

# 本

NUMBER 10  
SUMMER 1995

# Japanese Book News

Ōe Kenzaburō and Abe Kōbō  
Japan's Identity  
Japanese Books in Vietnam

## Top Seven Works of Most Frequently Translated Authors

### Tanizaki Jun'ichirō

- 1 Some Prefer Nettles
- 2 Tattooer
- 2 A Portrait of Shunkin
- 4 The Key
- 5 The Makioka Sisters
- 6 Diary of a Mad Old Man
- 7 In Praise of Shadows



The height of the books shows the number of languages—excluding Asian and African languages—the author's seven most translated works are translated into, and the thickness shows the total number of translations.

### Ibuse Masuji

- 1 Black Rain
- 2 Salamander
- 3 Lieutenant Lookeast
- 4 Savan on the Roof
- 5 Life at Mr. Tange's
- 5 No Consultations Today
- 7 John Manjirō, the Cast-away: His Life and Adventure



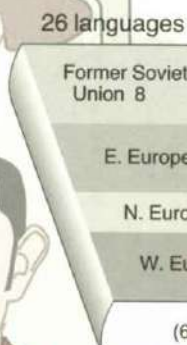
### Mishima Yukio

- 1 Sound of Waves
- 2 The Sailor Who Fell from Grace with the Sea
- 3 The Temple of the Golden Pavilion
- 4 After the Banquet
- 5 Confessions of a Mask
- 6 Five Modern Nō Plays
- 7 Spring Snow



### Ōe Kenzaburō

- 1 A Personal Matter
- 2 The Catch
- 3 The Silent Cry
- 4 Lavish Are the Dead
- 4 Sheep
- 4 The Young Man Arrived Late
- 7 The Day He Himself Shall Wipe My Tears Away



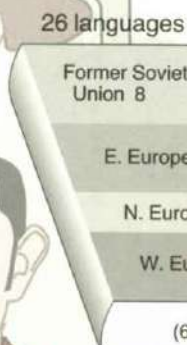
### Kawabata Yasunari

- 1 Snow Country
- 2 Thousand Cranes
- 3 The Izu Dancer
- 3 Kyoto
- 5 The Sound of the Mountain
- 6 House of the Sleeping Beauties
- 7 The Lake



### Abe Kōbō

- 1 The Woman in the Dunes
- 2 Inter Ice Age 4
- 3 The Face of Another
- 4 The Ruined Map
- 5 The Box Man
- 6 The Ghost Is Here
- 6 The Man Who Turned into a Stick



The Japan Foundation



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## Contents

Shapes of the "Ambiguous": Ōe's Triangles and Abe's Circles <i>Koyama Tetsurō</i> .....	1
The Never-ending Discourse: Japan's Identity <i>Harumi Befu</i> .....	4
Japanese Books Abroad Vietnam: Bridge for Cross-cultural Relations <i>Nguyen Dang Quang</i> .....	6
New Titles .....	8
Events and Trends .....	20

## From the Editor

The awarding of the Nobel Prize to Ōe Kenzaburō in 1994 holds an entirely different meaning from that bestowed on his predecessor, Kawabata Yasunari, in 1968. It signifies the genuine recognition of Japanese writers as contributors to the body of world literature.

As Ōe himself noted in a speech following notification of the award, there are three currents in postwar Japanese literature in terms of the relationship to world literature: The first evolved in isolation from world literature, as typified by Tanizaki Jun'ichirō and Kawabata Yasunari. Its expressions of the "beautiful" side of Japan won world acclaim because they fulfilled Western expectations of exotic orientalism. The second was nurtured under the profound influence of world literature, as typified by the works of Abe Kōbō and Ōe Kenzaburō. The third, represented by the writings of Murakami Haruki and Yoshimoto Banana, is the product of the global subculture. World recognition of the second current of Japanese literature has been reserved for last, but as Ōe himself commented, it signifies honors not just for himself personally, but for his colleagues who write world literature in Japanese.

In this issue, journalist Koyama Tetsurō gives us an in-depth look at both Ōe and Abe Kōbō, whose works are as internationally known as those of Ōe. We hope that the awarding of the Nobel Prize to a Japanese author will help to enhance understanding of the talented writers in this second category.

Our second feature article by respected Japanologist Harumi Befu looks at the major works seeking to explain the Japanese and their culture that have come out in the fifty years since the end of World War II and brings us up to date on the major recent publications in the genre.

The Japanese Books Abroad section presents the experiences of publisher Nguyen Dang Quang of Vietnam, where economic growth is moving ahead at a dramatic pace, who has been involved in the translation and publishing of Japanese books there.

On the back cover is a final grouping of Japanese publishers whose titles often appear in our New Titles section, this time featuring highly reputed, but relatively modest-sized presses.



# Shapes of the “Ambiguous”: Ōe’s Triangles and Abe’s Circles

Koyama Tetsurō

I wonder if there is any other country where such a mood of anxious and expectant tension descends upon literary circles as it does in Japan in October, when the season for selection of Nobel Prize winners approaches. Certainly there must be no other place where the media becomes so agitated and poised to report what may be the story of the decade.

No Japanese writer had been awarded the prize for literature since Kawabata Yasunari became the first in 1968, but there were a number of names the media and the critics always considered eligible and likely to be picked. They included Abe Kōbō, Inoue Yasushi, Endō Shūsaku, Ibuse Masuji, and Ōe Kenzaburō.

The usually frank and jocular Abe, author of *Suna no onna* [1962; tr. *The Woman in the Dunes*, 1964] and *Tomodachi* [1967; tr. *Friends*, 1969], both of which were made into very successful films, used to become irritable under the media onslaught that preceded the annual selection of the Nobel prizewinner and invariably disappeared from his home on the day of the Swedish Academy’s announcement, leaving the crowd of reporters embarrassed and empty-handed. Inoue, whose works are often set in continental Asia, as were *Tempyō no iraka* [1957; tr. *The Roof Tile of Tempyō*, 1975] and *Fūtō* [1963; tr. *Wind and Waves*, 1963], was himself once a journalist. So every October, instead of turning a cold shoulder to the press, he invited dozens of reporters into his home, where he wine and dined them as they awaited the eagerly anticipated moment. Endō Shūsaku, preeminent Catholic author of *Chimmoku* [1966; tr. *Silence*, 1969], is known for whiling away the day of the announcement playing go, a game he likes but is not good at. Ibuse Masuji, author of *Kuroi ame* [1965–66; tr. *Black Rain*, 1969], a novel set in Hiroshima immediately after the atomic bombing, was born in 1898, and the media long ago voluntarily gave up undignified pursuit of the grand old man of literature, in deference to his advanced age.

As the announcement drew near, Ōe Kenzaburō’s lifestyle did not change much; he went to the swimming pool every day as usual. But the temper of his mind must have been anything but serene. Mrs. Ōe once told the press: “Well,” she revealed, “the only part of the paper he looks at these days is the foreign news page.”

Ultimately, Ōe was awarded the prize. In retrospect, Abe Kōbō (who passed away in 1993) would have been as likely a choice, as Ōe himself admitted: “If he were alive, Abe would have been chosen.” And actually, the literary approaches of these two authors do have much in common. I would like to consider these literary links, which are very significant to Japanese literature, starting with the notion of the “ambiguous,” about which Ōe spoke in his Nobel lecture in Stockholm in December.

Ōe titled his talk “Japan, the Ambiguous, and Myself” to evoke the title of the lecture delivered by Kawa-

bata twenty-six years ago: “Japan, the Beautiful, and Myself.” As a clue to understanding Ōe’s notion of “ambiguous,” let us look at the “triangle” metaphor frequently observed in his works.

Few make much mention of the fact, but Ōe has a clear predilection for triangles and triangular relationships. One of the simplest examples can be found at the beginning of Ōe’s *Kirupu no gundan* [1988; *A Legion of Quilps*]—a story centering around a boy who reads Charles Dickens’ novel *The Old Curiosity Shop*. There is a scene in Ōe’s story in which the boy, the narrator, enters the dining room of his house to find the father and his uncle (the father’s younger brother) “drinking whiskey, sitting at the table in such a manner that the third of the three points of a triangle is missing.” Immediately after this, the mother comes out of the kitchen and “occupies the third vertex.”

Toward the end of the novel, the boy is in bed with a fever, on the brink of death. In his delirium, he presses the tips of his palms together at an angle of sixty degrees. Of course, the angle of sixty degrees is that for each of the three vertices of a regular triangle. Immediately following this, Ōe writes, “In the logic of dream, the most important thing is for him to press both palms together at an angle of sixty degrees.” In other words, this novel begins and ends with a triangle.

In *Man’en gannen no futtobōru* [1967; tr. *The Silent Cry*, 1974], cited by the Swedish Academy as one of Ōe’s major works, there is also the passage: “Takashi was talking as though the conversation were a triangle with me at one corner and himself and my wife linked by the side opposite.” (p. 142, 1974) This scene depicts the protagonist Mitsusaburō, his wife, and his younger brother Takashi engaged in conversation, and is different in plot and context from the scene at the beginning of the *A Legion of Quilps*, but both are the same in that a man, his wife, and his brother form the triangle.

One of the main characters in *Natsukashii toshi e no tegami* [Letters to the Year of Nostalgia] (1987) is Brother Gii, whose personality is developed from Gii, a hermit of the woods in *The Silent Cry*. An important female character named O-Setchan appears in a chapter entitled “The Cassiopeia-Shaped Mole,” and she is described as having a W-shaped mole in the hollow of her waist. “Cassiopeia-shaped” means that it takes the shape of a “w,” that is, two triangles side by side.

There is a possibility that Ōe inserted this mole as a gimmick prompted by Mishima Yukio’s final work, the *Hōjō no Umi* [1965–71; *The Sea of Fertility*] tetralogy, which describes how moles seem to testify to the transmigration of the souls of characters in the story. If so, the woman with the W-shaped mole in the *Letters to the Year of Nostalgia* is probably the reincarnation of the narrator’s sister in *Dōjidai gēmu* [The Game of Contemporaneity] (1979), a major work preceding the *Letters to*



the *Year of Nostalgia*. In *The Game of Contemporaneity*, too, we frequently come across the tripartite phrase, "village-state-microcosm," indicating areas in the woods.

Ōe's predilection for triangles (triads) can be traced back to his debut as a writer. In the postscript to one of his early works, *Miru mae ni tobe* [Jump Before You Look] (1958), a collection of short stories, he writes about his interest in triangular correlations. He has clung to this attachment to triangles ever since, as reflected in the fact that his latest work is a trilogy, *Moe-agaru midori no ki* [A Green Tree in Flames], the last volume of which came out in February 1995.

I once asked Ōe about his proclivity for triangles. He said that his way of thinking had been greatly influenced by his mentor, Watanabe Kazuo, who was a well-known authority on French Renaissance literature and Rabelais. "The important theme for Watanabe was a third way. There is Catholic, there is Protestant, and why not a third way? Capitalism and socialism exist, so is there not a third way? He called the third way humanism." Ōe then said, "Suppose there is a confrontation between two parties. I believe it should be possible to consider the matter from a 'third corner' of the triangle."

In his Nobel lecture, Ōe introduced Watanabe as a Japanese intellectual who sought to graft the best of Western tradition onto that of the Japanese at the deepest level. The position that two distant sides of a conflict can be bridged through the third corner of the triangle is reflected in "Japan, the Ambiguous, and Myself."

In the major works of Abe Kōbō, one of the Japanese writers Ōe most admires, it is circles rather than triangles that provide the recurrent motif. In *Hakobune Sakura-maru* [1984; tr. *The Ark Sakura*, 1988], there is a strange insect called a "eupcaccia" which, without legs or wings, stays in the same place, only rotating its body in accordance with the movements of the sun throughout its life.

The insect feeds on its own feces accumulated on the side of its body not facing the sun. While the odd bug in *The Ark Sakura* is generally interpreted by critics as symbolic of a person who cannot escape from routine, I believe Abe attached a somewhat different meaning to this pitiful but rather humorous creature.

The novel portrays a grotesque struggle for power that takes place within a huge subterranean "ark" the protagonist has created as a device to survive nuclear war, but the eupcaccia is given a weight almost comparable to this power struggle.

While it remains in one place, the eupcaccia ("clockbug") rotates in a circle, following the sun, doing nothing else but emitting waste on the side opposite the sun and then consuming it. However, after completing the daily routine of turning in a circle, there is not only a sense of weariness, but of relief. When the number of circles reaches 365, the creature experiences an expanded sense of relief, along with a renewed appreciation of routine. As this amusing creature, always conscious of the invisible circle of time, keeps its cir-

cular motion on an ever-expanding scale, it alone gains the potential to free itself from indefinite confinement within the circle. That potential is precisely what enables the clockbug to have a culture.

