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NUMBER 14
SUMMER 1996

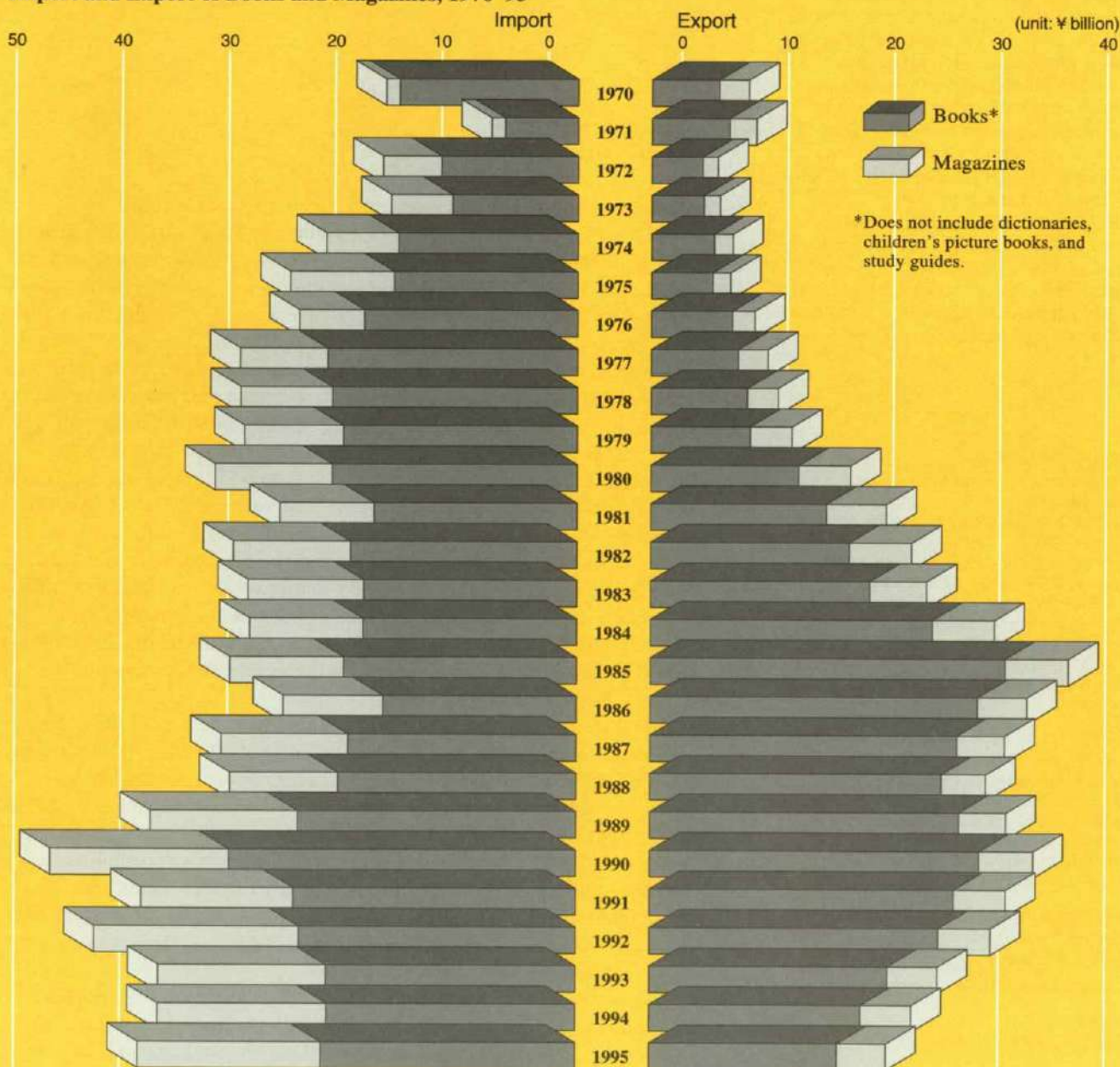
Japanese Book News

Historical Fiction

Japanese Economy

On Translation of Japanese Literature

Import and Export of Books and Magazines, 1970-95



Source: *Shuppan nenkan 1971-96-nemban* [Publishers' Year Book, 1971-96] (Shuppan News Sha).



The Japan Foundation

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

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Bibliographic and Production Services
Shuppan News Co.

Editorial and Translation Services
Center for Intercultural Communication

Design

Michiyoshi Design Laboratory, Inc.

