs were symbols of hope.

The author is a folklorist known for her popular studies of history and manners based on meticulous fieldwork. This book too is based on extensive perusal of materials and accounts by persons who knew Ōshita. Baseball is a key element of postwar popular culture.

The workaholics who fueled Japan's rapid growth in the 1960s and early seventies (now in their fifties and sixties) were enthusiastic baseball fans. Watching games on TV or listening to broadcasts by radio helped ease the mental stresses and strains of their punishing work schedules. Work went better after reveling in the thrills of a good game.



Cover: Ōta Tetsuya

Remembrances of the late and great engineering genius Honda Sōichirō, by a friend and fellow industrialist of forty years.



Cover: Kusaka Jun'ichi

The life of Ōshita Hiroshi, Japan's Babe Ruth, animates the story of Japanese baseball in the days right after World War II.



Cover: Kusama Jun'ichi

Yoshida Isoya, one of the great pioneers of modern architecture, took up the challenge of giving new relevance to Japanese traditions.

Kenichikuka Yoshida Isoya [Architect Yoshida Isoya]. Sunagawa Yukio. Shōbunsha, 1991. 182 × 128 mm. 300 pp. ¥2,500. ISBN 4-7949-6034.

This book is a definitive biography of the architect who introduced elements of Japan's traditional *sukiya*-style of dwelling into modern architecture. In 1925, two years after graduation from what is now the Tokyo University of Fine Arts and Music, Yoshida Isoya (1894-1974) toured Europe, where he firsthand saw Renaissance and Gothic masterpieces. He became determined that Japanese should produce their own architecture comparable with the finest to be found in Europe. This challenge was Yoshida's point of departure as he sought to create a modern *sukiya* style.

He began by eliminating elements he considered obsolete in Japanese-style residential architecture, like the plethora of "horizontal lines" (transoms, lintel beams, staggered alcove shelves, etc.) to obtain a simple and neat design. His traditional-style houses with their fresh, modern flair were well received as "new *sukiya*" by a wealthy clientele made up mainly of politicians, patrons of culture, and industrialists, including Yoshida Shigeru (early-postwar prime minister), Iwanami Shigeo (founder of Iwanami Shoten Publishers), and Matsushita Kōnosuke (founder of electric giant National/Panasonic). He also built many innovative *sukiya*-style restaurants, and today his designs are typically adopted for sophisticated Japanese restaurants (*ryōtei*).

Yoshida also took up the challenge of applying the Japanese aesthetic to Western-style ferro-concrete structures. Numerous buildings he designed are monuments of early postwar architecture, including a theater for the classical performing arts, the Japan Art Academy Hall (1958) modelled after the Imperial Palace, the Gotō Art Museum with motifs from late-16th-century Momoyama-style architecture, a hotel with a banquet hall echoing the Heian-court (794-1192) style, and the Geihinkan (now the guest house used for foreign heads of state). His goal, he said on the occasion of receiving the Order of Cultural Merit in 1964, was to create "the kind of Japanese architecture foreigners will want to imitate."

Pianisuto to iu sanzoku ga iru [The Savage Tribe of Pianists]. Nakamura Hiroko. Bungei Shunjū, 1992. 182 × 128 mm. 278 pp. ¥1,400. ISBN4-16-346080-2. A graduate of the Juilliard School of Music in New York, Nakamura Hiroko is a leading Japanese pianist. This book is a collection of essays on the lives of pianists, Japanese and non-Japanese, present or past, which appeared as a series in the monthly magazine *Bungei shunjū* beginning in 1990. Nakamura's expose about the Tchaikovsky contest held every four years in Russia (for which she served as judge), *Chaikofusukii konsāto* [The Tchaikovsky Concert], won the 20th Ōya Sōichi Nonfiction Prize, and her virtuosity as an essayist is well established.

Nakamura calls pianists members of a *sanzoku*, or "savage tribe," for, as she says, a good pianist has to practice for hours each day from childhood, cultivating tremendous physical toughness. Once you reach adulthood, you go out to battle on the stage, where you must "fight" totally alone against the overwhelming numbers of the audience. The enormous time consumed in daily practice leaves a pianist far too little time to learn things that are common knowledge to ordinary people or how to cooperate with others. "Pianists are invariably eccentric and excessively serious."

Among the pianists introduced in this book are Horowitz, Rachmaninoff, Paderewski, as well as prewar Japanese pianist Kuno Hisa (1884-1925), who, though famed among Japanese as the country's best player of Beethoven, committed suicide in disappointment when she found that Europeans, accustomed to refined and elegant performances, would not accept her ferocious style.

Filled with the keen observations of a topflight professional pianist, this book is as engaging and energetic as are the author's performances on stage, offering enjoyable discourses on the nature of artistic genius, education, Japanese culture, and many other topics.



Cover: Fukuda Shōji

Essays on the nature of artistic genius, education, Japanese culture, and much more by a pianist who calls herself and her colleagues members of a "savage tribe."