The bomb-shelter ark divides people into two groups, those who can enter the shelter and those who cannot. The clockbug has the potential to overcome this kind of dichotomous thinking. This, I believe, is the message Abe wanted to convey.

Since the beginning of the Meiji period (1868–1912) Japanese intellectuals have agonized over the question of which of two options to adopt—"the West" or "Japan," "modernity" or "tradition"—and over how to transcend the dichotomy. Novelists have been no exception. Unable to tolerate the unresolved dilemma, many have chosen to go to extremes, coming to the exclusive support of one or the other.

Two leading novelists who opted for Japan and tradition were Kawabata Yasunari and Mishima Yukio. Kawabata won the Nobel prize for his endeavors to elaborate on the beauty of the Japanese sensibility in works like *Yukiguni* [1948; tr. *Snow Country*, 1956], *Sembazuru* [1952; tr. *Thousand Cranes*, 1959], and *Yama no oto* [1954; tr. *The Sound of the Mountain*, 1970]. Mishima Yukio deplored the degeneration of his country and passionately appealed to the Self-Defense Forces for action at the SDF headquarters in Ichigaya, Tokyo, in 1970. His shocking suicide by disembowelment there underlined the agony of his choice. Because these two writers were well-known overseas, foreign readers saw Japanese fiction entirely as literature in pursuit of the subtle and elusive world of beauty. In other words, most Japanese writers of international renown until recently were those who, no longer able to withstand the sense of being pulled apart on the tightrope between the two poles, chose Japan. Foreign readers have therefore been presented chiefly with readings from this "beautiful" but enigmatic literature.

If we look in this context at Ōe's frequent use of triangles and Abe's small but immense circle, we can detect a sensibility different from what is seen in Mishima and Kawabata. We can perceive the determination not to seek immediate escape from the dilemma but to stay where one finds oneself from the beginning and to translate one's world into a broader expanse.

Let us look at *The Silent Cry* I introduced earlier as an example of Ōe's triangles. In the latter half of this novel, Mitsusaburō's wife and his brother Takashi establish a sexual relationship which Mitsusaburō learns about. Immediately after this, comes a scene in which the split at the back of the caps worn by young men participating in a mysterious soul festival and Nembutsu dance is described as being regular triangle. Up until then, Mitsusaburō and his wife had been on such bad terms that their sexual relationship had atrophied. But, observing his wife watching the young men dance at the festival, he realizes for the first time since their marriage that his wife is an independent being. In a conventional resolution, the husband of an adulterous wife would abruptly resolve the dilemma of a ruptured relationship by opting for a single "point"—a divorce, for



example. In *The Silent Cry*, the sexual relationship between the wife and her husband's brother leads to the expansion of the linear relationship between husband and wife into a broader, triangular relationship between the husband, his brother, and his wife, and as a result the three persons are newly situated as independent beings.

*The Silent Cry* is probably the first Japanese novel to describe husband-wife relationships in such terms, and in my view, this was the quest Ōe referred to in "Japan, the Ambiguous, and Myself." What emerges from Japanese literature that centers on a single "point" is "beauty" (i.e., Japanese aesthetics), whereas the literature of triangles and circles gives birth to humor. For instance, the protagonist of Abe's last novel, *Kangarū nōto* [1991; Kangaroo Notebook] (see *Japanese Book News*, No. 1, p. 19) is a white-collar worker who wakes

up one morning feeling his legs itching and finds radish sprouts growing out of the pores of his skin!

One cannot help laughing when coming across humorous passages in, say, *Atarashii hito yo mezame yo* [Wake Up, New Man] (1983), in which Ōe portrays his life as a triangle, with himself at one corner and his mentally handicapped son and the poetry of William Blake at the other two corners. Ōe also published a collection of short stories with the comical title, *Kaba ni kamareru* [Bitten by a Hippo] (1985).

It is my hope that the awarding of the Nobel Prize to Ōe will prompt non-Japanese readers to sample the broad reaches of Japanese literature rich in humor and wit, such as produced by Abe and Ōe. (*Koyama Tetsurō is editor, Cultural News Section, Kyodo News Service.*)

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

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# The Never-ending Discourse: Japan's Identity

Harumi Befu

*Nihonjinron*, otherwise known as *Nihon bunkaron*, *Nihonron*, etc.—or discourse on Japan's uniqueness—is one genre of nonfiction literature that has endured through times of war and peace for the past one hundred years. Literally hundreds of books have been published on the subject over the past century. Its heyday was probably the 1960s and 1970s, when we saw a sharp increase in the publication of books in this genre. Since then, there has been some decline. However, interest in Japan's cultural and national identity remains strong. For example, *Nihon to wa nani nano ka: Kokusaika no tadanaka de* [What is Japan?: In the Midst of Internationalization] (Nippon Shuppan Hōsō Kyōkai, 1991), edited by Umehara Takeshi, Director of the International Research Center for Japanese Studies, has gone through as many as ten printings in only four years. It contains nineteen articles, some by the staff of the Center and others by outsiders, including non-Japanese, dealing broadly with such topics as Japanese studies as an enterprise, Japanese culture in a world context, and problems and possibilities of Japanese civilization.

## The Heyday of Meta-Nihonjinron

One characteristic of *Nihonjinron* books in the past ten years or so, as illustrated in the aforementioned *Nihon to wa nani nano ka*, is the rise of meta-*Nihonjinron*; that is, books that critique or "revisit" the field. Such critiques and revisiting have been available in English: for example, Roy Andrew Miller's *Japan's Modern Myth* (Weatherhill, 1982), Peter Dale's *The Myth of Japanese Uniqueness* (St. Martin's, 1986), and Ross Mouer and Sugimoto Yoshio's *Images of Japanese Society* (Kegan Paul International, 1986). But in Japanese, they have been slower in coming. I would like to review some of the more prominent Japanese works of the meta-*Nihonjinron* genre here.

Two major works have been published on the history of *Nihonjinron*, one by Aoki Tamotsu, an anthropologist at Osaka University, and the other by Minami Hiroshi, professor emeritus of Hitotsubashi University. Aoki's work, "*Nihon Bunkaron*" *no hen'yō: Sengo Nihon no bunka to aidentiti* [The Lineage of *Nihonjinron*: Culture and Identity in Postwar Japan] (Chūō Kōron Sha, 1990), a recipient of the coveted Yoshino Sakuzō prize, is largely based on an article Aoki wrote for *Chūō Kōron* in 1989. Its popularity is evidenced in the fact that it went through five printings in just half a year since its initial publication. He divides the history of *Nihonjinron* in postwar Japan into four periods: Negative views on the unique characteristics of Japan (1945–54); relativistic views of Japan (1955–63); affirmation of Japanese qualities (1964–83); and recognition of universality of Japanese qualities (1984–present). A major contribution of this work is in correlating the vicissitudes of *Nihonjinron* to larger historical forces.

Minami, author of *Nihonjinron: Meiji kara konnichi made* [*Nihonjinron: From Meiji to the Present*] (Iwanami Shoten, 1994), is a social psychologist who has written a popular *Nihonjin no shinri* [The Psychology of the Japanese] (Iwanami Shoten, 1953). The current book has its precursors in "Nihon no bunkaron—Sono keifu" [Theories of Japanese Culture: Its Genealogy] (*Shisō*, No. 463, pp. 1–11, 1963) and *Nihonjinron no keifu* [The Genealogy of *Nihonjinron*] (Iwanami Shoten, 1980).

A 393-page tome, it is quite extensive in its treatment of the subject, covering all aspects of *Nihonjinron*, including ecology, landscape, cultural values, mentality, business management, and the like. It divides the history of *Nihonjinron* into seven periods: Early Meiji, in which the Japanese regard themselves to be an inferior people; later Meiji, in which superiority of the Japanese was asserted; Taishō, in which more comprehensive views of the Japanese began to appear; early pre-1945 Shōwa, in which ecological *Nihonjinron* made a major impact; later pre-1945 Shōwa, in which heightened patriotic *Nihonjinron* held sway; the Occupation period, in which *Kiku to katana* (Shakai Shisō Sha, 1948)—the Japanese translation of Ruth Benedict's *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* (Houghton Mifflin, 1946)—became a runaway bestseller; the contemporary period, with its efflorescence of *Nihonjinron* divided into many specialized areas. While comprehensive and even encyclopedic, the book tends to be descriptive and less analytical than Aoki's.

In the postwar genre of *Nihonjinron*, Ruth Benedict's book occupies a special place. One may say without hesitation that the postwar discourse on Japanese identity was inaugurated by this work. Since the original translation was published, several other editions and scores of reprintings of each edition, numerous reviews and critiques have appeared. One of the most recent and major reassessments of this work is Soeda Yoshiya's *Nihon bunka shiron—Benedikuto "Kiku to Katana" o yomu* [A Tentative Theory of Japanese Culture—Reading Benedict's *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*] (Shin'yōsha, 1993). Soeda, of Tsukuba University, takes up the methodology and major cultural themes in Benedict's opus, such as "indebtedness," "duty," "obligation," "honor," "shame," and "child-rearing," gives a thoughtful commentary on Benedict's analysis on each, and reviews analyses of Japanese scholars who have reviewed Benedict's work as well. It is probably the most comprehensive single volume on the work.

Marxists have been highly critical of the received *Nihonjinron*, earlier examples being *Nihon Bunkaron no shūhen* [Environments of *Nihonjinron*] (Ningen no Kagakusha, 1982) by Kawamura Nozomu at Tokyo Metropolitan University and "*Nihon bunkaron*" to



*tennōsei ideorogi* [Nihonjinron and the Ideology of the Imperial Institution] (Shin Nihon Shuppansha, 1983) by Hijikata Kazuo at Nagoya University. Two more recent examples, both of high quality, are "*Bunka*" o yosoou kiken shisō: "*Nihon bunkaron*" hihan [Dangerous Thought Veiled in the Rubric of "Culture": A Critique of Nihonjinron] (Suiyōsha, 1991), edited by the Shisō Bunka Kenkyū Iinkai (Committee for Research on Thought and Culture) of the Nihon Kagakusha Kaigi (Japan Scientists Association), and *Gendai Nihon bunkaron no kenkyū: Tennōsei ideorogi to shin Kyōto Gakuha* [Studies of Contemporary Nihonjinron: The Ideology of the Imperial Institution and the Neo-Kyoto School] (Shiraishi Shoten, 1991) by Samesaka Makoto, et al. Both are collections of writings by Marxist intellectuals. The former includes eight articles by as many writers (Iwasaki Noritane, Satō Shizuo, Kitamura Minoru, Iwai Tadakuma, Iwama Kazuo, Ajisaka Makoto, Miyaji Masato, and Yamaguchi Kazutaka) and the latter, eleven articles by five writers (Ajisaka Makoto, Ueda Hiroshi, Kuroda Haruo, Kugitsura Kazunori, and Yamakawa Manabu).

As one would expect, authors of both volumes are highly critical of Nihonjinron, which are generally interpreted as supporting the establishment. *Gendai Nihon bunkaron no kenkyū* specifically faults the Kyoto school and critiques its major players *seriatim*—Nishida Kitarō, Umehara Takeshi, Ueyama Shumpei, Watsuji Tetsurō, Imanishi Kinji, Yano Noboru, Yamazaki Masakazu, and Kuwabara Takeo—for providing intellectual backing for the mainstream ideology supporting the imperial institution.

### Applied Nihonjinron

Among the more recent Nihonjinron literature, *Nihonron no shiza: Rettō no shakai to kokka* [Perspectives on Nihonjinron: Society and State of the Archipelago] (Shōgakukan, 1993) by Amino Yoshihiko, of the Kanagawa University Nihon Jōmin Bunka Kenkyūjo, is unique in that it is written from the perspective of a medievalist, whereas virtually all Nihonjinron literature is written by those whose specialization is in early modern to modern Japan. Amino rejects the commonly espoused Nihonjinron views on the cultural homogeneity of the Japanese and of rice cultivation as the economic/ecological basis of Japanese culture. Instead he argues for the importance of medieval culture and institutions as providing the foundations for modern Japan.

My own Nihonjinron, in *Ideorogi toshite no Nihon bunkaron* [Nihonjinron as an Ideology] (Shisō no Kagakusha, 1987, 1990 rev.), is an anthropological study, rather than a tract on Japanese culture. I propose to regard Nihonjinron not as an objective account of the nature of Japanese culture, but as the myth and ideology of Japan. It is my intent to look at the popular Nihonjinron literature not as enduring scholarly contributions aiming at "truth," but as consumer goods which are mass-produced to meet ever-changing popular appeal.