Printed in Japan

©The Japan Foundation 1996
ISSN 0918-9580

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From the Editor

Popular fiction writer and recipient of the Order of Culture Shiba Ryōtarō died on February 12, 1996. Author of numerous widely read historical novels such as *Ryōma ga yuku* (1962–66) about samurai activist Sakamoto Ryōma (1836–67), and *Saka no ue no kumo* (1969–72) about military officers involved in the Russo-Japanese War (1904–05), Shiba was highly respected for his critiques of civilization based on a keen sense of history and for writings that suggested positive, constructive directions for Japanese and Japanese society in the postwar period. Shiba is little known overseas, but like prewar popular novelist Yoshikawa Eiji (known for his epic *Miyamoto Musashi*), his works will be read for a long time to come. What is the reason for the widespread passion for historical fiction among Japanese readers? Literary critic Nawata Kazuo offers his interpretation of the fascination with this genre.

Reflecting the prolonged recession and the political changes affecting both Japan and the world that make framing visions for the future difficult, publishing of books in the fields of politics and economics has slowed. Our second lead essay summarizes the analysis of Tōkai University Katsumata Hisayoshi over the past ten years concerning the "bubble" economy and its collapse.

For our Japanese Books Abroad feature this time we asked Professor of Japanese Studies at Yale University Edwin McClellan, who is translator of Natsume Sōseki's *Kokoro* and Shiga Naoya's *An'ya-kōro*, to write about his insights concerning the translation of Japanese literature into English. Professor McClellan, who was awarded the Kikuchi Kan Prize in 1994 for his achievements in training younger specialists in Japanese literature, received the Sixth Noma Literary Translation Prize in October 1995 for the excellence of his translation of Yoshikawa Eiji's memoir *Wasure-nokori no ki* as *Fragments of a Past* (Kodansha International, 1995).

We would like to thank all our readers for their generous cooperation in returning the questionnaire included with the last issue of *Japanese Book News*. The many valuable suggestions and ideas as well as words of encouragement we received will help us to further improve the content of these pages.

Historical Fiction for the 1990s

Nawata Kazuo

Currently on Japan's best-seller list—more than 400,000 copies sold so far—are three works of historical fiction depicting heroic figures of ancient China: *Chōji* [Wengong], 3 vols. (Kōdansha, 1993), about the king of the state of Jin during the “Spring and Autumn” period (722–481 B.C.); *Anshi* [Yanzi], 3 vols. (Shinchōsha, 1994), portraying the exploits of a “Spring and Autumn” period statesman of the state of Qi; and *Mōshōkun* [Meng-changjun], 5 vols. (Kōdansha, 1995), the tale of a Qi leader of the “Warring States” period (403–221 B.C.). All three of these multi-volume novels are by Miyagitani Masamitsu (b. 1945).

The popularity of fiction going back to Chinese antiquity may have something to do with the fact that every phase of Japan's own history, from ancient times to the relatively recent Meiji (1868–1912) and Taishō (1912–26) eras, has been written about exhaustively, some periods more than others. The Chinese continent, with its 4,000-years of rising and falling dynasties and its rich cast of historical characters no doubt answers the quest of both authors and readers for a backdrop of even larger and more romantic scale.

Another source of Chinese historical fiction's appeal may be the tradition of depicting even villains as human, as exemplified by the timeless classic, the chronicle of the Three Kingdoms, *Sanguozhi*. Wars and battles, such stories illustrate, can serve paradoxically to pave the way for the recovery of humanity. It was at the time of the Persian Gulf War, notably, that *Shokatsu Kōmei* [Zhuge Liang], by Chin Shunshin (2 vols., Chūō Kōron Sha, 1991), became a best-seller. The ingenious stratagems of its protagonist, the third-century general Zhuge Liang (181–234), offered a striking contrast to the high-tech tactics witnessed in the Middle East that seemed oblivious to the human face of warfare.

Author Chin Shunshin dealt with a similar theme in another novel, *Yaritsu Sozai* [Yeh-lu Ch'u-ts'ai], 2 vols. (Shūeisha, 1994), about the chief minister to Chinggis Khan who supported the great Mongol leader from the shadows. At first glance, the book appears to be a critique of the kind of chaos resulting from politics carried out in a leadership vacuum, but in fact the author's intention is to portray popular anger at the frivolity and deception allowed to pervade that ideally most-noble and sophisticated human endeavor we call government.

New Heroic Horizons

The heroes of historical fiction provide models or ideals for ways of living for people confronting contemporary realities. Well before Miyagitani romanticized Yanzi for Japanese readers, they had Yoshikawa Eiji's *Miyamoto Musashi* (tr. *Musashi*, 1981; 8 vols., Kōdansha, 1990, pocket edition), originally published 1935–39 about the half-legendary swordsman, and Shiba Ryōtarō's *Ryōma ga yuku* (8 vols. Bungei Shunjū, 1975, pocket edition),

originally published 1962–66, about Sakamoto Ryōma, one of the “men of high purpose” who contributed to the downfall of the old feudal regime and the emergence of a new government after the opening up of the country in the mid-nineteenth century.