BUSINESS

Fukugō fukyō [Compound Recession]. Miyazaki Yoshikazu. Chūō Kōron Sha, 1992. 173 × 109 mm. 262 pp. ¥820. ISBN 4-12-101078-7.

In 1991 Japan's economy slowed down and recession set in. What caused it and how is discussed in this best-selling book by a prominent economist. Through empirical analyses of factors behind the simultaneous emergence of casino capitalism in the major industrial countries starting in the mid-1980s, especially the mechanism of its rise, tensify, and collapse in Japan, the author concludes that the present slump is a "compound recession," brought about by the linkage of long-term adjustment of bad financial assets (stock) as a consequence of liberalization of the financial market, and resultant short-term inventory adjustments under minus-growth of the real GNP (flow).

To combat the dual recession—the classic "recession of flow" due to a shortage of effective demand combined with a "stock recession" resulting from a tight money situation—Miyazaki argues that it is vital not only to lower interest rates and expand effective demand by moving forward the public works spending schedule, but also adjust bad financial assets (e.g., setting up an American-type deposit insurance system for small depositors) and facilitate the merger of financial institutions aimed at early easing of monetary stringency.

The dynamics of economy has shifted from the national to the global, which revolves not so much around the production and trade of goods and services as around the international flow of capital. No one nation's central bank alone, says Miyazaki, can cope with these momentous structural changes through domestically oriented financial and monetary policies. The only feasible prescription available is the worldwide reinstitution of Keynesian policies based on the establishment of a powerful central world bank that can fully control the global flow of funds and freely manipulate B.I.S. regulations, as well as on the creation of a new, genuinely key currency.

Denshi rikkoku Nihon no jijoden [NHK Documentary of the Rise of Japan as an Electronics Giant]. Aida Hiroshi.

Nihon Hōsō Shuppan Kyōkai, 1991–92. 4 vols.: 182 × 128 mm., 350 pp., 362 pp., 406 pp., 410 pp.; ¥1,500 each. ISBN 4-14-80019-4.

A special TV program on how Japan emerged as one of the world's top electronics manufacturing countries was broadcast in six installments in 1991 by the public Japan Broadcasting Corporation (NHK) network. The program was acclaimed for its accurate explanations of difficult aspects of science and technology in layman's language. Program director Aida Hiroshi utilized the massive amount of literature, primary documents, artifacts, photographs and film as well as interviews and other material used to prepare the program to create this further work in book form.

The first of the four volumes traces the way Norwegian stone was transformed into the "magic" material that sustains today's semiconductor industry. It describes the development of the theory of the germanium-based transistor and recounts little-known episodes surrounding germanium refining in Japan after the defeat in World War II. The second volume chronicles how the silicon transistor first invented in the United States was developed into the integrated circuit, ushering in the electronics revolution which caught Japanese industry by surprise. The third volume recounts how Japan's stagnant semiconductor technology took a major step forward in the course of fierce competition among manufacturers when Japan became the first country to introduce America's integrated circuit (IC) technology for civilian use. The final volume demonstrates how the advent of the microprocessor promises limitless expansion in semiconductor application, and presents the case for the claim that Japan's semiconductor industry has now surpassed that of the United States. Yet the author warns that all the major breakthroughs in semiconductor technology, from principles to production methods, are the work of American scientists. Japanese have made few original contributions and should pursue scientific development combining their orientation to teamwork with individual creativity.



Compound Recession probes the causes and results of as well as solutions for the current business slump.



Cover: Takeuchi Kōichi

Aida Hiroshi's chronicle of Japan's rise as an electronics giant transfers the immediacy and realism of the original broadcast program to the printed page.



Cover: Kurata Akinori

A sympathetic study that defends the constructive role of Japanese ODA and suggests ways it can be used more efficiently.

Nihon no ODA wo dō suru ka [What To Do About Japanese ODA]. Watanabe Toshio and Kusano Atsushi. Nihon Hōsō Shuppan Kyōkai, 1991. 182 × 128 mm. 218 pp. ¥830. ISBN 4-14-001635-3. Japan's official development assistance (ODA) now exceeds \$10 billion annually, making it the largest in the world along with that of the United States. However, Japanese themselves do not know exactly how their taxes are being used abroad. Many critics censure Japanese ODA projects for sponsoring environmental destruction, for causing people to be evicted from their ancestral homes and other infringements on human rights, and condemn Japanese trading companies and manufacturers for exploiting those projects for their own profit.

Refuting these criticisms, professors Watanabe (Tokyo Institute of Technology) and Kusano (Keio University) contend that Japanese foreign aid has contributed to easing poverty and promoting economic growth in developing countries. They admit that problems exist, such as the lack of an adequate planning system and sufficient expertise needed to administer increasing amounts of ODA.

One of the factors that prevent Japanese assistance from being well understood is that yen loans make up a large proportion of Japan's ODA. Many critics think the desirable form of assistance in the true spirit of charity ought to be untied grants in aid. This book supports the preference of the Japanese government for assistance in the form of loans. The authors defend the policy by explaining that developing countries pursuing economic growth need funds in immense amounts and that the awareness that the money has to be repaid helps to foster self-reliance.