Hamaguchi Eshun, of the International Research Center for Japanese Studies, has long argued for a "contextual model" of Japanese society, in which an individual secures an identity in interpersonal terms. (Cf.

his "*Nihonrashisa*" no saihakken [The Rediscovery of "Japaneseness"], Nihon Keizai Shimbunsha, 1977.) In 1993 he edited a volume in which "Japanese models" proposed by numerous writers are presented: *Nihon-gata moderu to wa nanika: Kokusaika jidai ni okeru meritto to demeritto* [What Are Japanese Models?: Their Merits and Demerits in the Age of Internationalization] (Shin'yōsha, 1993). Theoretical, conceptual and methodological issues are taken up in the construction of "Japanese" models by such writers as Kimura Bin, Kumon Shumpei, and Sonoda Hidehiro. Moreover, Japan as an empirical case is scrutinized from several angles—industrialization, regionalism, family structure, religion, etc. by Sofue Takao, Ōmura Hideaki, Tsunoyama Sakae and others.

A subgenre of Nihonjinron that has been extremely popular in postwar years is business management. Over the past three decades literally scores of books have been written to demonstrate the peculiarly Japanese style of management both by non-management social scientists and management specialists. A characteristic of more recent writings in this subgenre is the concern over the question of utility or inutility of the very management style that brought on spectacular economic success in the past. Authors have different answers. Here are some recent examples.

*Nihon-teki keiei soshiki* [The Japanese-style Management Organization] (Bunshindō, 1993) by Uemura Shōzō of Osaka Municipal University presents the orthodox view emphasizing groupism and interpersonal relationships in Japanese management. Contrary to the oft-voiced position that Japanese-style management is now on the way out, he maintains that this management style will continue for the foreseeable future. Orihata Motokazu, who holds an M.B.A. from the University of California and is a practitioner in the consulting field rather than an academic, sees Japanese-style management as coming to a turning point in "*Nihon-teki keiei*" *shinkaron* [An Evolutionary Theory of "Japanese-style Management"] (President-sha, 1993). But like Uemura, Orihata believes in its resiliency. He argues that it will revitalize precisely because it has its foundation in Japanese culture.

In *Ajia no keizai hatten to Nihon-gata moderu: Shakai ruikiron-teki apurōchi* [Economic Development in Asia and the Japanese model: The Social-Taxonomical Approach] (Bunshindō, 1994), Hasegawa Hiroyuki of Nihon University takes a broadly comparative approach, in which the Japanese management style is juxtaposed to management patterns in various East and Southeast Asian economies. Hasegawa sees the future downfall of the Japanese economy in the very management style that brought about its success, but which is now outmoded. He prescribes changes needed to transform Japan's management for successful competition, but is pessimistic about Japan's ability to carry out necessary reforms.

At last a few other recent publications in Nihonjinron may be mentioned in passing. Maniwa Mitsuyuki of Shizuoka University has authored *Nihon-teki shūdan no shakaigaku: Hōsetsu to haiseki no kōzō* [The Sociology

*Continued to p. 21*



Vietnam

## Bridge for Cross-cultural Relations

Nguyen Dang Quang

Among some thirty-seven publishing houses in Vietnam, the leaders are the Education Publishing House and the National Political Publishing House. The case of Education Publishing House, which puts out thousands of titles each year, the majority for students from pre-school to university and graduate school, provides a good illustration of how the publishing of books originating in Japan stands in Vietnam today.

EPH's editorial staff includes scholars, doctors, and experienced school teachers and its list is dominated by textbooks written by scientists and faculty of colleges, universities and research institutes. It has branch offices in Ho Chi Minh City and Da Nang, and its Computer Center is now capable of typesetting and layout for titles in Vietnamese, English, French, Russian, German, Japanese, Chinese, and other languages. Printing is mainly handled by the Dien Hong company using offset equipment. Marketing is handled by fifty-three companies specializing in textbooks and school equipment through which 100 million volumes per year are distributed throughout the country.

In 1994, EPH published about 1,500 titles, which constituted about 80 percent of the total volume of books published in Vietnam in that year, and among the titles that have attracted my attention the most recently are two related to Japan. The first is *Musashi*, the historical novel about the famous swordsman Miyamoto Musashi, by Yoshikawa Eiji. The second is *The Japanese-Vietnamese-English Dictionary for Foreign Trade*, the first Japanese dictionary to be laid out and designed by computer in Vietnam. The process of producing these books, with all the technological and other difficulties entailed, tells a great deal about how Japan and Vietnam are related to each other in the world of publishing today.

### A Publishing First

*The Japanese-Vietnamese-English Dictionary for Foreign Trade* was compiled starting in 1984 by Nguyen Van Hao, one of Vietnam's foremost experts on the Japanese language, who took part in a training course in Japan under the supervision of professor Itō Katsumi of Waseda University's Faculty of Commerce. The manuscript was brought back to Vietnam, but its publication was frustrated for lack of adequate layout and printing technology suitable for its complex format. Nguyen returned to Japan in 1991 on a Japan Foundation Fellowship to work on the dictionary with the support of the Japanese Language Institute in Urawa. There the compilation process was completed.

Printing in Vietnam until the 1980s was done mainly by hand using the centuries-old methods of movable type, and Japanese typesetting fonts were simply not available. The development of desktop printing technology changed all that. Computers began to be used in

Vietnam in the late 1980s, revolutionizing our printing technology. The appearance of DTP was no less revolutionary than was the invention of movable type by Gutenberg centuries ago. In the decade since, all traditional typesetting workshops, which once produced 95 percent of printed matter in the country, were abolished and all the old machinery was recycled into steel. Offset printers came into use in their place. The Education Publishing House was the leader in the use of computers in publishing. At the same time, there were no Japanese typefaces in the software available in Vietnam.

In 1991, Nguyen Van Hao brought back from Japan an old-model OASYS (Japanese) word processor on which he hoped to edit his dictionary. The manuals had been lost, and the menus and messages were all in Japanese, which few Vietnamese knew, especially those with any experience with computers. The people who knew Japanese, on the other hand, knew virtually nothing about computers. To solve this dilemma and get the *Dictionary* on track, Nguyen, with his knowledge of Japanese, and I, with my knowledge of computers, joined forces. I tested each key and message, one at a time, querying Nguyen each time Japanese words appeared on the display, and gradually we mastered its functions. I was already busy full time on my regular job, but after working hours, we sat together, absorbed in our endeavor to unravel the marvels of that Japanese word processor night after night, until midnight, often forgetting to eat supper or anything else of this world. Meanwhile, the Japan Foundation awarded financial assistance for the publication of the *Dictionary*. In the end, we were able to lay out the whole 700-page dictionary, managing to meet the agreed-upon deadline for publication. The first dictionary of its kind, it provides a basic tool for improving communication between the two countries.

### Window on the "Samurai" Tradition

In the twenty-seven years I have been working in publishing in Vietnam, I have helped hundreds of literary works from different countries—China, Russia, France, America, England—reach Vietnamese readers through translation and publishing. Today the country that most fascinates me is Japan. Vietnam and Japan are both Asian countries with traditions of distinction, and our peoples have overcome adversity and suffering through hard work and diligence, Japan becoming one of the most highly developed countries in the world. At the time of this writing, the Japanese television series *Oshin* is being shown on Vietnamese television. As we watch what the little girl heroine of this story has to endure, people of older or middle age like myself recall very similar scenes from our own childhood and youth in the not-so-distant past. We often find tears spontaneously running down our cheeks.

There must be many other treasures of Japanese literature and film that would inspire and move Vietnamese, but the language barrier is still very high. Very few Vietnamese speak Japanese and very few can translate between the two languages, often forcing us to "go round," i.e., to translate from English or French editions



of Japanese works. *Musashi* is a case in point. It made its way into Vietnamese via the French translation which is a rendering of the English edition (Kōdansha International, 1981). Attempting to translate directly from Japanese, we experience many difficulties due to the characteristics of Japanese orthography. Japanese has many words written in ideographs that have their origin in Chinese orthography. Vietnamese, too, has many loan words from Chinese, since until the French invented the Latin orthography used today, its language was written in simplified Chinese characters. These words are now transcribed in what is called Han-Viet. Words like *jūdō*, *kendō*, *sadō* and *ryōshu* can be written in Han-Viet, but others are left in the Japanese roman spelling.

*Musashi* presented us with many challenges in translating, beginning with the word samurai, who were unlike any warrior or noble class in Europe or elsewhere. We found we had to have a proper understanding of Japanese history in order to achieve a correct translation and explanation of samurai. Up until the publication of this book, Vietnamese had little information about what the samurai really were other than legend and rumor. We were told, for example, that the way young Japanese kamikaze pilots would sacrifice their lives for their mission, was "samurai-like." So was the incident in Tokyo reported not so long ago, in which the former president of a certain company attempted to commit suicide in front of the whole staff of a taxation office, using a traditional sword, in order to prove his innocence on the charges of tax evasion.

Yoshikawa Eiji not only gives us an absorbing story, but shows us the Japan of the seventeenth century, the time when samurai and shoguns were real characters in history, along with fascinating personalities like

Musashi himself and the idiosyncratic priest Takuan. Never has such a lengthy novel, involving so many translating and editing problems, been introduced from another country. The final publication would not have been possible without the generous financial assistance received from the Japan Foundation. The Vietnamese edition of *Musashi* reached readers in March 1995.

### Toward More Direct Cooperation

The products of modern Japanese industry and technology are well known in Vietnam: the motorbikes and cars that are our main forms of transportation; fans, telephones, computers, televisions, radios, and so on are largely Japanese-made. We know little, however, of the cultural wealth that lies behind these manufactures, and it is extremely difficult to introduce Japanese culture to Vietnam because of the language barrier. Since 1991, with the assistance of the Japan Foundation, efforts to begin solid programs for teaching Japanese as a foreign language are beginning and textbooks have been produced for study at the elementary and intermediary levels. Plans for other publications including a Japanese-language textbook specializing in trade and titles in other fields of the humanities are gradually growing. There is great potential for the introduction of more Japanese books, translated or otherwise, to Vietnam, particularly if publishing companies can establish direct contacts and cooperation. When that happens, increased cross-cultural communication will certainly add depth to the relations between our two countries.

(*Nguyen Dang Quang is deputy director of the Education Publishing House and director of the Desktop Publishing Centre in Hanoi.*)



## Best-sellers, General, Jan.-Dec. 1994

1. *Nihon o dame ni shita kyōnin no seijika* [Nine Politicians Who Ruined Japan] by Hamada Kōichi. (Kōdansha, ¥1,500). Exposé of corruption in Japanese politics, in which the eccentric politician popularly known as "Hamakō," now retired from political life, mentions real names and tells real stories from his own experience.
2. *Dai-ōjō* [The Great Crossing], by Ei Rokusuke. (Iwanami Shoten, ¥580). Comments on an old age, illness, and death gathered primarily from anonymous persons by a versatile TV scriptwriter and author.
3. *Madison gun no hashi* [The Bridges of Madison County] by Robert J. Waller. Translation by Muramatsu Kiyoshi. (Bungei Shunjū, ¥1,400). Story of pure love between a middle-aged man and woman unfolding in a fateful encounter over a period of four days and their lives thereafter.
4. *Isho* [Testament], by Matsumoto Hitoshi. (Asahi Shimbunsha, ¥1,000). Star of the popular "Downtown" comedy team Matsumoto's views on human nature and the entertainment industry.
5. *FBI shinri bunseikan* [Whoever Fights Monsters], by Robert K. Ressler. Translation by Aihara Mariko. (Hayakawa Shobō, ¥1,800). Powerful story of how an investigator gets inside the mind of a psychopathic killer, on which the movie *Silence of the Lamb* was based.
6. *Fainaru fantaji VI* [Final Fantasy VI]. Edited by Square. 4 vols. (NTT Shuppan, ¥570, ¥750, ¥800, and ¥900). Guide to strategy in a popular video game.
7. *Tenshi no jiritsu* [Rage of Angels], by Sidney Sheldon. 2 vols. Translation by Tenma Ryūko. (Academy Shuppan Co., ¥1,250 each). Dramatic story of Jennifer, a female lawyer, as she courageously faces the dangers of entanglements in organized crime and the intrigue of courtroom rivalry.
8. *Gan saihatsu su* [The Cancer Recurred] by Itsumi Masataka and Itsumi Harue. (Kōsaidō Shuppan, ¥1,200). Popular TV personality Itsumi Masataka's own record of his battle with cancer at the age of 48 and of his wife as she cared for him.
9. *Chōseirihō* [The "Trans-classification" System] by Noguchi Yukio. (Chūō Kōron Sha, ¥720). Presents a new method of classification based not on content but chronology.
10. *Nihon-ichi mijikai haha e no tegami* [A Brief Message from the Heart], ed. by Maruoka Municipal Government, Fukui Prefecture. (Daikōsha, ¥1,100). A collection of more than 30,000 letters addressed to mothers, submitted by people from all over Japan, whose brief lines express the strong feelings of the writers.