Both these long novels became best-sellers that gave readers heroes dedicated to an unbroken path and a consistent philosophy of life, one set coming out during the late thirties as Japan plunged into war abroad, and the other in the midst of the rapid economic growth period after World War II. Following Miyagitani's conviction that historical fiction should above all be deeply moving and inspiring, *Yanzi* gives readers a hero to admire in a statesman of ancient China who created a golden age so vibrant that no rival force could destroy it. Amid the disappointments and uncertainties of the post-bubble age, Yanzi's character and achievements shine through all the more impressively.

Part of the greatness of Miyagitani's novel is its portrayal of how even the great can be isolated by their own noble-mindedness. Yanzi's solitude emerges in even sharper relief because of the passions and romance surrounding his archenemy, Cui Zhu. After slaying the Qi sovereign who had stolen his beloved wife, Cui Zhu seized power. When the Qi historian records that “Cui Zhu killed his lord,” Cui slays the chronicler, then finds the chronicler's brother writing the same thing. Cui promptly kills the younger brother; and only when even this fails to prevent yet a younger brother from setting down history truthfully does Cui finally desist from shedding further blood.

In the latter part of the story, Cui's wife is murdered, and the feared and fierce archenemy takes the reader completely by surprise by hanging himself quickly and unhesitatingly. The sympathetic portrayal of the villain's human side in this story projects all the more vividly the wisdom and virtue of Yanzi. It raises the poignant question: which of the two principal characters was truly happier as a human being? Yanzi, who is loved by thousands of people he does not know personally? Or his rival, Cui Zhu, who dies for the love of one woman? Yanzi changes the fate of a country and inspires the admiration of many people, but we find ourselves asking what happiness he has gained for himself. He has no one to love totally; no one worthy of sacrificing his nobility and pride for or to die for. Precisely because Yanzi's way of living is unattainable by the ordinary person, it becomes an ideal and object of eternal yearning.

While some historical fiction treats this sort of romantic hero at the pinnacle of society, there are other varieties as well, such as that focusing on the activities of individuals who make it possible for us to reappraise our way of living by looking at the people immediately around us. Intimate portrayals of the lifestyle of the townspeople and ordinary folk of olden times win even more reader support these days than the exploits of master swordsmen or

warlords, and their popularity is especially perceptible since the bursting of the “bubble” a few years ago.

The upsurge of this readership can be attributed to two sources, one stemming from the lineage of theories on the city and the other from the realm of popular sentiment. The two are inextricably intertwined. From the perspective of urban theory, we can observe the enormous changes that took place in Tokyo at the height of the bubble economy in a metropolis that had already been forced to change radically several times—following the Meiji Restoration of 1868, the Great Kantō Earthquake of 1923, the devastating airraids at the end of the Pacific War, and accompanying the Tokyo Olympics of 1964. Vested interests of all sorts were entwined with these changes, which transformed not only the landscape but the attitudes of the people. Nostalgia for the city that once functioned as an arena of daily life has turned people’s attention to the old city of Edo (renamed Tokyo in 1868) and generated a raft of novels set in Edo in such a manner as to throw contemporary society into sharp relief. These stories’ plot structures evoke the desire for a return to the close human relationships that were part of the traditional community. They offer a “homecoming” for the uprooted residents of Tokyo, many of whom no longer have ties with rural or urban communities of any kind.

Resurrection of the Human Spirit

The popularity of historical novels dealing with grassroots themes can also be explained as the coalescence of popular sentiment. People are realizing how important it is to look more closely at the dramas of life immediately around them. Period fiction about famous warlords and conquerors of Japan’s “Warring States” in the sixteenth century was once widely read for what it had to instruct: the character and strategic exploits of the heroes provided models to survive the intense competition of the corporate world and the backdrops offered lessons in the nation’s history. However, as readers began to seek a path toward restoration of the human spirit in the wake of excessive emphasis on the economy and competition, they are less drawn to the genius of military or political strategy than to portrayals of the heart-warming moments of daily life and the reassuring variety of human virtues and failings.

Prominent among the authors of this “urban neighborhood” genre is Kitahara Aiko. In *Fukagawa Miodōri kidoban-goya* [Fukagawa Miodōri Neighborhood Patrol Post] (Kōdansha, 1993, pocket edition), she has created protagonists on a scale the reader can readily identify with. O-Sute and Shōbei are an unselfish couple who keep a local patrol post (*kidoban-goya*) in the old, canal-laced quarter of downtown Edo. It is a quiet, utopian place where the good-natured couple, both struggling to overcome hidden pasts of their own, serve as buoys steadying the torments of people who come into the post when life treats them harshly.

This anthology is part of an on-going series, particularly noteworthy among which is a story entitled “Wara” [Straw] in the second anthology, *Fukagawa Miodōri hitomoshi-goro* [Fukagawa Miodōri in the Evening Twilight] (Kōdansha, 1994). The theme is human egoism. Once a salt peddler with a penchant for brawling, Seikichi has settled down to become the owner of a tobacco shop.