Large-scale development projects launched with yen loans can indeed lead to environmental destruction, the book points out, and more thoroughgoing feasibility studies than conducted in the past have to be conducted to prevent it. Improvement of Japan's ODA can be achieved through emphasis on technological cooperation, and the public should be better informed about what is being done with official assistance funds.

Ajia kōekiken to Nihon kōgyōka [The Asian Trading Sphere and Japanese Industrialization 1500-1900]. Edited by Hamashita Takeshi and Kawakatsu Heita. Riburopōto, 1991. 182 × 128 mm. 286 pp. ¥2,266. ISBN 4-8457-0635-0.

This is a compilation of the proceedings of a conference of Japanese economic historians designed to reexamine dominant interpretations of the process of Japan's industrialization. Japan's success in economic development thus far has been interpreted in the context of its effort to catch up with the West since the Meiji Restoration. The participants, mostly members of the postwar generation, portray the process as one of catching up not with the West but with China, and eventually overtaking its hegemony in the course of four centuries (1500 to 1900).

Japan moved from the periphery to the center of the East Asian economic sphere. At the beginning it was a backward state eager to incorporate the fruits of Chinese civilization into its institutions and culture. When the cost of paying for them in silver or copper became prohibitive, Japan gradually learned how to introduce technology directly from China, and succeeded in stopping the outflow of specie by imitation and by substituting all imports of cotton, silk, sugar, porcelain, etc. with indigenous products, attaining complete self-sufficiency by the end of the Tokugawa period (1603-1867).

The forced opening of ports in East Asia in the nineteenth century by the Western powers made it possible for East Asian countries to engage in "free trade" with the West, but also among themselves. This intra-Asian trade led to fierce regional competition, particularly between Japan and China, resulting in the new division of labor between them, with Japan emerging as the supplier of manufactured goods and China as their consumer.

The thesis of European expansion in Asia is also challenged. The evidence presented shows that it was Chinese traders who dominated the Asian seas, losing control only as late as in the 1890s, and then not to Western but to Japanese traders.



Cover: Katō Kōtarō

Essays by young scholars challenge accepted interpretations of Japan's process of industrialization, framing it in an Asia-oriented context.

SOCIETY

Byōin de shinu to iu koto [Death in the Hospital]. Yamazaki Akio. Shufu no Tomo Sha, 1990. 182 × 128mm. 223 pp. ¥1,300. ISBN 4-07-936836-4.

More and more people die in hospital, yet hospitals are not prepared for people who are dying. Gastroenterologist Yamazaki recounts the deaths of ten terminal cancer patients, illustrating the defects of medical practice in Japan today and proposing the kind of care he as a clinician believes is necessary for terminal patients.

The first half presents the stories of five patients who died painful and pitiful deaths in the grip of rigid prescriptive medical care. He describes how most doctors perceive their medical duties to be staving off death as long as possible, and how patients often suffer intense pain because, out of excessive fear of addiction, doctors are unwilling to give adequate morphine injections.

The other five patients described in the latter half of the book experienced a different approach to terminal patient care. Most of them died calmly, aware that there was no possibility of their recovery. For a terminal patient to be calm and approach death with a sense of fulfillment and acceptance requires the affection of people around him or her, mental strength on the part of the patient, and the understanding of the doctor, Yamazaki emphasizes.

Until a few years ago, Yamazaki himself had been faithful to the taboo long observed in Japan on apprising terminal cancer patients of their actual condition and had not questioned the long-standing practice in medical circles of dealing with such patients merely with life-prolonging treatments. Only after reading a copy of Elisabeth Kübler-Ross's "On Death and Dying," he happened to obtain during the voyage in the Antarctic Ocean as a ship's doctor did he become concerned about terminal patients' real needs.

Yamazaki worked in a municipal hospital in Chiba Prefecture until 1991 and is currently in charge of a hospice at the St. John's Sakuramachi Hospital in a suburb of Tokyo.

Mo no tojōnite [In the Midst of Mourning]. Noda Masaaki. Iwanami Shoten, 1992. 182 × 128 mm. 398 pp. ¥2,400. ISBN 4-00-002287-3.

The author is a psychiatrist who describes himself as a "specialist in grief." He has immersed himself for many years in the study of the pathologies and sufferings of patients who have experienced the sudden loss of loved ones—husbands, fathers, lovers—due to various kinds of accidents.

Mo no tojōnite is a record of interviews conducted over a seven-year period with relatives of the passengers killed in a plane crash that took place in the Osutakayama mountains (Gunma Pref.) on August 12, 1985. The JAL jumbo jet, fully loaded with 509 passengers, most of them traveling on business, and 15 crew members was on its way from Tokyo to Osaka when it crashed, killing a total of 520 persons. During the difficult process of gathering the remains of those killed in the remote mountains, an association of the bereaved was formed to negotiate with the airline company over responsibility and compensation. Author Noda followed the activities of association consistently and interviewed more than thirty of its members. His stance in dealing with the theme of death is that death is more an experience of the survivors than of the dead themselves.