(Based on book distributor Tohan Corporation lists, January-December 1994)



## New Titles

### HISTORY

*Hyōhaku no seishinshi: Yanagita Kunio no hassei* [The History of the Wandering Spirit: The Origins of Yanagita Kunio]. Akasaka Norio. Shōgakusan, 1994. 193 × 133 mm. 438 pp. ¥4,500. ISBN 4-09-387127-2.

Yanagita Kunio (1875–1962) pioneered the field of folklore studies in Japan in the early twentieth century by gathering extensive information on the customs, beliefs and mores of the Japanese populace. Based on Yanagita's writings, this volume is a compelling intellectual history of folklore studies that attempts to present the achievements of his lifetime. It focuses on the lifestyle and traditions of one segment of Japan's itinerant population: the *miko* (shrine maidens), *hijiri* (monks) and other ascetics who made their living performing religious functions, such as offering prayers and conducting services for the repose of departed souls. Because their religious beliefs were different, being more primitive than the leading religions of the day, these itinerants were both venerated and scorned by ordinary, settled folk. They passed down Japan's primitive religions preceding Shinto and Buddhism, and ancient native folklore. Their itinerancy, the author suggests, may be the very reason

they were able thus to preserve those prehistoric traditions. This book leads the reader in a close scrutiny of folkways contemporary Japanese have long forgotten.

*Media no akebono: Meiji kaikokuki no shimbun shuppan monogatari* [The Dawn of Mass Media: Newspaper and Book Publishing during the Early Days of Modern Japan]. Takahashi Yasuo. Nihon Keizai Shimbunsha, 1994. 193 × 131 mm. 372 pp. ¥2,800. ISBN 4-532-16137-1.



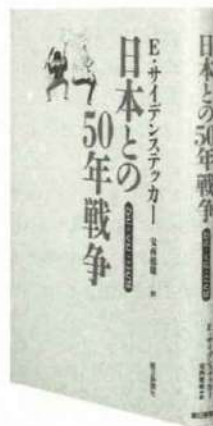
Cover design: Tamura Yoshiya

Around the beginning of the Meiji period (1868–1912), Japanese people craved foreign writings that could tell them more about the unfamiliar world outside. Publishing had flourished during the Edo period, too, but because printers then used woodblocks, whereby each character had to be carefully carved by hand, printers could not produce the mass quantities possible with movable type. Although the first Japanese-English dictionary, *Wa-Ei gorin shūsei*, which featured Roman letters and Japanese characters within the same text, marked a milestone in Japan's publishing history as the first Japanese book to be typeset using lead movable type, it was actually printed in Shanghai. Its publication occasioned the first meeting of its author, James Hepburn, American missionary and physician known today as the inventor of the Hepburn style of romanization, and the journalist Kishida Ginkō. The dictionary and the introduction of type printing gave direct access to world affairs to many more Japanese than ever

before, thereby greatly spurring Japan's cultural development. Kishida, meanwhile, went on to launch the country's first newspaper, which played an immeasurable role in the nation's modernization.

*Nihon to no gojūnen sensō: Hito, kuni, kotoba* [My Fifty-year War with Japan: The People, the Country, the Language]. Edward Seidensticker. Translated by Anzai Tetsuo. Asahi Shimbunsha, 1994. 194 × 135 mm. 298 pp. ¥2,300. ISBN 4-02-256799-6.

Eminent American scholar of Japanese literature Edward Seidensticker is perhaps best known for his complete English translation of the Heian classic *Genji monogatari* [The Tale of Genji], and for his part in Kawabata Yasunari's selection for a Nobel Prize through his translations of *Izu no odoriko* [The Izu Dancer], *Yukiguni* [Snow Country] and other works.



Cover design: Tada Susumu

In this essay collection, Seidensticker looks back on more than half a century of involvement with Japan and reminisces about his friendships with Kawabata and other writers. His first study of the Japanese language was prompted by the attack on Pearl Harbor, and when the U.S. State Department sent him to Japan immediately after the war, he became an avid Japanophile. While the book's title alludes to both the author's struggle with the Japanese language and his conflicts with the so-called "progressives" that formed the intellectual mainstream in Japan during the 1950s, it is intended, he says, mainly as a joke.

In a masterly discourse ranging beyond literature to many other



Cover design: Tanimoto Kazuhiko



areas of Japanese culture, Seiden-sticker balances his affection for Japan with penetrating insights and stinging criticisms that display a breadth of knowledge about the country.

**Ō-Edo risaikuru jijō [Recycling in Edo Japan].** Ishikawa Eisuke. Kōdansha, 1994. 190 × 148 mm. 316 pp. ¥1,600. ISBN 4-06-207049-9. Life in Japan during the Edo period (1603–1868) was fueled solely by solar energy. In this volume, Ishikawa argues that Edo society thus functioned under a highly refined, sustainable cycle of reused resources. This was possible, he says, because people not only lived in harmony with plants and depended on them for virtually everything they produced, but moreover skillfully recycled those products. Food, shelter, clothing, lighting, paper—all the daily necessities were made from vegetable materials that passed along in an established system of reuse. The recyclers of the day included *shoku akindo*, repairmen-cum-merchants who did such jobs as repapering torn lanterns while also selling new merchandise and offering trade-ins on secondhand goods; tinkers, grinders, and saw-setters who specialized in restoring old equipment and tools to good condition; and others who collected and recycled used paper, clothes or casks. These people were key agents in a sophisticated process of regeneration.

Amplly illustrated, this book is at once a history on the lifestyle of premodern Japan and a critique of contemporary civilization.

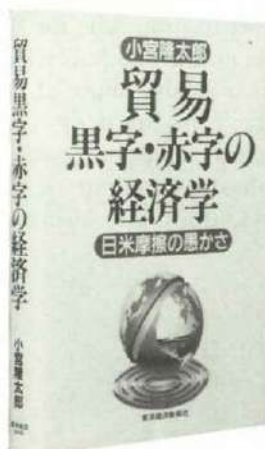


Cover design: Chiyoda Rō

## POLITICS AND ECONOMICS

**Bōeki kuroji akaji no keizaigaku: Nichi-Bei masatsu no orokasa [The Economics of Trade Surpluses and Deficits: The Senselessness of Japan-U.S. Friction].** Komiya Ryūtarō. Tōyō Keizai Shimpōsha, 1994. 194 × 134 mm. 314 pp. ¥1,700. ISBN 4-492-39194-0.

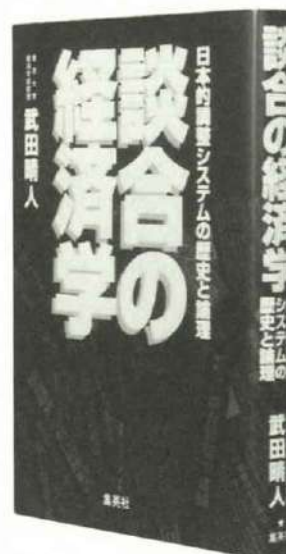
This volume examines and criticizes the conventional economic ideas clung to rigidly by those at the center of the ongoing trade dispute between Japan and the United States. The author asserts that there is no solid ground for the common assumption that a trade deficit is bad and a trade surplus good by pointing out that no one objects to expenditures exceeding income when it comes to a family building a home or a company investing in plant and equipment. He challenges Western analysts who insist that the Japanese market remains closed and the Japanese economists who agree with them to give evidence that Western markets are really any more open by comparison. Furthermore, he sharply criticizes economists for the lack of theoretical backbone their claims all too frequently betray.



Cover design: Tōyō Keizai Shimpōsha

**Dangō no keizaigaku: Nihon-teki chōsei shisutemu no rekishi to ronri [Dangō Economics: The History and Logic of Japan-Style Consensus in Business].** Takeda Haruhito. Shūeisha, 1994. 194 × 134 mm. 254 pp. ¥1,600. ISBN 4-08-781099-2. Discussions on the Japanese economy often focus on the system

of *dangō*, the traditional practice of bid-rigging among corporations vying for contracts. In addition to elucidating how the system works based on a wealth of data and literature, this book also provides an intriguing history of bidding practices from the late sixteenth century up to the recent scandals involving major construction firms.



Cover design: Kanda Hiroyoshi

In the *dangō* system, “member” contractors regularly confer on how to divide up available work for a given period of time. To ensure the agreements are honored by everyone, the system requires arbiters or coordinators whose role is to prevent any member getting an unfair advantage over the others. Sometimes, however, intervention comes from an outside party, such as from politicians, which often leads to bribery and other illicit dealings. The author sees the merits of *dangō* in its effectiveness as a counterbalancer to over-competition, and suggests the need to combine free-market principles with the rationale of prior adjustment of interests.

**Naniwa kin'yū-dō: Kane to hijō no hōritsu kōza [Loan Sharks à la Osaka: Legal Tips on Money and Coldheartedness].** Aoki Yūji, ed. Kōdansha, 1994. 188 × 128 mm. 207 pp. ¥1,200. ISBN 4-06-206517-7. Based on Aoki Yūji's nine-volume *Naniwa kin'yū-dō*, a story in manga comic-book form of the financial world in Osaka (called “Naniwa” in olden times), this book describes



different kinds of loan businesses, the legal knowledge necessary for creditors and debtors, and cases of personal bankruptcy.

After troubles between loan usurers and borrowers reached a critical point, a new law was enacted to regulate the behavior of money-lending organizations. However, while the use of outright coercion and violence in loan collecting is on the decline, there has been an increase in the incidence of underhanded and pernicious methods. The book also points out many loopholes in the court's execution proceedings. It has attracted considerable attention for its explication of many tragic incidents which arose out of ignorance of the law and litigation.



Cover design: Kawabata Hiroaki

***Nihon no koyō: Nijūisseiki e no saisekkei* [Employment in Japan: Replanning for the 21st Century]. Shimada Haruo.** Chikuma Shobō, 1994. 173 × 106 mm. 238 pp. ¥680. ISBN 4-480-05603-3.

The job market continues to worsen in Japan as the post-“bubble” business slump drags on. Keiō University economist Shimada Haruo proposes to reappraise the employment system and formulate a plan to create more jobs. In his view, lifetime employment and seniority-based wages are only customary practices, neither firmly established as institutions nor spelled out in employment contracts. He argues that the appreciation of the yen and the slow-growth business climate have

made it necessary for management to switch from an across-the-board, seniority wage system to one based on ability and performance. Corporations must also strive to maintain and improve their human resources by developing their employees' skills and reconsidering the whole-sale recruiting of new college graduates.



***Nihon no taishi: Aru ekonomisuto no yuigon* [Grand Vision for Japan: An Economist's Testament]. Shimamoto Reiichi.** PHP Kenkyū-sho, 1994. 195 × 134 mm. 210 pp. ¥1,500. ISBN 4-569-54289-1.

In this volume, economist Shimamoto (1927-93), who worked for many years at the Bank of Japan, presents a number of proposals for the country's economic and political future. From his intensive study of liberal economics from Smith to Hayek, Shimamoto arrives at a position which emphasizes the importance of business ethics in ensuring



Cover design: Abiko Katsuhiro

the smooth functioning of a market economy. His exposition includes a review of modern Japanese corporate ethics, an analysis of the dysfunctional aspects of the Russian economy, and misgivings about so-called Japanese-style management. He also suggests nine conditions that must be met to create a “good country,” among them a high moral standard among the public, clean environment, stable living conditions, the elimination of a marked rich-poor disparity, respect for individual freedom, and support for the self-help efforts of other countries. This is literally a volume of testament by an idealist who lived through Japan's wartime and postwar eras.

***Shin Kitachōsen to Nihon* [The New Japan-North Korea Relationship]. Ogawa Kazuhisa.** Tōyō Keizai Shimpōsha, 1994. 195 × 134 mm. 260 pp. ¥1,500. ISBN 4-492-21063-6.



Cover design: Tōyō Keizai Shimpōsha

The author was a member of the Ground Self-Defense Force, a theology student at Dōshisha University, and a magazine reporter before he established himself as one of the few military analysts in the country. In this book, he considers military and political relations among Japan, North and South Korea, China and the United States. He criticizes Japanese politicians for their over-reactions to the North Korean military threat, and argues that Japan should try to maintain a militarily and politically independent stance



toward both North Korea and the United States. On the topic of North Korea's Kim Jong Il, meanwhile, he raises doubts about his competence as a leader and highlights the weakness of his command over the military and the contradictions inherent in the elitist movement supporting him. His analysis also touches upon various aspects of North Korea's military capabilities, such as its development of the Rodong missile and biological, chemical, and nuclear weaponry.

**Zukai: Nihon no kin'yū gyōsei, kanchō, kin'yū kikan** [A Diagrammatic Guide to Japan's Financial World]. Kusumoto Hiroshi, ed. Tōyō Keizai Shimpōsha, 1994. 210 × 149 mm. 266 pp. ¥1,800. ISBN 4-492-08533-5.