Finding he has a flair for satirical poetry (*kyōka*), he ignores the attentions of his devoted wife, who is concerned for his self-destructive habits. He stays instead with a prostitute suffering from tuberculosis until his family is nearly ruined. Whether or not O-Sute and Shōbei can be the “straw” to which such a man drowning in the seas of life can clutch is the stuff of the story. Author Kitahara was born and brought up in Tokyo’s *shitamachi*, the old commercial quarter of the city, where her father was a chair-maker, so her novels vividly convey folk sensibilities that are part of her own experience.

But certainly the author who has contributed most to the rise of historical fiction not for the discovery of effective business strategies but for the restoration of the human spirit is Ryū Keiichirō (1923–89). Ryū first showed his promise with *Yoshiwara gomenjō* [The Licensed Pleasure Quarters of Yoshiwara] (Shinchōsha, 1989, pocket edition), originally published in 1984. His career cut short by his sudden death after only six years of writing, Ryū had sought to create a grand utopia from the hidden recesses of history.

Ryū’s plots are made possible by the ground-breaking research of historian Amino Yoshihiko published in works such as *Nihon chūsei no hi-nōgyōmin to tennō* [Non-Farming People and the Emperor in Medieval Japan] (Iwanami Shoten, 1984) and *Muen, kugai, raku—Nihon chūsei no jiyū to heiwa* [Estrangement, Public Domain, and Indulgence: Freedom and Peace in Medieval Japan] (Heibonsha, 1987). Once believed to be an age of darkness and suffering, the medieval age was the heyday of special groups in various occupations of the time who had the privilege of traveling freely around the country because their affiliations were to the emperor or to temples and shrines rather than to warlords. They had a utopian network called *kugai* (“public [divine] domain”), which is what made medieval times, Amino believes, the source of immense dynamism. These free people (*kugai no mono*) who refused to yield to secular power were a thorn in the side of the warlords eager to expand their control of the countryside. After the death of Tokugawa Ieyasu, founder of the Tokugawa shogunate (1603–1867), the *kugai* were severely discriminated against and their story buried in history.

What would they have done had they been allowed to move freely on the center stage of history once again? It is out of this historical fabric that Ryū Keiichirō creates stories in which prominent or obscure historical figures team up with descendants of the free people of medieval times to carry on a fierce struggle against those who would trample human freedom and dignity. *Yoshiwara gomenjō* begins by drawing on the latest results of historical research to flesh out a new kind of character for volume one’s hero Matsunaga Seiichirō. Matsunaga is a samurai known for his skill in the two-sword style taught by the master swordsman Miyamoto Musashi, and as the story unfolds, the secret of his birth gradually becomes clear. He is found to be the son of the emperor Go-Mizunoo, after whom the Tokugawa shogunate has sent out Yagyū-school *ninja* to assassinate in the submerged struggle for ascendancy between the shogunate and the court.

Ryū sought to create an “Edo mythology” based on the one hand on legends of the fugitive hardships of people of

noble origin and other narrative prototypes, and on the other on the presence of the imperial court. The role assigned to Matsunaga is that of the "vengeful deity." But Ryū portrays the emperor as a cultural rather than a political entity and Matsunaga as divine for reasons other than that he is the son of the emperor. He assumes godhood because, although he is a person who should not be profaned, he is mercilessly trampled on, discriminated against, and shunned. The story tells the paradoxical truth that a person of noble origin only possesses real divinity after being subject to severe physical and psychological cruelty. Only because he experiences these hardships does Matsunaga take on the characteristics of a god. His wrathful sword makes the people shudder, "realizing for the first time how many must die when he is overwhelmed with anger or grief." In other words, Ryū resurrects heroes from the world of myth, perhaps the original form of storytelling, to play the role of champion of people seeking to live truly human lives.

Soul Searching Through History

Also part of the new trend in historical fiction is *Shijūshichi-nin no shikaku* [Forty-seven Assassins] (Shinchōsha, 1992) based on the historical incident of the forty-seven loyal retainers (1701–03) by Ikemiya Shōichirō, a member of the generation that experienced World War II. Here Ikemiya has Ōishi Kuranosuke, leading the band of former retainers of the lord of Akō, make a revealing remark before they raid the residence of Kira Yoshinaka to avenge the suicide their lord was forced to commit:

Since time immemorial people have staked their lives to outdo each other. Prodded by the instinct to fight for survival, they have polished their intellects, cultivated strength, and refined their skills, while setting up codes of moral conduct for their times. Through these endeavors, civilizations have been built and culture has been created.