Author Noda describes how each interviewee survives the experience of loss brought on by the sudden death of loved ones. He also analyzes in depth such background elements as the way Japan Airlines dealt with the accident and the kind of safety measures that were adopted, as well as the conflicts within the association of the bereaved, and the deficiencies the incident revealed in laws and government administration.

As a trans-psychiatrist, the author has been dealing with the pathologies involved in consumer bankruptcies resulting from overspending on credit cards and treated patients with techno-stress for some time. This is a rare book resulting from the happy marriage of an author's social concern and his professional interest in individual personalities. Recipient of the 1992 Kōdansha Nonfiction Prize.



Cover: Kamegai Shōji

A doctor's prescription for positive treatment of hospitalized terminal patients grapples with established practices and social taboos.



Cover: Kikuchi Kaoru

Mo no tojō nite portrays the family survivors of plane accident victims; their ways of dealing with loss offer profound insights into the universal experience of grief.

CULTURE



Cover: Yabuki Nobuhiko

Engaging essays on life in England and observations on British thinking and manners by a Japanese scholar.

Igirisu wa yukaida [How Wonderful To Be in England]. Hayashi Nozomu. Heibonsha, 1992. 182 × 128 mm. 250 pp. ¥1,800. ISBN 4-582-45211-6.

Among the many writings appearing recently on life and travel abroad, this is an eminently readable and enjoyable collection of essays on England by bibliographer and scholar of early modern Japanese literature Hayashi Nozomu (b. 1949). With sensitivity and subtle humor, the author shares with readers his experiences and encounters with interesting people in England while a researcher at Cambridge University. His observations are thought-provoking and his deep attachment to England heartwarming.

The story focuses on life at a manor house built in 1,120 A.D. in the village of Hemingford Grey where Hayashi accidentally found lodgings after a prolonged search and on his delightful relationship with Lucy M. Boston, the 91-year-old lady of the house with whom he lived for eight months. Their encounter was by happenstance, but she happened to be a renowned writer of children's books, well known in Japan for her books published here under the series title *Tales of Green Knowe*. She cultivated classical varieties of roses and was a skilled patchwork quilter. Boston has since passed away and the house has become a popular attraction for Japanese tourists.

Hayashi vividly and engagingly sketches scenes of the lady intent on her patchwork before the hearth on a winter's evening, her tea parties serving her favorite Chinese tea, and an intimate evening listening quietly to the "mysterious tones" of an antique clavichord.

The book is the second collection of Hayashi's essays on England, who has a charming way of striking up acquaintances during his travels and savoring the experiences they bring. The first book won the 39th Japan Essayists' Club prize for its humorous and eloquent accounts of the flavor of English dishes. His insights on the eating habits and other aspects of daily life in England are a fascinating voyage toward the wellsprings of British culture.

Afurika no hi [Africa's Fires].

Ishikawa Kaoru. Gakuseisha, 1992. 182 × 128 mm. 212 pp. ¥1,800. ISBN 4-311-60125-5.

A professional diplomat, Ishikawa Kaoru and his family had experienced postings only in European capitals before his assignment to the central African Republic of Zaire. Facing profound culture shock from the day of their arrival, they gradually learned to adjust to life in the city of Kinshasa, with its population of between 3 and 4 million, where the main means of public transportation consists of bent and dented buses, the roads are full of potholes, policemen pocket fines from traffic violators, people eat only one meal a day and drink sugar-loaded coffee to quench their hunger.

With a GNP equivalent to about 28 days' that of Japan, Zaire lacks funds for adequate medical care, welfare services, or education. Ishikawa believes the poverty stems from the fact that the market economy and the principle of competition do not function there. During a radio broadcast while in Zaire, he expressed his views frankly. Putting aside the rhetoric of diplomatic affairs, he said that while he understood their desire to develop the country on the model of European countries, the United States, and Japan, effective resource distribution would not function as long as the country remained firmly incorporated into the economic structure of the former suzerain, Belgium. He appealed to Zaireans to act with more shrewdness, stating that if they did not exercise more resourcefulness and ingenuity, their development effort would simply go in circles and not bring progress.

Ishikawa demonstrates a flexible and empathetic grasp of the realities faced in Africa. It is wrong, he says, to categorically attack the wide gap between the governing elite and ordinary people because in societies where a middle class is not established, a core elite can help maintain harmony among many rival tribal groups. The title derives from the scene of fires burning in the night across the African continent he observed on his flight into Zaire from Geneva.



Cover: Gakuseisha Editorial Staff

Ishikawa's account of his experience in Zaire offers a fresh perspective on life and development in Africa.

Tōkyō gurashi oboegaki. [Essays on Life in Tokyo]. Edagawa Kōichi. Haru Shobō, 1992. 182 × 128 mm. 190 pp. ¥1,700. ISBN 4-938133-37-7.