The abundant diagrams and statistics in this book explain the relationships between financial institutions and the government bureaucracy in Japan. They include detailed data on subsidiaries of securities and trust companies that appeared after broad reforms of the financial system were introduced in 1992-93; on mergers of city banks and credit associations; on the role of a company established in 1991 by 162 private financial institutions to purchase collaterals for irrecoverable loans on member firms; and on actual cases of financing by the Deposit Insurance Organization. Explanations are also given on the various government ministries involved in financial administration, the Bank of Japan, and public as well as private financial institutions.

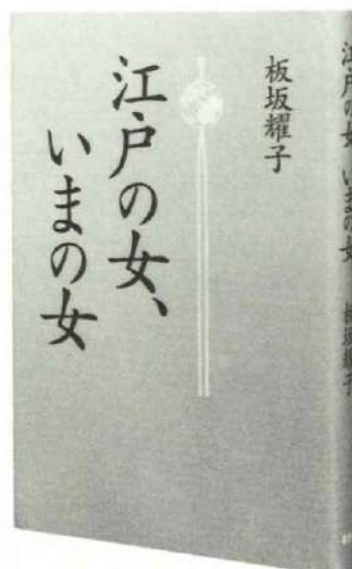


Cover design: Tōyō Keizai Shimpōsha

## SOCIETY

**Edo no onna, ima no onna** [Women of Edo, Women Today]. Itasaka Yōko. Ashi Shobō, 1994. 193 × 131 mm. 245 pp. ¥2,400. ISBN 4-7512-0554-4.

It is unlikely that the Edo period has ever before been approached as it is in this collection of critical essays. The author, a professor of Edo literature at Fukuoka University of Education, considers various female characters from the famous works of Chikamatsu Monzaemon, Ueda Akinari, Ihara Saikaku and other Edo-period writers from both the historical and contemporary perspectives. From an Edo point of view, she rescues the women from the unfairly condescending gaze of contemporary readers, but at the same time, as a woman of today, she categorically rejects the conditions under which they had to live. That is, she admires and empathizes with the women themselves, but does not sanction their social milieu.



Cover design: Ashi Shobō

Moving back and forward between the early modern period and the present, the author tries to align herself with the sophisticated (most contemporary observers would say strange) logic of the Edo age in order to understand it. On the other hand, she finds that, as a product of the social and economic conditions of the day, this was nonetheless a

warped kind of intellectual maturity. This is an engaging essay collection full of illuminating insights.

**Eisei tenrankai no yokubō** [The Allure of Specimen Exhibitions]. Tanaka Satoshi. Seikyūsha, 1994. 193 × 132 mm. 224 pp. ¥2,472. ISBN 4-7872-3083-2.

For many elderly Japanese, the term "specimen exhibition" still connotes something obscene. These exhibitions were a standard feature of official expositions, and often of local fairs and festivals, nestled somewhere in the throng between the candy-maker, the penny toys, and the circus sideshow. In a dimly lit pavilion, visitors would gape and grimace at models of the human body, specimens of parasites, medical photos of venereal disease, and other gruesome displays. It seemed somehow incongruous that these exhibits could be associated with the authorities—the police or the prefectural government—that usually sponsored them.



Cover design: Murayama Mamoru

This book, written by a critic whose previous publications include *Hara no mushi, warau* [Laughter of Worms], offers a unique perspective on Japan's modern era through a consideration of the emergence and public reception of medical exhibitions. The exhibits began, as did many cultural events in modern Japan, as part of a government campaign to educate the "ignorant" masses and instill in them proper values on health and hygiene.



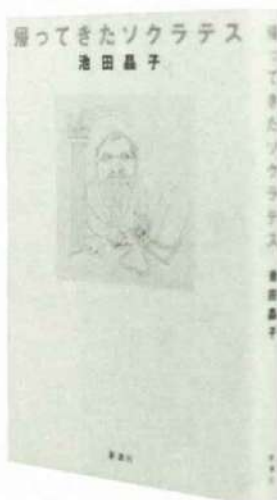
Though cloaked in the image of science, the exhibitions generally concealed a subtext of discrimination and control over the masses. (See *Japanese Book News*, No. 9, p. 5.)

**Iinuma Jirō chosakushū dai-yon-kan: Shimin undō kenkyū** [The Selected Works of Iinuma Jirō, Vol. 4: Citizens' Movements]. Iinuma Jirō. Miraisha, 1994. 192 × 134 mm. 344 pp. ¥3,914. ISBN 4-624-93304-4. Although Iinuma Jirō is a historian of agricultural economics who taught at Kyoto University, the depth and breadth of his scholarship puts him beyond academic pigeon-holing. His personally-picked, five-volume *Selected Works* offers a glimpse of what is a much greater scholarly achievement while also revealing another side of the author himself: the Christian, who, following the example of the Good Samaritan, is compelled to lend his support as an activist and theorist in grassroots citizens' movements.

This volume, the fourth in the series, presents his arguments for the Peace for Vietnam Committee, a group which emerged from the general anti-Vietnam War movement and is considered the first of its kind in Japan. Iinuma joined the Committee as a Christian. Not only organized movements, he insists, but even those fueled by the prayers of a single person are bound to clash with authority. He manages to re-

main flexible and sincere as he meditates on these matters while active in the peace movement. This commitment leads him from polemics for the Committee to a concern with the problems faced by Koreans resident in Japan. Thus, in this volume, we see the author's moral passion develop from the simple kindness of a good Samaritan to a deeper sense of unity with all sufferers of injustice.

**Kaettekita Sokuratesu** [Socrates Returns]. Ikeda Akiko. Shinchōsha, 1994. 191 × 133 mm. 212 pp. ¥1,400. ISBN 4-10-400101-5. While philosophy in Japan continues to suffer from lack of popularity, this volume "revives" Socrates after more than 2,000 years to explore a range of thorny contemporary problems—from brain death and aging to politics and women's rights—using the same question-and-answer method he employed so effectively in the Platonic dialogues. The author, a philosopher, has also published *Kangaeru hito: Orakuru Seiyō tetsugakushi* [Thinkers: The History of Oral Philosophy in the West].



Cover design: Takahashi Junko

The book is not, however, a pulpy attempt to lure more people to the unpopular field of philosophy. Squaring off against various adversaries on different topics, "Socrates" wields his famous dialectic tools to gradually chip away at the foundations of their cherished views, exposing what they at first took for granted and as incon-

testable truth to be nothing more than their own prejudices and arbitrary assumptions, the mere beliefs of those who have abandoned the difficult task of rigorous and honest thought.

The book, which was serialized in a monthly journal and is soon to be followed by a sequel, teaches that philosophy is not some special, esoteric finesse but simply the act of thinking itself.

**Kankyō-teki kōsei o motomete** [Toward Environmental Justice]. Toda Kiyoshi. Shin'yōsha, 1994. 194 × 130 mm. 372 pp. ¥3,605. ISBN 4-7885-0496-0.

The future of humanity depends on our response to today's environmental problems. The people of the industrially developed nations, in particular, are united by a common dread of what will happen if environmental degradation is allowed to continue unchecked. Today, given the North-South clash of interests and a growing cynicism even in the industrialized world that development and environmental protection are simply incompatible, efforts to save the environment tend to stop at treating only the symptoms of the disease, and a hopeful prognosis is increasingly difficult to maintain.

In this book, the author, a lecturer in environmental studies at Tsuru Bunka University, is determined to find answers to a range of questions



Cover design: Miraisha



Cover design: Yamazaki Kazuo



about environmental destruction, including how it comes about, how and whom it affects, and what we need to build a sustainable society that will never slip back into ecological disaster. Identifying over-development as the cause of the problem, he points to society's power elite—the political, bureaucratic and financial elite in capitalist countries, and the top bureaucrats and technocrats in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe—as the main perpetrators of that ongoing blunder. A society controlled by such an elite minority, he argues, almost inevitably leans toward excessive development, the economic strain of which is shifted to the weaker majority, resulting in environmental degradation and social injustice. In a provocative argument, the author carefully unravels the threads of this knotty issue as he constructs a vision of a society both fair and environmentally secure.

**Mada 'feminizumu' ga nakatta koro** [In the Days Before Feminism]. Kanō Mikiyo. Impakuto Shuppankai, 1994. 194 × 131 mm. 324 pp. ¥2,400. ISBN 4-7554-0038-4.

Feminism in Japan today seems to have entered a transition period, not only in terms of organization and action but in theory as well. The author of this volume broke new ground in Japanese women's history

with *Onna tachi no "jūgo"* [Women on the Home Front] (Chikuma Shobō, 1987), a study of the work and daily life of women in Japan during the Second World War.

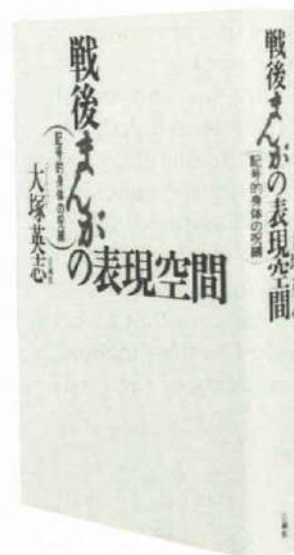
The present work is a collection of Kanō's writings mainly from the 1970s when "women's lib" was just beginning to attract attention in Japan as it branched away from the previous equal rights movement and established itself as the champion of "female logic." Around that time, the author left her position at a major publishing house and took a part-time job with a government-supported data-processing center. Her experiences helped open her eyes to Japanese society's hypocritical treatment of women in the work place. Inspired by her real-life observations, the book is more than a simple indictment of the "system"; it is a sober inquiry, from a woman's point of view, of the "human condition" in terms of the meaning of work and of living day to day. Her solid logic is more than relevant in the 1990s; the problems she first exposed have only grown more serious since.

**Sabetsu toshite no genshiryoku** [Nuclear Power as a Form of Discrimination]. Shimizu Shūji. Libertà Shuppan, 1994. 193 × 132 mm. 254 pp. ¥1,900. ISBN 4-947637-29-3.

Like Fukui Prefecture on the Sea of Japan coast, Fukushima Prefecture in the northeast produces around ten times its own demand for electric

power in order to supply major cities in other parts of the country. This book, by an economist at Fukushima University with a special interest in nuclear power, is a collection of essays on social phenomena associated with the nuclear power issue. The essays are grouped into three sections: "Accidents at the Chernobyl and Fukushima Nuclear Power Plants"; "Nuclear Power and the Regional Economy"; and "Appeals to the Prefectural Governor." The author points out the lack of awareness within local governments, electric power companies, and the judiciary of the dangers of nuclear power, and sheds light on structural contradictions in the consumer economy today.

**Sengo manga no hyōgen kūkan** [Expression in Postwar Manga]. Ōtsuka Eiji. Hōzōkan, 1994. 194 × 131 mm. 394 pp. ¥2,600. ISBN 4-8318-7205-9.

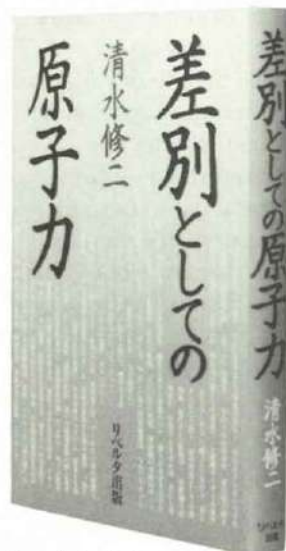


Cover design: Koma Takahiko

This author is a freelance editor who also writes popular commentaries on the semiotics of contemporary mass media. The critical essays collected here examine why manga comic books in Japan today seem unable to portray sexuality in more sophisticated, humane ways. Apart from a few exceptions like Ishii Takashi and Yamamoto Naoki, manga artists of the postwar period have failed, and continue to fail, to offer mature representations of eros. This is related, the author argues, to the decline of storytelling skills



Cover design: Kaihara Hiroshi



Cover design: Dateya



among the younger generation of manga artists. He offers a critical account of these circumstances that considers the effects of the increasingly compartmentalized division of labor in the manga production process.

**Tenkan suru Nihon shakai** [Japanese Society in Transition]. Shiobara Tsutomu. Shin'yōsha, 1994. 194 × 132 mm. 172 pp. ¥1,700. ISBN 4-7885-0478-2. Shiobara is a sociologist who specializes in the theory of social organization and social movements. In this volume, he examines the structure of Japanese society in its current transition from modernity to postmodernity. He identifies aspects of Japan's postmodern society in the disappearance of the hierarchical order among established Buddhist sects, large organized religions like Sōka Gakkai and Tenrikyō, neo-new religions and small spiritualist cults, and the emergence in its place of an even ground of opposition and competition. He sees this phenomenon as paralleling the polarization of the industrial structure and its shift toward software-oriented production. He attempts to elucidate a state of equilibrium he calls "oppositional complementarity" that he finds between the various rival religious organizations and in the current system of medical care that fails to provide real relief to the physical and spiritual ailments of the post-modern era.