Human life is more precious than anything, for it is irreplaceable. Yet people go on dying. No life is eternal. Only our society, our culture is capable of surviving forever. We should devote our short lives solely to the purpose of maintaining and improving our society.

This passage expresses the love-hate feelings toward history of an author whose bitter experiences in war instilled in him the conviction that history cannot advance without acts of merciless cruelty. Ikemiya's historical perspective allows him to portray the revenge of the forty-seven samurai, the bloody eighteenth-century incident that has been elevated to a treasure in Japan's cultural pantheon, not only as an isolated historical incident, but as part of the history of human beings that has been repeated many times and will continue to be repeated.

Recent historical fiction coming out in Japan, some examples of which I have described, not only gives readers gripping, romantic stories from other epochs and praise of humanity that fosters the restoration of the human spirit. There is also plenty here to encourage readers to face reality squarely and critically, while recognizing the obligations that remain unsettled from the wartime Shōwa period. (*Nawata Kazuo is a literary critic.*)

Best-sellers, General, Jan.–Dec. 1995

1. *Isho* [Testament], by Matsumoto Hitoshi. (Asahi Shimbunsha, ¥1,000). Star of the popular "Down Town" comedy team Matsumoto's views on human nature and the entertainment industry.
2. *Matsumoto* [Matsumoto], by Matsumoto Hitoshi. (Asahi Shimbunsha, ¥1,000). Another best-seller by popular comedy personality Matsumoto consisting mainly of stories about comedy.
3. *Soft no sekai* [Sophie's World], by Jostein Gaarder. Translation by Ikeda Kayoko. (Nihon Hōsō Shuppan Kyōkai, ¥2,500). Introduces in an easy-to-understand language the history of philosophy from Greek to contemporary in the form of a story revolving around the 14-year-old girl Sophie, her mysterious philosophy teacher, and a dog.
4. *Foresuto Gumpu* [Forrest Gump], by Winston Groom. Translation by Ogawa Toshiko. (Kōdansha, ¥1,500). Story of a man and his eventful life in America's turbulent 1950s–80s. Original work of the hit film "Forrest Gump."
5. *Kōfuku no kagaku kōkokuron* [The Kōfuku-no-Kagaku's Discourse on the Resurrection of the Country], by Ōkawa Ryūhō. (Kōfuku no Kagaku Shuppan, ¥1,000). The founder of a new religious group warns of the power of the mass media and talks about a state-level utopia.
6. *Dai-ōjō* [The Great Crossing], and *Nidome no Dai-ōjō* [The Great Crossing, Part 2], by Ei Rokusuke. (Iwanami Shoten, ¥580, ¥620). Comments on old age, illness, and death gathered primarily from anonymous persons by a versatile TV scriptwriter and author. Part 2 covers the Great Hanshin Earthquake and the Aum Shinrikyō cult.
7. *Parasaito ibu* [Parasite Eve], by Sena Hideaki. (Kadokawa Shoten, ¥1,400). A SFX horror fiction about the cells which, developed by a biochemist and nicknamed Eve, "rapes" the man to get pregnant and continues multiplying in the attempt to conquer the world of humankind.
8. *Dābi sutarion III kōshiki pāfekuto gaido* [Derby Stallion III, The Official Complete Guide], edited by the Gekkan Famikon Tsūshin. (Asupekuto, ¥1,100). Elementary guide to strategy in a popular video game.
9. *Shin Taiyō no hō* [The Law of the Sun, Revised], by Ōkawa Ryūhō. (Kōfuku no Kagaku Shuppan, ¥2,000). The founder of a new religious group revises the old edition of *Taiyō no hō*, concerning the doctrinal aspect of the religion.
10. *Dābi sutarion III zensho* [The Complete Derby Stallion III], by Narusawa Daisuke. (Asupekuto, ¥1,200). Advanced guide to strategy in a popular video game.

(Based on book distributor Tōhan Corporation lists, January–December 1995)

Books and the Japanese Economy

Katsumata Hisayoshi

The period of hyper inflation of property prices (stocks and land) and its subsequent collapse between 1985 and 1996 was a time of extreme deviation from economic fundamentals known as the "bubble economy" in Japan. It was only natural, therefore, that with the passage of time the property boom should return to fundamentals, not gradually or gently but with an inevitably hard landing.

All the economic bubbles in world history seem to have burst suddenly and painfully, as happened at the time of the Great Depression following the 1929 stock market crash in New York. For ten long years, the American economy struggled for recovery. Not until 1939 did the United States finally surpass the real GNP 1929 level.

Obviously, then, once a bubble forms, it is extremely difficult to deflate without trouble, but Japan apparently didn't take this lesson of history seriously enough. The collapse of the 1990s bubble turned property price inflation into property price deflation, and as a result, some of the loans provided by financial institutions became uncollectible, undermining their own lending abilities and creating the so-called credit crunch. The failure of Japanese economic policymakers to anticipate these developments was the single most responsible factor for the upset in forecasts from 1990 onward.