However foreign observers may disparage the crowded "rabbit-hutch"-like housing of Japan's big cities, the author is a staunch and loving defender of urban life. Born in the old commercial district of Mukōjima on the edge of Tokyo Bay, he has lived in different parts of the old section (*shitamachi*) of the capital for half a century and declares that he would never want to live anywhere else. He has watched the city change dramatically over the years. Each time he moved, he sought a home based on three criteria: convenience to central hubs of Tokyo; proximity to pleasant places to eat and drink, and ease in obtaining daily necessities close to home.

Tokyo is in the process of redeveloping as an "organic city" where the collective memory of community has been lost. In order for the city to grow independently, it has to be able to globalize without government constraints and yet it is firmly under the spell of the "Japanese city." At the same time it is being forcibly opened up to the outside by the influx of unskilled laborers from the Third World.

In the urban society of the past, the community or neighborhood was an extension of each home; today there is a growing separation between the two. Edagawa is not one to complain of the cramped housing conditions compared to Western cities, believing that the living environment incorporates "secondary" spaces in the surrounding neighborhood.

Edagawa does not bewail the passing of the "good old days," but eagerly anticipates seeing his beloved Tokyo change for the better. Just as the world is changing, so will Tokyo and the people living in it. Among the many books appearing about Tokyo this is an original discourse on the city from the point of view of a long-time *shitamachi* native. Originally published in twelve installments in the monthly opinion magazine *Seiron*. The author is a freelancer writing on the city and urban dwellers for the past ten years.

Zō no tabi [Journey of the Elephant]. Ishizaka Shōzō. Shinchōsha, 1992. 182 × 128 mm. 246 pp. ¥1,400. ISBN 4-10-385601-7.

Journalist Ishizaka draws on a wealth of historical documents and careful on-site research for this vivid account of the commotion that convulsed the domains along Japan's Tōkaidō highway during the time of Tokugawa Yoshimune (1684-1751) when an elephant was brought to Edo. The eighth shogun was a man of intense curiosity and one day expressed his desire to see an elephant. This animal had been brought into the country five times previously, but had not been seen in 150 years.

Since the shogun's whim was virtually law, it was not long before a ship carrying a pair of young elephants from Thailand arrived at Nagasaki, then Japan's only port open to the outside world. One of the elephants became ill and died soon after arrival, and the other had to be walked the 1,400 kilometers to Edo (now Tokyo) where the shogun resided. The expectations of the shogun had to be met at all costs, so the officials in charge of bringing the pachyderm cross-country knew that if anything happened to it during the 80-day journey, they would have to atone with their lives. The domains along the route would also have to take responsibility, so inordinate efforts were made to assure its rapid and expeditious passage.

The author describes the excitement that preceded and followed the elephant's 1729 journey with as much detail as if he had been part of the entourage himself. The account continues after arrival in Edo. Within two years, the elephant no longer interested the shogun and was bigger and harder to control, so the government sold it off to a showman, who put it on exhibition. When it ceased to be a money-making attraction, the elephant was simply abandoned in the cold, left without a single caretaker to starve to death. The author mourns the human capriciousness and cruelty that brings the tale to its tragic end.



Cover: Nakane Kōjun

Edagawa's odes to life in the changing inner city express an affection for the ethos and amenities of Tokyo belie the negative "rabbit-hutch" image.



Cover: Kamo Yoshihisa

The saga of a Thai elephant brought to Japan in the eighteenth century brings the people and society of the time vividly to life.

FICTION



Cover: Shinchōsha Design Staff

Kangarū nōto depicts the fantasies of a person who tries to resist the forces of modern society.

Kangarū nōto [Kangaroo Notebook]. Abe Kōbō. Shinchōsha, 1991. 182 × 128 mm. 202 pp. ¥1,500. ISBN 4-10-300809-1. Prize-winning writer takes up modern society's irresistible grip on the individual in his latest novel about a white-collar worker in a stationery manufacturer. Surrealistic adventures begin when the protagonist casually proposes the "kangaroo notebook" as an idea for a new product. Ordered to turn his idea into reality, he finds himself completely at a loss about how to proceed. Realizing something is wrong with his legs, he is alarmed to find radish sprouts growing out of the pores of his skin. They proliferate, covering his legs. He rushes to a hospital, and is laid on a bed. Then the bed begins moving about at its own free will, and the adventures of the "sprout-legged man" take him to such places as a children's purgatory where a group of ragged urchins of the "S.O.S. Club" sing in chorus their theme song: "Help, Help, Help! I beg you to please help!"

The book is filled with desolate and shriveled images, which the author says symbolize a state verging on but unable to attain death.

This is the first book Abe has produced since 1984. He is known for the surrealistic imagery of many of his works, beginning with the 1949 story *Dendro-kakariya* [Dendrocacalia] about a man who turns into a plant. Abe (b. 1924) lived in Manchuria for most of his youth and studied medicine in university, but became a member of the Kindai Bungaku literary coterie after graduation and chose a career in writing. In 1951 he received the Akutagawa Prize for *Kabe* — *S. Karuma shi no hanzai* [The Wall: Mr. S. Karma's Crime]. *Suna no onna* [The Woman in the Dunes] won the 1963 Yomiuri Literature Prize and acclaim both in Japan and overseas (it was translated into English in 1964 and made into a film the same year) as a landmark work in postwar avant garde literature. His works are widely read abroad, especially in the United States, France, Russia, and Germany, as well as Eastern European countries.