Cover design: Kataoka Osamu

## CULTURE AND THE ARTS

**Arākizumu** [Arakism]. Araki Nobuyoshi; Itō Toshiharu, ed. Sakuhinsha, 1994. 210 × 149 mm. 434 pp. ¥2,800. ISBN 4-87893-200-7. One of the leading photographers in Japan, Araki Nobuyoshi has a unique ability to get straight to the point, either through his camera or with his pen. Edited by art critic Itō, this volume is a collection of Araki's observations and aphorisms, which have been dubbed "Arakism," covering the period from the publication in 1964 of *Satchin*, his first photographic collection, to the present.



Cover design: Suzuki Sei'ichi

Araki insists that "the objects of love are the objects of photography." Taking his cue from the semi-autobiographical genre of modern Japanese literature, the "I-novel," he defines himself as an "I-photographer," concerned with the representation of experiential truth and so choosing for his subject matter only those people or things in his immediate surroundings that he is really interested in. The photographs are therefore an ongoing expression of the artist's own self, whether they capture an everyday street scene or a woman's body, his favorite subject. Although the prose seems chaotic at first, perhaps this is something like the instinctive reflex of an artist who takes love—a theme difficult to treat head-on in the Japanese world of criticism—as his central concern. In fact, far from being poor writing, though meandering erratically back and forth, his

text convinces the reader that defiance is, after all, a variation of diffidence.

**Katsuji ga kieta hi** [The Last Days of Movable Type]. Nakanishi Hidehiko. Shōbunsha, 1994. 192 × 132 mm. 250 pp. ¥2,600. ISBN 4-7949-6172-3. Along with paper, movable type was one of the pillars that sustained modern culture. Today, however, movable type has all but disappeared from the printing industry. This book is the chronicle of a more than century-old print shop continuing up to its transition to computerized printing methods. The author is the fifth head of the company since its establishment early in the Meiji period (1868–1912).



Cover design: Kusaka Jun'ichi

The author's interest in computers began when he was a psychology student at Kyoto University. After graduating, he worked for a while in data analysis, but soon took a job in the printing company run by his father. There, he discovered how much the typesetter's masterful craft meant, but his experience with computers told him that it nonetheless ran against the tide of the times. Eventually prevailing over his father's view that "movable type is culture," he orchestrated the company's transition to computer-based printing. For the long-established company, which handled many orders for scientific works full of foreign words and rarely-used Chinese characters, this was quite a bold step.



Standing at one of the major crossroads of printing culture, the author conveys both his sorrow over the passing of movable type and his determination to help develop its computerized successor. His finely tuned prose, moreover, makes the book enjoyable reading.

**Kon no kioku [Indigo Memories].**

**Iida Ryūta.** Kadokawa Shoten, 1994. 194 × 132 mm. 334 pp. ¥2,000. ISBN 4-04-883374-X.

Iida is a haiku poet who still lives in the small mountain village in Yamaguchi Prefecture where he was born in 1921. He has been recording his impressions of the natural environment of his native home in haiku poetry for over fifty years. This volume, however, is a collection of essays in which he describes his day-to-day life as he enters old age.

He notes that poets born around 1919 or 1920 stand out in the haiku world today. He puts this down to the fact that people of that generation, which lived under the threats of war and tuberculosis, could not afford the time and trouble demanded by academic research or fiction writing, and so quite a few were naturally captivated by the unique economy of the haiku. His attempt to identify the common origins of these and other haiku poets who experienced the war is the keynote running throughout the essays. His portraits of unknown provincial figures provided along the way are reminiscent of the studies of common folk (*jōmin*) by the pioneering folklorist Yanagita Kunio.



Cover illustration: Funakoshi Yasutake

**Me no karyūdo [Photographic Hunters].** Ōtake Akiko. Shinchōsha, 1994. 200 × 148 mm. 287 pp.

¥2,000. ISBN 4-10-602401-2.

This volume looks at fourteen contemporary Japanese photographers, including Tōmatsu Teruaki, Moriyama Daidō, Araki Nobuyoshi and Shinoyama Kishin. The author is a nonfiction writer mainly of works on performance art, among them *Odoru shima Bari* [Bali, Island of Dance].



Cover design: Shinchōsha

In the present book, she is less interested in the photographs themselves, however, than in the lives of these artists who chose—or rather could not but choose—photography as their means of expression. She takes great pains, for instance, as she retraces the plight of Nakahira Takuma. Having captured the Japan of the 1970s in the fleeting, vivid images of his photographs and criticism, Nakahira disappeared from the forefront of photographic art after a bout of amnesia brought on by acute alcoholism, and yet today is still virtually a walking camera.

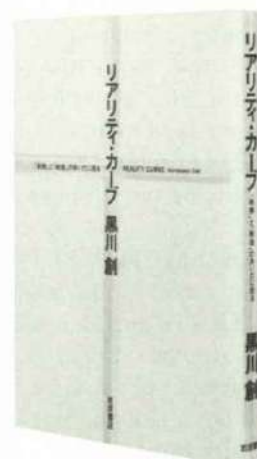
Each of the photographers dealt with is seen to exhibit his own distinctive style of expression, their only common trait being that (except for Kuwabara Kineo, born in 1913) they began their careers after the Second World War. Accordingly, the book may be read either as a photo-history of postwar Japan or as a sketch of contemporary Japanese photography, a compelling story in either case.

**Riaritī kābu [Reality Curve].**

**Kurokawa Sō.** Iwanami Shoten, 1994. 194 × 132 mm. 254 pp.

¥2,400. ISBN 4-00-002459-0.

What is “reality”? Can it be “touched” with language the way we touch things with our hands? A contemplative work by a young literary critic, this volume explores postwar Japanese literature and society by examining various views that captured the prevailing ethos of each phase of that fifty-year period. The author is uncompromising in his exposure of the logical inconsistencies of these arguments, returning repeatedly to the works of leftist writer Nakano Shigeharu as his touchstone. He places his faith in the kind of unequivocal determination he finds in Nakano as he mentally paced back and forth seeking a truth within himself.



Cover design: Minami Shimbō

The author feels an unsettling incongruity, for instance, in the expression “Japan as part of Asia,” an idiom often used by Japanese writers. When visiting Korea or Thailand, or talking with Koreans resident in Japan, he cannot but be struck by the emptiness of the phrase. Kurokawa finds the same kind of meaninglessness in the arguments concerning Japanese writers who underwent *tenkō*—public ideological conversion coerced by the repressive prewar state—and in Mishima Yukio’s discourse on the emperor. The author demands a language that is immune to relativization, a language that penetrates to the very root of things, and the linguistic effort that such a discourse requires.





Cover design: Minami Shimbō

**Sōketsu tachi no utage: Kanji no shinwa to yūtopia** [Cang Xie's Banquet: Utopia and the Legends of Chinese Characters]. Takeda Masaya. Chikuma Shobō, 1994. 194 × 134 mm. 322 pp. ¥2,200. ISBN 4-480-82313-1.

In this work, a young scholar of Chinese literature looks at the history of Chinese struggles with their complicated writing system and looks back on the ideographs' impact on regions outside the Chinese cultural sphere.

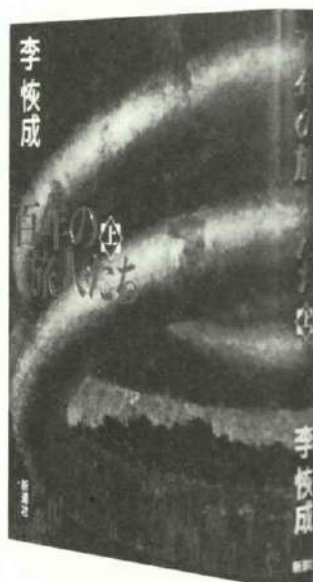
According to legend, Chinese characters were invented by the ancient sage Cang Xie (Ts'ang Hsieh; Jap.: Sōketsu). While the cumbersome system has often been reviled, the Chinese have not abandoned it. Advocates of reform impressed by the simplicity of Western alphabetic orthographies launched campaigns from time to time calling for the switch to a phonetic system with characters representing sounds instead of meaning.

Europeans, meanwhile, first learned about China's script from missionaries who went there in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. They developed some fanciful notions about it, however, that excited their imaginations about the possibilities of a universal language. Chinese appeared in the fantasy stories that gained popularity in the seventeenth century Europe, as the language of the moon.

A fascinating study of Eastern and Western cultures, this book compares the Chinese search for a universal language using Chinese characters with that of Europeans.

## LITERATURE

**Hyakunen no tabibito-tachi** [Travelers of a Hundred Years]. 2 vols. Lee Hoesung. Shinchōsha, 1994. 197 × 136 mm. each. 282 pp.; 290 pp. ¥1,500. each. ISBN 4-10-324502-6; 4-10-324503-4.



Cover illustration: Arita Akira

In the summer of 1947, two years after the invasion of Sakhalin (formerly Karafuto, as part of Japanese territory) by Soviet forces in the final stages of World War II, a group of five Korean families flee the island to Hokkaido. They are to be deported to Korea by order of the Allied Occupation authorities. The story recounts their experiences from their departure from Hokkaido to boarding the boats in Kyūshū that will take them to Korea. First comes their journey from Hakodate by ferry to Aomori, then their journey by land across the entire length of Honshū, and their subsequent life in a Nagasaki internment camp while waiting reversion to Korea. During their trip, the members of the group reveal their individual characters as they tell about their lives in Sakhalin. All of them see their lives as full of unhappiness and suffering. A grand epic of the Korean people, this novel is like a symphony composed of many weighty themes—nationalism and ethnic identity, history, relationships between men and women and within the family, life and death, the Christian god.

Some of the Koreans in the story end up staying in Japan. They stand as reminders to the reader of the discrimination that resident Koreans in Japan still suffer today. In a sense, and as its title suggests, the travelers in the story bear a century-long historical burden as representatives of their people. This fresh and memorable novel is the first the author has written originally for publication as a book in ten years.

**Jūkō** [Gun Muzzle]. 2 vols. Miura Ayako. Shōgakusan, 1994. 194 × 133 mm. each. 342 pp.; 318 pp. ¥1,600 each. ISBN 4-09-387113-2; 4-09-387114-0.

This long novel grew out of the publisher's request the author received to "write something about human beings and the gods set in the Shōwa period" (1926–89). Accordingly, it begins with the death of the Emperor Taishō in 1926 and ends on the day of the imperial funeral for the Emperor Shōwa in 1989. Its focus, however, is on the war years, as the title suggests.



Cover design: Kikuchi Nobuyoshi; Illustration: Koiso Ryōhei

The story describes a conscientious young teacher in Asahikawa, Hokkaido. As the Shōwa period opens, protagonist Kitamori Ryūta, the son of an affluent pawnbroker, is in elementary school. Amid the increasingly nationalistic school environment of the day, he meets a warm, kind and liberal-minded teacher who inspires him to become a teacher himself. By the time he has realized that dream, however,



Japan's leaders are preparing the country for war and tightening their repressive controls on freedom of thought and speech. In the story, based on a real-life incident, Ryūta is jailed on groundless suspicions of violating the Public Peace Preservation Law, drafted into the army after his release, and sent to the front lines. This novel describes his struggle to recover from these experiences after the war and eventually return to teaching. The author, whose works consistently pursue the essence of love and human nature, succeeds in arousing the strong empathy and emotions of readers with her moving portrait of the warmth and strength of which human beings are capable.

**Kāten kōru [Curtain Call]. Kuroi Senji.** Kōdansha, 1994. 194 × 136 mm. 444 pp. ¥1,900. ISBN 4-06-207197-5.

A romantic story set in the theater industry, this novel revolves around a middle-aged playwright who anguishes over, then finally agrees to the restaging of one of his plays that flopped on its first production ten years earlier. The problem he agonizes over is whether the failure was because the female lead was miscast or because the play itself was flawed. This time, moreover, he is falling in love with the actress playing the same role, a newly discovered star.

As their relationship deepens, he also struggles to write a new work for her to star in. To complete his

plot, the heroine must die, and he is gripped by the fear that doing so will take from him a woman he really loves. His fears become reality. Right before the opening day, the actress is killed in a fire. On opening night, too, at the curtain call, the actress's stand-in, who "dies" on the stage, does not appear to take her final bow.

Skillfully written by an author himself experienced in writing and producing plays, this novel vividly portrays the denizens of the theatrical world as it explores the love between a man struggling to develop his creative energies and a woman torn between her real and imaginary roles as fictional character, actress, and flesh-and-blood woman.