The bubble that began to grow in 1985 is not the first Japan has experienced in its history. Right after World War I, stock and land prices spiraled two- or three-fold in Tokyo and Osaka within only ten months, from June 1919 to March 1920, and then plummeted. Such trends were worldwide at the time, but the bust dealt a staggering blow to the Japanese economy. Its impact, combined with the devastating Great Kantō Earthquake (7.9 on the Richter scale) that hit the Tokyo area in 1923, led to the Financial Crisis of 1927. The recent bubble economy period revealed that Japan had not learned anything from the grim facts of history. This negligence is partly due to the post-World War II illusion that Japan could solve any economic problem it might come up against as long as it maintained rapid growth.

Causes of the Bubble

After going on sale in 1992, Miyazaki Yoshikazu's *Fukugō fukyō* [Compound Recession] (Chūō Kōron Sha; see *Japanese Book News*, No. 1, p. 14) remained on the best-seller list for quite a while. The author's high profile as an economist and his newly coined term *fukugō fukyō* (combined or compound recession) drew extra attention to the book. Focusing mainly on the fluctuations in stock prices, it analyzes the mechanisms of Japan's bubble economy.

During the rapid growth period (1956–75), Japanese corporations expanded their plant and equipment investment through indirect financing, that is, by borrowing money from the city banks that were their major sources of funds. During the following ten years (1976–85), due

to the oil crisis and also partly because of the decreased growth rate, they began accumulating internal funds (internal reserves and depreciation) from which they derived the funds necessary to invest in plant and equipment. This weaned them away from the banks. Around 1986, however, a direct financing formula began to revolve around equity financing. This period coincided with the enlargement of the bubble, writes Miyazaki.

As long as the supplier of funds expected capital gains from sustained increases in stock prices, he says, it was possible to obtain vast amounts of low-interest funding through equity financing in the form of convertible bonds or warrant bonds. The huge pool of funds on hand increasing in this fashion prompted corporations to make large investments in stocks aimed at capital gains, which sharply raised stock prices. This was the mechanism that distended the bubble, Miyazaki argues. And the mechanism was sustained, it should be remembered, because of the myth that the price of stocks would keep on rising without limit.

Concerning what he calls combined recession, he says "This unprecedented 'financial-sector-led recession' is quite different from the traditional type of recession resulting from a shortage of effective demand. Obviously, then, the current business slump is a whole new manifestation of recession."

Another intriguing book is Mieno Yasushi's *Nihon keizai to Chūō Ginkō* [Japan's Economy and the Central Bank] (Tōyō Keizai Shimpōsha, 1995). Published soon after the author left the post of governor of the Bank of Japan, it is a collection of lectures given while he was there. Mieno sums up four main points to learn from the overheated economic boom and the extraordinary increase of property values in the last half of the 1980s, and the reactionary aftereffects.

First, property price fluctuations cannot remain alienated from economic fundamentals for too long. There is always a balance-restoring mechanism of property values at work that pulls back down prices that go too high.

Second, economic overheating should be checked in advance. A system of early warnings of overheating should be built into the Japanese economy. In other words, emphasis should be placed on the market mechanism.

Third, the stability of financial systems is indispensable for the wholesome growth of the economy. And fourth, the enforcement of financial policy should aim to achieve the medium- or long-term goal of "sustained growth without inflation," not to stabilize foreign exchange rates or rectify the trade imbalance.

These four points are all the more noteworthy because they show what the former BOJ Governor believes led to the property bubble and its collapse. In other words, he himself admits that the property inflation was intensified by the lowering of the official discount rate several times

in an effort to mitigate the damage caused to domestic export industries by the rapid rise of the yen following the September 1985 Plaza agreement.

Another book analyzing Japan's overheated economy from the perspective of business cycles, which tends to be slighted among Japanese economists, is Shinohara Miyohi's *Sengo gojūnen no keiki junkan* [Business Cycles in the Postwar 50 Years] (Nihon Keizai Shimbunsha, 1994). A well-known economist, Shinohara is the first to confirm the existence of Juglar cycles, each lasting ten years on the average, in the Japanese economy. He has also confirmed the presence of the same cycles in the Asian economy. He examines the emergence of the recent bubble in Japan in the context of long-term Kondratiev waves (average cycle 55 years) in the world economy.

Shinohara identifies two points shared by Kondratiev wave that was on its falling phase in the 1930s and the present Kondratiev wave that was on its falling phase in the 1980s. One is that foreign exchange rates, the relative prices of crude oil and primary products, stock prices, and so forth underwent drastic changes compared with periods of normal growth. The other similarity is the development of the "loan crisis." A good example is the United States, once the world's largest creditor nation, which descended suddenly to the status of the world's largest debtor nation. In Japan, the late-1980s excessive monetary relaxation brought about a sharp rise in the money supply, and as the result Marshallian *k*, which tends to decline during a business boom, on the contrary, rose. This failure of financial policy led to property inflation.