Keibetsu [Contempt]. Nakagami Kenji. Asahi Shimbunsha, 1992. 182 × 128 mm. 440 pp. ¥1,700. ISBN 4-02-256421-0.

The passions generated by love, contempt, and defiance depicted in this novel, originally serialized in the morning edition of the national daily *Asahi shimbun* from February to October 1991, reveal the complex dynamics of Japanese society and the struggle of heterodox elements against the powerful forces of conformity. An attractive topless dancer (Machiko) of Tokyo's Kabukichō lowbrow nightclub quarter and a handsome playboy (Kazu) become fugitives from the law after a St. Valentine's day tryst at the club. The two ultimately seek refuge in Kazu's hometown in the country, where his every movement incites envy and jealousy. Machiko, like many young urban women today, believes a man and woman in love with each other are equal, whether in happiness or despair. In the end, Kazu dies at a moment of personal fulfillment.

The author took advantage of the novel's publication in serial form to lavish it with portrayals of contemporary social manners and melodramatic treatment, making it absorbing reading. Novelist Ōe Kenzaburō praises the book's depiction "of people who seek to purify themselves through passionate resistance, and of the struggle between those who discriminate against outsiders and those who are discriminated against."

A member of the hippie generation of Japan, Nakagami was born in 1946 in Wakayama prefecture. He went to Tokyo after graduation from senior high school, and hung out in jazz coffee shops in Shinjuku, eking out a living as a laborer. He read Arthur Rimbaud and James Joyce and began writing fiction. He was involved in the New Leftist movement for a time and some of his works are strongly tinted by anarchist thought, but his main theme since publication of his maiden work (1974) was the complex kinship relations and struggles among the people of his hometown. In 1976 he won the Akutagawa Prize for *Misaki* [The Cape], and became known for his expression of powerful emotions and rich style of writing. He died of cancer in June 1992.



Cover: Kikuchi Nobuyoshi

Nakagami Kenji's last novel portrays the passions and social dynamics of discrimination.

Events and Trends

1992 Tokyo International Book Fair

The Tokyo Book Fair, held biennially since 1984 as a bazaar open to the general public, has gone international. The Japan Book Publishers Association and sponsoring organizations invited overseas book publishers, agents and printers to display their wares at the fourth fair, held in Ikebukuro, Tokyo, October 31 through November 4, 1992. It thus became a trade fair as well, reflecting the eagerness of Japan's publishing industry to make Tokyo a hub of Asian publishing.

Participation was substantial, with 150 firms from 24 other countries (60 from China alone) and approximately 570 local companies. Foreign publishing houses have great expectations of the Japanese market, and European and American publishers seeking business opportunities in translation, sales, and joint publication and Asian publishers on the lookout for printing orders from Japanese presses made the most of the contacts provided by the fair. While a Chinese firm reportedly won a \$3 million printing contract with a U.S. publisher, many foreign participants complained that there was too big a crowd of non-industry visitors, that opportunities to do business were far too few for a trade fair, and that

English was not well understood. The organizers face the difficult challenge of integrating the traditional bookselling event for the general public with the fair's new role as an international event for the world publishing industry.

Asian Pacific Publishers Association Established

A forum was held to promote mutual cooperation among Asian publishers on November 1, 1992, during the Tokyo International Book Fair, which led to the establishment of an Asian Pacific Publishers Association (APPA), proposed by Hattori Toshiyuki, President of the Japan Book Publishers Association. Representatives of other countries present approved the idea and signed an agreement the same day. The APPA will be formally inaugurated at the Tokyo International Book Fair scheduled for January 1994. It will convene an annual conference in order to explore ways to facilitate publication, cooperation and exchange in the Asian-Pacific region.

The APPA activities as described in the agreement draft will include: 1) training and exchange of young persons in the publishing business; 2) advanced courses on editing, platemaking, printing, binding, paper and distribution systems; 3) spreading the concept of copyright and efforts to achieve copyright protection; 4) training of translators among all languages, and 5) promoting of joint publishing. Deci-

sions will be made by the end of 1993 on the APPA Charter and selection of the location of its secretariats, and budgets will be drawn up and methods of fund-raising determined.