**Koishikawa no ie [The House at Koishikawa]. Aoki Tama.**

Kōdansha, 1994. 194 × 131 mm. 214 pp. ¥1,500. ISBN 4-06-206198-8.

This book's title refers to the house occupied by writer Kōda Rohan (1867–1947), a giant in modern Japanese literature. His daughter, Aya (1904–88), was raised under the strict discipline that was anchored in Rohan's unique aesthetic values. After his death, Aya became a renowned author in her own right, as the continued publication of her collected works testifies.

The author of the present volume is Aya's daughter, Rohan's granddaughter. In a series of essays, she records her memories of her grandfather's final ten years, when she and her mother lived with him in the Koishikawa area of Tokyo after Aya's divorce in 1938, when Tama was nine years old. The move exposed the author to the same rigorous upbringing her mother had received. Rohan is seen following a way of life the Japanese have allowed to disappear into history, one imbued with a deep, aesthetic attention to all aspects of living. Once, when Tama brought medicine to her grandfather at the request of her mother, Rohan told her, "Medicine can save your life if used properly, but if the amount is wrong, it can cause even greater suffering." And he scolded her for bringing medicine to him without making sure it was good for the patient.

The many real-life incidents these essays bring back for us down the years fondly recount the author's memories of joy and embarrassment from that bygone age.



Cover design: Anno Mitsumasa

**Nihon bungaku ni okeru "tasha" [The "Other" in Japanese Literature]. Tsuruta Kin'ya, ed.**

Shin'yōsha, 1994. 194 × 131 mm. 504 pp. ¥4,429. ISBN 4-7885-0505-3.

Written by a group of ambitious literary researchers and compiled by a professor at the University of British Columbia, the essays—18 in all—collected in this volume consider Japanese literature in terms of the paradigm of the "other," a key topic in cultural studies in recent years. No attempt is made to hold the concept of "otherness" to a consistent meaning throughout the essays. Rather, the contributing authors define it as their respective purposes require: the Other that isolates and defines the Self; the Other as the object of passionate love; the Other in the clash of cultures; the Other within the Self; and so on. The range of works treated encompasses both modern and contemporary Japanese literature, from Natsume Sōseki to Itō Sei and Ibuse Masuji to Endō Shūsaku, Kurahashi Yumiko, Yamada Emi, Murakami Ryū and Shimada Masahiko.

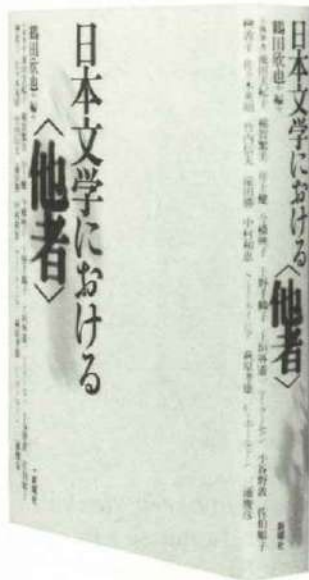
Among the characteristics of Japanese literature discussed is the idea that, whereas the Western sense of the Other is based on a paternal principle acquired through



Cover design: Suzuki Sei'ichi



fundamental conflict between humanity and the transcendent God, in Japan the encounter with the Other is understood as an opportunity for conciliation and fusion, thus guided by a maternal principle which works to blur the boundaries separating Self and Other.



Cover design: Koma Takahiko

**Niji no misaki [Rainbow Point].** Tsujii Takashi. Chūō Kōron Sha, 1994. 196 × 134 mm. 266 pp. ¥1,450. ISBN 4-12-002340-0. This is a biographical novel based on the life of poet and businessman Kawada Jun (1882–1966). Born into prominent family, Kawada began composing verse at the age of sixteen, and was quickly recognized as a prodigy. He went on, however, to achieve equal success as a businessman, eventually becoming the favorite candidate for a prestigious directorship in the Sumitomo enterprise then the hub of the Sumitomo *zaibatsu* (industrial and financial combine). During the Second World War, however, at the age of fifty-four, he voluntarily resigned from the company in an expression of moral indignation against the military regime. Returning thereafter to his literary career, he met Suzuka Toshiko (Shōko in the novel), then the wife of a Kyoto University professor. The widowed, middle aged poet and the married woman twenty-seven years his junior were drawn together by their love of poetry, and eventually they overcame

many trials and conflicts to realize their love for each other as well.

Sprinkling the text with Kawada's verse, Tsujii (real name Tsutsumi Seiji), who is both an accomplished poet and novelist as well as leading figure of the great Seibu business empire, gives both depth and breadth to his recreation of the difficult path the two lovers traveled. An author whose own life is on a scale no less grand than that of Kawada himself, Tsujii makes this story a compelling novel truly satisfying to mature readers.



Cover design: Kikuchi Nobuyoshi;  
illustration: Ushijima Noriyuki

**Raiden hongi [Champion Raiden],** Iijima Kazuichi. Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 1994. 194 × 131 mm. 436 pp. ¥2,800. ISBN 4-309-00916-6. Raiden Tame'emon (1767–1825) is reputed to have been the strongest wrestler in the entire history of the sumo. From its origins as *tsujizumō*, an attraction combining gambling and entertainment, sumo had evolved into a major fund-raising spectacle by the time Raiden appeared during the latter half of the Edo period (1603–1868). It had become the pastime of the noble and well-to-do, while feudal lords vied to patronize powerful wrestlers as status symbols.

This full-length novel is a fictionalized recreation of Raiden's life amid a turbulent age of famine, misgovernment and urban riots. He is portrayed as a cultivated and warm-hearted man; he would often take



Cover design: Milky Isobe

the babies of the poor into his arms in respect for the widely held belief that a child picked up by a sumo wrestler would grow up strong and healthy. Initially, however, he was disliked by his peers both for his incredible strength and because he ignored the conventions of betting, match-fixing and other rules of the sumo world. But he soon became a champion of the common people, a voice for their brooding anger. This led to his unanticipated involvement in Edo power struggles and finally his banishment from the inner city.

Skillfully applying both extensive historical research and his own inventive talents, the author portrays an extraordinary wrestler in the days when sumo was still young and wild.

**Shiga Naoya [Shiga Naoya].** 2 vols. Agawa Hiroyuki. Iwanami Shoten, 1994. 194 × 132 mm. each. 460 pp.; 472 pp. ¥1,800 each. ISBN 4-00-002940-1; 4-00-002941-X.

Shiga Naoya (1883–1971) is one of the pillars of the modern novel in Japan. Selections of his works are virtually a standard feature of school textbooks for Japanese language and literature studies. The great admiration and respect both his literary contemporaries and later writers have showed for him is legendary. This tremendous impact was a result not only of his writing but also of his appeal as a person.

This volume is a biography of Shiga written by an author who



worked on the compilation of three collections of his works and who considers himself the youngest of Shiga's literary disciples. Covering Shiga's entire life from birth to funeral over some 900 pages, the book depicts not only the man himself but also the changing milieu of family and friends around him. It is written in narrative style, with each of the fifty-three chapters reading like a self-contained short story rich in human interest that captures the reader's attention, even for those who do not know Shiga or his works.

Of the many Shiga biographies that have appeared, this account of the writer's truly fascinating eighty-eight years is perhaps the finest.



Cover design: Shiota Shō

**Shikeishū Nagayama Norio [Condemned Criminal Nagayama Norio]. Saki Ryūzō.** Kōdansha, 1994. 194 × 136 mm. 476 pp. ¥1,900. ISBN 4-06-207121-5.

Death row prisoner Nagayama Norio (b. 1950) is a somewhat unique criminal in Japan. He was nineteen when he was arrested for the murder of four people in a series of pistol attacks. Though from a background of such desperate poverty that he could not even finish junior high school, Nagayama used his time in prison to study and underwent a remarkable transformation of character. Convinced his crimes were born of poverty and need, he wrote a bestselling biographical novel,

*Muchi no namida* [Tears of Ignorance], from his jail cell. He also won the Prize for New Japanese Literature for his autobiographical story *Kibashi* [Wooden Bridge] (Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 1990).

The author of the present work, a biographical novel based on Nagayama's life, was on the selection committee that picked Nagayama for the prize and subsequently developed an interest in the serial murders for which he was convicted. He pieces together the twenty-seven-year-old incident from court records, police files, newspaper reports, psychological evaluations and testimonies from various people involved in the case.



Cover design: Mōri Kazue

Without passing his own judgments, he draws out the peculiarities of the incident in a carefully controlled style sustained throughout the book. Though the afterword claims the book was written as a novel and no more, perhaps "nonfictional novel" might be a more apt description for this excellent reconstruction by an author well aware that there is always a degree of subjectivity in any account of the "facts."

**Shōsetsuka Ōoka Shōhei: Haisen to iu jūjika o seotte [The Novelist Ōoka Shōhei and the Cross of Defeat].** Matsumoto Hiroshi. Tōkyō Sōgensha, 1994. 194 × 131 mm. 270 pp. ¥1,800. ISBN 4-488-02340-1. In 1946, at the age of thirty-seven, Ōoka Shōhei (1909–88) published

*Furyoki* [Prisoner of War, tr. 1967], a novel based on his experiences after being captured in the Philippines during the Second World War. From there he went on to become one of Japan's leading writers of the postwar period.



Cover design: Tōkyō Sōgensha

This volume is a collection of literary criticism offered as a kind of requiem to Ōoka by an author who worked in the publishing house that produced Ōoka's first collection of writings. Though he lost contact with the novelist when he moved on to a teaching job, in this book the author reveals the great affection and esteem he feels for Ōoka through a rigorous critical reading of his works. Though the terse, logical style of *Furyoki* is often attributed to the influence of French literature which Ōoka had studied, the author suggests it also reflects the style of the books about the game of go that Ōoka absorbed himself in when he tired of searching for ways to record his POW experience faithfully. The secret to the success of Ōoka's debut work, that is, was his ability to unravel the threads of his own experience with the same rational care with which he puzzled out the possibilities and permutations of the pieces on the go board.

Such penetrating critical insights, which only someone who has admired Ōoka's work so deeply and for so long could provide, fill this book.



## Events and Trends

### Holocaust-“Debunking” Fiasco

A Jewish organization in the United States protested an article, published in the February issue of the monthly *Marco Polo* (put out by mass-market publisher Bungei Shunjū), arguing that the Nazis did not carry out genocide at Auschwitz. The outcry prompted corporations in Japan and overseas including Volkswagen and Mitsubishi Motors to cease advertising in the magazine. Other companies threatened to withdraw space ads not only from *Marco Polo* but from other periodicals put out by Bungei Shunjū. In response, the publisher recalled copies from distribution and later decided to close down the magazine altogether.

Founded in May 1991, *Marco Polo* was a mass-market journal aimed at readers in their thirties with an official circulation figure of 250,000. The article in question was authored by a Japanese doctor based on articles from an ultra-rightist propaganda periodical published by the Institute for Historical Review and a number of other works by revisionist authors who believe that the campaign of genocide known as the Holocaust is unsubstantiated. The theory argues that the gas chambers at Auschwitz were not used for execution.

Leading organization of American Jews, the Simon Wiesenthal Center, declared the article outright discriminatory for its denial of the genocide. A representative of the Israeli embassy in Japan also expressed its dismay about the article in a meeting with the magazine's editors. In recognition of the inappropriateness of the article, Bungei Shunjū decided to close down the publication entirely.

Bungei Shunjū, which is known for its highly reputed monthly *Bungei Shunjū* and is among Japan's most prestigious publishers, has come under fire as a result of this incident for failing to understand its responsibilities as a media

institution. Konaka Yōtarō, executive director of the Japan P.E.N. Club, said, “As a writer, I am shocked that [Bungei Shunjū] would allow an article so completely defiant of international common knowledge to be published.”

### Delivery Service of Japanese Books to 181 Countries

In April, a subsidiary of the Yamato Delivery Service specializing in express book delivery expanded its business overseas, to 181 countries in Europe, North America, Asia, and elsewhere. Orders received by telephone, postcard, fax, or computer communication (email) are processed and books sent to the address indicated via the Yamato Delivery group's international service. Delivery from the publisher requires four to seven days and packaging two to three days, but even when holidays intervene, delivery is made within two weeks. In addition to the price of the book, the cost of the new service includes a handling charge (¥380 per order regardless of number of books), customs charges, and postage, but is still twenty or thirty percent lower than previously available international delivery services.

The service handles ordinary books, cassette tapes, videos, CDs, and CD-ROM software, but not magazines, comic books, or textbooks. Yamato says this type of service is the first of its kind in the industry. It believes there is potential demand for around 100 orders per month, mainly from Japanese businessmen posted overseas.