Thus, Shinohara attributes Japan's bubble economy to the Kondratiev wave and ineptitude among Japanese policymakers. In that sense, the bubble was a classical one, not the new phenomenon Miyazaki Yoshikazu's "compound recession" would lead us to believe, says Shinohara.

Japan's Cumulative Predicament

The recent bubble is discussed from another point of view by a former finance ministry bureaucrat. In *Nihon-gata ginkō keiei no tsumi* [The Crime of Japanese-style Banking Management] (Tōyō Keizai Shimpōsha, 1994), author Yoshida Kazuo identifies the culprit in the decrease in interest rates too drastic for the property market to attain an appropriate level. The cozy relationship between industry and government in Japan has been an issue for some time now, and the excessive trust of the private sector in government policies prompted overheated property speculation, Yoshida argues. That dependence nurtured the belief that the central government would come to the rescue if property speculation failed. This indulgence was what brought about the rise of the bubble. The government's decision in 1996 to use taxpayers' money (¥685 billion) to help liquidate debt-ridden housing loan firms abundantly demonstrates such dependence.

Economic problems unique to Japan are also discussed by Tsuru Shigeto, a leading Japanese economist, in *Nihon no shihonshugi* [Japan's Capitalism] (Iwanami Shoten, 1995; the English version was published in 1993 by Cambridge University Press). One of the problems he points out is the "land price revolution," that is, spiraling land prices. Against the backdrop of the steep rise in land

prices built into the postwar Japanese economy is the fact that the stipulation on property rights in Article 29 of the Constitution—including "The right to own or to hold property is inviolable"—has been narrowly and conventionally interpreted with emphasis on inviolability, says Tsuru.

The draft of the Constitution prepared by the Allied occupation authorities led by U.S. General Douglas MacArthur stated that the right to the ownership of land and all natural resources is ultimately held by the state, the collective representative of the people. This draft clause had the teeth taken out of it because of strong resistance from Japanese. Had the clause remained intact, Tsuru contends, Japanese land prices would have been prevented from spiraling.

Japan's highly industrialized economy is thwarted by high land prices, says leading sociologist Tominaga Ken'ichi, because Japan's social structure is "a mixture of pre-modern, modern, and post-modern elements." In *Nihon no kindai to shakai hendō* [Japan's Modernization and Social Changes] (Kōdansha, 1990), Tominaga holds that Japan did not establish political modernization (democracy) until after World War II while succeeding in economic modernization (industrialization) much earlier. Social/cultural modernization, that is, freedom and equality and rationalism, lags far behind economic modernization, he says. Because speculation in land is a most irrational form of economic behavior, it can be said that Japan has a distorted form of highly industrialized economy.

A similar point of view is provided in *Shōhi shakai hihan* [Criticism of Consumption-oriented Society] (Iwanami Shoten, 1996) by Tsutsumi Seiji, who leads the Saison Group, one of the largest distribution groups in Japan. "Japanese organizations, whether they are corporations, government agencies, political parties, or whatever, are highly capable of achieving goals, but their ability to select goals was very poor except during the early part of the Meiji era," writes Tsutsumi. "The discrepancy," he goes on, "results probably from remnants of the traditional *ie* (household)-centered society, and if so, challenging the old mentality should be the central task in achieving the self-reform necessary for computerization and the age of information." The *ie* society and social/cultural modernization are poles apart.

In closing, I would like to introduce one of my own books. *Sengo gojūnen no Nihon keizai* [The Postwar 50 Years of the Japanese Economy] (Tōyō Keizai Shimpōsha, 1995) adopts an approach completely different from the traditional Keynesian analysis. Moving away from conventional analyses, I argue that the main factor behind the high growth of postwar Japanese economy is the indirectly controlled economy featuring artificial low-interest rate policy, fiscal expansion, and distrust of the market mechanism. The full liberalization of interest rates, therefore, might have prevented the bubble economy. The hasty pursuit of economic growth through an indirectly controlled economy resulted in the economic chaos of the last ten years. If Japan is aware of this fault and fundamentally revises its economic policy, a quick recovery would not be that difficult. (Katsumata Hisayoshi is professor of economics at Tōkai University.)

On Translation of Modern Japanese Literature

Edwin McClellan

In the last forty years or so, following the ensconcement of Japanese literature in the American university curriculum thanks to the pioneering work of scholars like Donald Keene in the years following the end of World War II, a considerable amount of good modern Japanese fiction has been made available in English translations that are distinguished in their own right.