Recession and the Publishing Industry

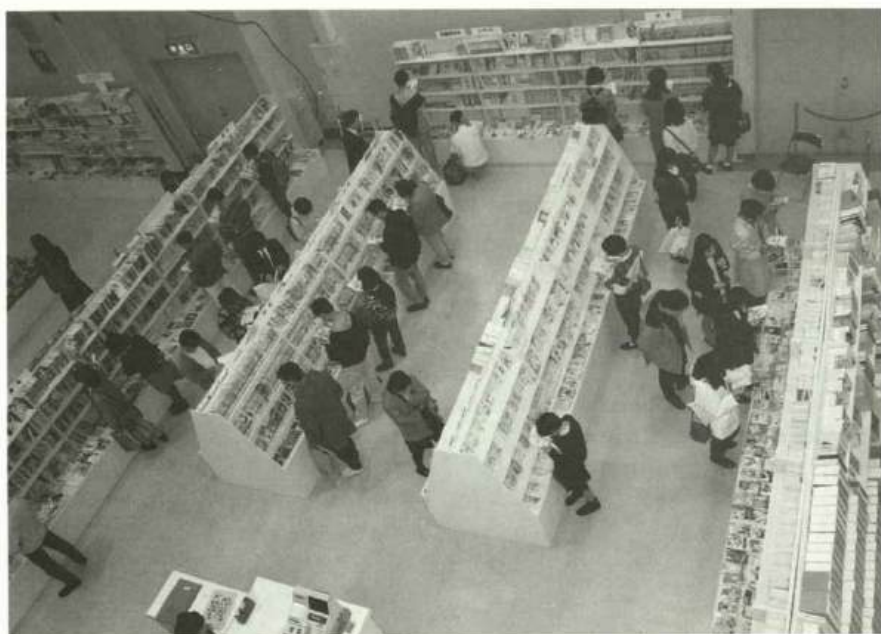
The collapse of land and stock market speculation known as "bubble economy" has affected the Japanese publishing industry. Despite talk of the popular drift away from the printed media, the market expanded yearly, but the present recession is having a pervasive impact on publishers and bookstores. Bankruptcies among medium-sized publishing houses have been increasing, such as in the case of Rokkō Shuppan which went down in July with a debt of ¥4 billion and Tairiku Shobō in August with ¥9.7 billion in red ink.

There are fewer new magazines launched during the year than the previous year and more have disappeared. Existing magazines have been unable to increase their circulation, and have suffered a decrease in earnings due to a sharp drop in advertising revenue (said to occupy 40-50 percent of proceeds). These developments have dealt a resounding blow to publishing houses, many of which depend heavily on magazine sales.

New titles came out in increasing numbers, and this is necessary for publishers since average print runs have had to be kept lower. Publishers find themselves in as precarious a position as a bicycle rider; to stop moving forward is to risk falling down completely. In the backdrop is a large increase in the rate of unsold return copies. The rate was highest in August, at more than 40 percent.

During the past year, a thousand bookstores have closed. Small bookstores were once able to survive hard times by putting on sale more magazines and comic books, which have a quicker turnover. Their business is now sluggish partly because convenience stores have begun selling books and magazines and partly because consumers are tightening their purse strings.

To combat poor sales, bookstores



have begun to plan and hold bookfairs on their premises in the attempt to stimulate interest in books. Publishers, too, have sought to innovate and try new tactics, bringing out old titles with selling potential in newly packaged form.

¥10 Million Cash Prizes Proliferate

The Edogawa Rampo Prize, the mystery-writers' gateway to success, has added a cash prize of ¥10 million (\$80,000) to the Sherlock Holmes bronze statue and royalties accrued from publication of the winning work. Kawata Yaichirō became the first recipient at the September 28 presentation ceremonies. The Prize was started in 1955 when Japan's first modern mystery writer Edogawa Rampo (1894–1965; whose penname was intended to resemble the Japanese pronunciation of Edgar Allan Poe), created a ¥1 million fund on the occasion of his 60th birthday to award a cash prize of ¥50,000 to detective story researchers. This original prize later changed to provide recognition and encouragement for the budding talents of new mystery writers.

There are now a total of seven literary prizes, mainly in the mystery genre, that present winners with cash prizes of ¥10 million. Most of the awards are funded by television broadcasting companies which seek exclusive rights to produce the stories for television series programs. The sponsors consider the ¥10 million amount sufficient for a winner to live without any earnings during one year and even cover the cost of collecting material to write other books. By contrast, the cash honoraria for the Akutagawa and Naoki prizes, Japan's most prestigious literary prizes, stand at ¥1 million each with no apparent plans to raise the amount.

Private-sector Initiative to Promote Translation

An organization called the Association of 100 Japanese Books (Nihon no Hyakusatsu Hon'yaku no Kai) has been founded to encourage Japanese corporations to support the translation and publication of Japanese books in other languages. Its objective is to facilitate the translation of Japanese works in the humanities and social sciences, as well as literature and the arts, in order to promote better understanding of Japanese culture abroad. Private corporations and individuals will be invited to become members of the association and sponsor translation projects. Basically, one sponsoring corporation will subsidize the translation and publication of one book—the cost expected to come to between 1 and 3 million yen per volume—and the association will act as "match-maker," introducing appropriate projects to sponsors in accordance with the specific interests of member firms. The main targets of the association's match-making efforts will be projects to which a publisher has made a prior commitment with a qualified translator for work completed or in progress on a specific manuscript. Poet, Japan P. E. N. Club chairman, and Chairman of the association Ōoka Makoto comments on this private-sector initiated endeavor as follows:

Since the beginning of Japan's modernization process in the mid-nineteenth century, books and other published writings mainly from Western countries have been translated into Japanese in massive quantities. It could be said that modern Japan was practically built on translation into Japanese, which has a long and solid tradition. By contrast, the history of translating and publishing Japanese works into other languages is relatively short and the number of Japanese publications available in other tongues—one of the key media conveying information about Japan—is still shockingly small.