### Tokyo International Book Fair 1995

The four-day Tokyo International Book Fair was held February 8th to 11th at the Makuhari Messe convention center east of Tokyo, displaying books from Japan and overseas. Originating in a local event started in 1984 by seven publishing organizations including the Japan Book Publishers Association and the Japan Magazine Publishers Association, the event went international in 1993. At this year's, seventh, fair, extra effort was made to

accommodate foreign publishers. In addition to 499 local presses, 401 publishers from 30 countries and areas participated, displaying a total of 230,000.

The fair featured exchange with other nations of Asia this time, and the space set aside along the “main street” in the center of the exhibition hall was packed with the booths of publishers hailing from China, Taiwan, Indonesia, the Philippines, and other Asian countries.

As at previous fairs, participants and visitors quickly got down to business, discussing matters of international copyright, joint publishing, and other projects. Compared with the awkwardness and other difficulties encountered last year, one participant commented, discussions seemed more lively and negotiations proceeded more successfully. Much of the business between Japanese and publishers from other Asian countries revolved around comic works, reflecting heightened awareness of respect for copyrights.

During the last two days of the fair, the exhibits were opened to the public, and 18,000 visitors admitted. Bargain sales on discount domestic and foreign-language books were extremely popular. Of particular interest were the appearance of “electronic books,” CD-ROMs, and other digital-age publications in the exhibits.

The Asian Pacific Publishers Association founded in 1994 held a forum in conjunction with the fair which was used to publicize its appeal for the protection of author copyrights in a first-day presentation, and the APPA Publishing Prize was presented to outstanding translated works and joint publications produced in member countries.

### WWII Fifty-Year Anniversary Publications Proliferate

The fiftieth anniversary year of the end of World War II has occasioned the appearance of many retrospective series. Iwanami Shoten begins publication in July of the six-volume *Sengo Nihon: Senryō to sengo kaikaku* [Japan Since the War: The Occupation and the Postwar Reforms] contributed to by



48 political scientists, economists, and specialists in other fields. Iwanami's paperback (*shinsho*) series, under the year's theme: *Sengo gojūnen: Nihon no "ima" o kangeru tame ni* [Fifty Years Since the War: Food for Thought on Japan Today], features related titles, such as Kawakami Minato's *Sengo bunkaku o tou* [An Inquiry into Postwar Literature].

Also a prominent presence are photograph collections surveying the Shōwa era (1926–89). Shōgakukan starts publication in the summer of well-known photographer Domon Ken's works, *Domon Ken no Shōwa* [Domon Ken's Record of the Shōwa Era] (tentative title; 5 vols.). Mainichi Shimbunsha's contribution is *Mikōkai shashin de miru sengo gojūnen: Ano koro kimi wa wakakatta* [The Fifty Years Since the War in Unpublished Photographs: The Days When You Were Still Young], which went on sale in February, made up of collections under politics, lifestyles, films, comics, radio, television, advertising, popular songs, and other groupings. The Asahi Shimbunsha's *Asahi rekishi shashin raiburari: Sensō to shomin, 1940–1949* [The Asahi Historical Photograph Library: The War and the People, 1940–49] (5 vols.), which went on sale in March, shows how ordinary people lived through this period.

## Publishing in 1994

According to data compiled by the Research Institute for Publications, sales of books and magazines in 1994 totalled ¥2.54 trillion, only 2.1 percent up from the previous year. The rate of increase was at its lowest ebb since the 1981 recession following the second oil crisis.

The aggregate amount of book sales increased by a comparatively favorable 3.4 percent, but magazines only 1.2 percent, the lowest rate since the end of the war. Although the recession has passed its worst point and recovery has supposedly begun, the leveling off of net income that slowed consumer spending has dealt a direct blow to the publishing industry.

The number of book copies sold increased 1.2 percent, rising above the figure for the previous year for the first time in six years. Most popular are economical pocket-size and other softbound editions, and readers are keeping their distance from hardbound books and dry-and-academic works. What sustained the growth of the industry was the boom in manga comic books and bestsellers brought out in low-priced paperback.

Content-wise, literature and the arts put up a good showing. In addition to new titles by popular writers

Yoshimoto Banana and Murakami Haruki, the awarding of the Nobel Prize for literature to Ōe Kenzaburō helped to encourage more literary reading.

## Earthquake-related Books Flourish

Following the massive tremors that shook Kobe and the surrounding area on January 17, the reality of earthquake disasters became very immediate, prompting people to study more carefully how to protect themselves and their livelihood. Readers seeking books about earthquakes sharply increased and many bookstores installed a special corner on the subject.

A wide range of works, from volumes on how to protect yourself from and survive major temblors, to specialized works on geological faults and liquefactive apparition, have all markedly increased sales. The list consists of about seventy titles (as of the end of February), including emergency reprints of previously published works.

One sudden bestseller that appeared toward the end of January is *Daichi dōran no jidai* [The Era the Earth Revolted] (Iwanami Shoten) by Ishibashi Katsuhiko (of the Ministry of Construction Building Research Institute), first published in August 1994.

## Continued from p. 5

of the Japanese Group: The Structure of Inclusion and Exclusion] (Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 1990), which analyzes, in the framework of *Nihonjinron*, a variety of recent events in Japan, such as bullying in school, the Recruit scandal, and the "self-imposed" business sacrifice on the day of the funeral of the Shōwa Emperor. The latest work by Sugimoto Yoshio (of La Trobe University) and Ross Mouer (of Monash University), who have collaborated in many co-authored *Nihonjinron* books, is *Nihonjinron no hōteishiki* [Formulas for *Nihonjinron*] (Chikuma Shobō, 1995). Basically the book is a Japanese version of their earlier opus, *Images of Japanese Society*, mentioned above.

Lastly, I should mention *Sekai no naka no Nihonjin: Shin Nihonjinron* [The Japanese in a World Context: Neo-Nihonjinron] (Yomiuri Shimbunsha, 1986) edited by the Yomiuri Research Institute. This book consists of four roundtable discussions (on "the Japanese unmasked," "the road to internationalization," "expectations and responses of Japanese diplomacy," and

"Japanese in the world context") and three additional segments (on "pluses and minuses of *Nihonjinron*," "the dynamism of the Japanese economy," and "the Japanese-style politics and diplomacy"), each of which contains several short essays by prominent intellectuals (including Katō Hidetoshi, Satō Seizaburō, Hironaka Wakako, and Mushakōji Kinhide), followed by a roundtable discussion by the authors of the essays. The four roundtable discussions are by Japanese, but participants of the three segments include a number of foreigners (like Ronald P. Dore, Merry T. White, and Vsevolod V. Ovchinnikov). Like Maniwa's, this book is characteristic of more recent *Nihonjinron* in that it is not an attempt to present another *Nihonjinron*, its title notwithstanding, but instead to consider where *Nihonjinron* can take us, how useful they are, and other meta-*Nihonjinron* issues.

(The author is Professor at Stanford University, California.)



## Major Publishers in Tokyo 4

This issue introduces four publishers, which, though small, specialize in books of distinction and high quality. All were established between 1960 and 1970, and play a leading role in Japan's non-mainstream culture or counter-culture. They are known for producing works in literature, the humanities, and social sciences of an idiosyncratic character not seen in the lists of the giant publishers.

### Seidosha

Ichise Bldg  
1-29 Kanda Jimbo-cho  
Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 101  
Tel: 03-3291-9831  
Fax: 03-3291-9834  
Founded: 1969  
Staff: about 30

The range of Seidosha's books is wide, embracing poetry, thought, literature, psychoanalysis, and many other fields. It also puts out two highly reputed periodicals, *Yuriika* and *Gendai shisō*. *Yuriika*, founded in 1969, is a continuation of a prewar journal with the same title devoted to poetry, and *Gendai shisō*, launched in 1973, focuses on French philosophy and ideas, especially structuralism and later schools of thought. Among Seidosha's publications are collected essays and works of leading Japanese opinion leaders, including philosopher Nakamura Yūjirō, cultural anthropologist Yamaguchi Masao, psychologist Kishida Shū, and literary critics Shibusawa Tatsuhiko, Yoshimoto Takaaki, and Hasumi Shigehiko, as well as poets Ōoka Makoto, Sasaki Yukitsuna, and Tanikawa Shuntarō.

### Shōbunsha

2-1-12 Soto-Kanda  
Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 101  
Tel: 03-3255-4501  
Fax: 03-3255-4506  
Founded: 1960  
Staff: about 25

Shōbunsha publishes mainly literary works and translations, and its collection of the works of leftist French novelist and critic Paul Nizan (1905–40) was very influential among Japanese youth in the late 1960s. Its titles feature the talents of avant-garde or sub-culture writers in jazz, rock, and other genres, such as essayist Uekusa Jin'ichi and jazz pianist Yamashita Yōsuke. The 5-volume collection of works by novelist Shimao Toshio, *Shimao Toshio sakuhinshū* (1961–67), was also highly acclaimed. Among other unique writers are novelist Kataoka Yoshio, novelist and critic Kobayashi Nobuhiko, and musician Takahashi Yūji. Shōbunsha today focuses mainly on history, society, arts, and literature, as well as contemporary music and theater. It also introduces through translation writers not much known in Japan in the fields of music, fantasy, and poetry.

### Sōshisha

4-26-26 Jingumae  
Shibuya-ku, Tokyo 150  
Tel: 03-3470-6565  
Fax: 03-3470-2640  
Founded: 1968  
Staff: 43

Under the motto "Nonfiction of a new style and perspective," Sōshisha publishes titles in literature and history, and many have been taken up in the media, such as poet Tanikawa Shuntarō's *Mazā Gūsū no uta* (Japanese translation of *The Nursery Rhymes of Mother Goose*) and a collection of critiques by Iwata Hiroshi, *Dōshitachi gohan desu yo* [Time to Eat, Comrades]. Tokudaiji Arisune's *Machigai darake no kuruma erabi* [Mistake-ridden Car Buying] (1977) made it to the top of the bestsellers' list, making *machigai-darake no* ("mistake-ridden") a popular catch-phrase. Among notable Sōshisha translations are Hunter Davis' *The Beatles* and several other books on the British singing group and Alicia Bay Laurel's *Living on the Earth*. Of its latest publications, *Seihin no shisō* [Philosophies of Deliberate Simplicity] by Nakano Kōji (see *Japanese Book News*, No. 3, p. 8) became a bestseller immediately after it came out in 1992.

### Takarajima Sha

5-5-5 Kojimachi  
Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 102  
Tel: 03-3239-0181  
Fax: 03-3264-6878  
Founded: 1970  
Staff: 110

Originally a group of freelancers engaged in data-gathering and feature-writing for weekly magazines named JICC Shuppankyoku, Takarajima Sha started off under its new name (meaning "Treasure Island" company) in 1992. The firm is known for the fresh quality of the works it produces, and its bold and adventurous publishing projects. The biweekly magazine *Takarajima*, launched in 1974, devoted mainly to counter-culture themes and rock, is popular among young readers in their teens and twenties. *Bessatsu Takarajima* is a nonfiction series published three or four times monthly dealing with social problems, culture, entertainment, and other topics. By virtue of its investigative approach to issues, it has opened up new territory in the publishing world with more than 200 titles so far.

Original Japanese for titles given in English in cover illustration (clockwise from top left):

**Tanizaki Jun'ichirō:** 1. *Tade kuu mushi*, 2. *Shisei*,  
3. *Shunkinshō*, 4. *Kagi*, 5. *Sasameyuki*, 6. *Fūten rōjin*  
*nikki*, 7. *In'ei raisan*.

**Ōe Kenzaburō:** 1. *Kojinteki na taiken*, 2. *Shiiku*,  
3. *Man'en gannen no futtobōru*, 4. *Shisha no ogori*,  
4. *Nin'gen no hitsuji*, 4. *Okurete kita seinen*, 7. *Mizukara*  
*waga namida o nuguitamau hi*.

**Kawabata Yasunari:** 1. *Yukiguni*, 2. *Sembazuru*, 3. *Izu no*  
*odoriko*, 3. *Koto*, 5. *Yama no oto*, 6. *Nemureru bijo*,  
7. *Mizuumi*.

**Abe Kōbō:** 1. *Suna no onna*, 2. *Daikon kamyōki*, 3. *Tanin*  
*no kao*, 4. *Moetsukita chizu*, 5. *Hako otoko*, 6. *Yūrei wa*  
*koko ni iru*, 6. *Bō ni natta otoko*.

**Mishima Yukio:** 1. *Shiosai*, 2. *Gogo no eikō*, 3. *Kinkakuji*,  
4. *Utage no ato*, 5. *Kamen no kokuhaku*, 6. *Kindai*  
*nōgakushū*, 7. *Haru no yuki*.

**Ibuse Masuji:** 1. *Kuroi ame*, 2. *Sanshōuo*, 3. *Yōhai taichō*,  
4. *Yane no ue no sawan*, 5. *Tange shi tei*, 6. *Honjitsu*  
*kyūshin*, 7. *Jon Manjirō hyōryūki*.