In recent years, Japanese corporations have become increasingly active patrons of the arts, but their concern has not extended to the field of translation or publishing. The establishment of the Association of 100 Japanese Books opens the way for the private sector to advance the task of introducing international readers to Japanese writing. Many corporations and individuals willing to undertake such sponsorship, as well as presses and translators with titles to publish have expressed interest in the goals of the association, and their response is an indication of the great need it can fulfill.

Invigoration of the translation of Japanese books can help to carry understanding of Japan beyond stereotypes and exotic images. Appreciation of the arts of Noh, Kyogen, Kabuki, or the tea ceremony or flower arrangement by those who do not know Japanese, for example, cannot go beyond a superficial fascination without access also, for example, to classical Japanese poetry. No matter how much money may be poured into performing arts tours to other parts of the world, the effort to deepen understanding of Japanese culture must be buttressed by support for translation and publication of the literary works upon which they are based.

Another serious problem is the lack of appreciation of the technical difficulty of translating Japanese into other languages. In the past, many scholars in the field of Japanese studies were able to translate important works as part of their academic research and publishing endeavors. Today, translations are less acceptable as evidence of research activity. Commercial translation fees are far too low to obtain the services of competent professional translators and support the time and research required to render classical or scholarly works into other languages. These difficulties are only aggravated by the vicious circle created by the very small number of Japanese works translated and published overseas, the extremely limited readership, and resulting unwillingness of publishers to commit themselves to such works.

The ranks of Japan specialists, nevertheless, include an impressive number of top-notch scholars and translators, not only in Western countries, but in China, South Korea, and other parts of Asia. The Association of 100 Japanese Books will hopefully only be the first of other initiatives that will support and invigorate their efforts.

Further information about the association may be obtained by contacting: Ms. Kurita Akiko, executive director, Association of 100 Japanese Books, 2-27-18-804 Naka-ochiai, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 161.

Number of Book and Magazine Printed Copies and Sales, 1970–91

	Books (millions of copies)	Book sales (¥ million)	Magazines (millions of copies)		Magazine sales (¥ million)	Total sales (¥ million)	Vis-à-vis previous year (%)
			Monthlies	Weeklies			
1970	513.80	220,102.94	865.65	1,007.60	245,991.63	466,094.57	—
1971	520.00	233,017.20	922.00	1,013.00	271,335.80	504,353.00	—
1972	566.80	267,040.62	1,014.20	1,053.52	313,141.72	580,182.34	+15.0
1973	634.81	331,225.40	1,105.47	1,085.12	351,652.63	682,878.03	+17.7
1974	666.55	429,260.86	1,127.57	1,106.82	435,866.92	865,127.78	+26.6
1975	733.20	491,201.47	1,217.77	1,128.95	488,208.33	979,409.80	+13.2
1976	857.84	533,566.01	1,315.19	1,140.23	532,735.04	1,066,301.05	+8.8
1977	960.78	576,898.62	1,354.64	1,151.63	563,524.77	1,140,423.39	+6.9
1978	1,037.64	625,877.46	1,422.37	1,209.21	603,520.24	1,229,397.70	+7.8
1979	1,048.02	664,256.03	1,530.16	1,269.67	665,430.64	1,329,686.67	+8.3
1980	1,058.50	687,432.24	1,659.05	1,358.55	766,722.16	1,454,154.40	+9.3
1981	1,090.25	690,883.58	1,675.64	1,358.55	790,521.79	1,481,405.37	+1.9
1982	1,133.86	703,106.58	1,725.90	1,385.72	841,375.82	1,545,482.40	+4.3
1983	1,201.89	707,973.30	1,863.97	1,448.07	888,554.09	1,596,527.39	+3.4
1984	1,274.00	697,871.72	1,957.16	1,549.43	940,747.96	1,638,619.68	+2.6
1985	1,299.48	712,283.97	2,123.52	1,688.88	1,029,519.56	1,741,803.53	+6.3
1986	1,304.67	715,715.86	2,117.14	1,739.54	1,082,955.74	1,798,671.60	+3.3
1987	1,298.15	763,636.74	2,148.90	1,756.94	1,116,992.12	1,880,628.86	+4.6
1988	1,339.69	784,251.79	2,295.02	1,793.83	1,166,099.00	1,950,350.79	+3.7
1989	1,366.48	796,911.49	2,354.69	1,946.30	1,217,616.29	2,014,527.78	+3.3
1990	1,393.81	847,446.11	2,486.55	2,006.64	1,302,171.39	2,149,617.50	+6.8
1991	1,400.78	926,363.88	2,548.71	2,098.95	1,348,862.44	2,275,226.32	+5.7

Total Number of New Titles, 1970–91