The availability of good translations is particularly important in a literature whose original language is as difficult as Japanese and which must rely far more on translations than major Western literatures such as French, Italian, German, or even Russian to become accessible to the intelligent, well-educated undergraduate. And I would say that undergraduates at the good universities and colleges in the United States probably constitute the most constant and impressionable readers of good Japanese novels in translation, and they, besides the graduate students of Japanese literature who will be the future mentors of undergraduates of succeeding generations, are the people I personally consider most seriously in the present context (except, of course, publishers and critics).

A Golden Age of Translation

Unfortunately, there is so little awareness even among those who read a great deal of Japanese literature in translation of the crucial role played by someone like Edward Seidensticker in making the more literary undergraduates at Yale or elsewhere recognize the beauty of Kawabata Yasunari's *Yama no oto* (*The Sound of the Mountain*, tr. 1970) or Nagai Kafū's *Bokutō-kidan* (*A Strange Tale from East of the River*, tr. 1958) or Tanizaki Jun'ichirō's *Sasame-yuki* (*The Makioka Sisters*, tr. 1957). That anyone can imagine another translator might have done equally well with the same novels was once incomprehensible to me, but I have since come to accept that such people are everywhere, including professors and editors. But one has to occasionally look on the bright side of things, and believe that if Seidensticker hadn't translated these works, they would not have become classics comparable in authority to major works of fiction from other literatures, remained so long on reading lists of undergraduate courses, or been remembered by people long after graduating from college. Even now I marvel at the intricacy, the subtlety of Seidensticker's language as I reread his rendering of *Bokutō-kidan*, at how the great teasing intelligence and artistry of Kafū is made so real to the English-speaking reader.

I think, too, that whatever Mishima's standing as a novelist may eventually be, the brilliance of his rhetoric, false or not, and of his storytelling in *Kinkakuji* (*The Temple of the Golden Pavilion*, tr. 1959) cannot have carried such conviction in English if someone a touch clumsier, less virtuosic than Ivan Morris had translated it. Or take another translation whose artistry is so different in kind from Morris's: that by John Bester of Ibuse's *Kuroi ame* (*Black*

Rain, tr. 1969). One has to know how much our response to the novel depends on our trust placed in the honesty and goodness of Shigematsu, the principal narrator—who, by the way, is one of Ibuse's great creations—to realize what an accomplishment it was for Bester to have carried over into English the very complex nature of the authority of Shigematsu's language, that cumulative authority which slowly asserts itself through the very absence of assertiveness. And what might have happened to Tanizaki's *Fūten-rōjin nikki* (*Diary of a Mad Old Man*, tr. 1965) if someone other than Howard Hibbett, someone without his consummate touch, had translated it? In all likelihood, it would have been dismissed as indeed the babblings of a senile old man orchestrated by an equally senile novelist.

Never again, surely, will such an array of talented translators—and I haven't mentioned them all—appear just at the right time to translate such good or enjoyable, more or less new novels that suited their respective styles. Considering its cultural and linguistic remoteness, modern Japanese literature, I would say, was incredibly well served by English-language translators for the decades from the fifties until recently. But—and here I shall sound like an old fogey—the golden age of both the Japanese novelist and the English translator seems to be over.

I hope, for the sake of retaining the honorable place modern Japanese fiction has won in the undergraduate curriculum of American universities and colleges, that those marvelous renderings of novels by such writers as Tanizaki, Kawabata, Ibuse, Mishima—and let us not forget—Ōe Kenzaburō, who was thrust upon us by John Nathan in his memorable translation of *Kojinteki na taiken* (*A Personal Matter*, tr. 1968), will not be allowed to go out of print. If they are, I doubt they will ever be replaced by a body of translated modern Japanese fiction nearly so richly rewarding to the English-language reader.

One Translator's Predilection

For me, translation of literature has always been a very personal thing, a means of expressing what I deeply felt to be true in another man's writing, an act of emotional commitment and bonding that gave me a sense of fulfillment. Partly for this reason perhaps, I have also found translating a demanding task not to be undertaken lightly. I have been a teacher of Japanese literature for nearly forty years, and in that time have published just four book-length translations.

The advantage of having my kind of self-indulgent attitude towards translation is that one begins translating *Michikusa* (*Grass on the Wayside*, tr. 1969), say, or *An'ya-kōro* (*A Dark Night's Passing*, tr. 1976) with no illusions about its marketability. One accepts from the start the forlornness of the enterprise. And if, upon its completion after several years of writing and rewriting, one finds a publisher for it, one is exceedingly grateful and slightly taken aback, for everybody concerned surely knows that here is a book that no American businessman will buy in the hope of gaining insight into the devious mind of his Japanese counterpart.

It would be nice if I could say that I became involved in these materially unrewarding commitments at least partly

to serve the cause of cross-cultural understanding, but for the life of me, I couldn't even begin to pretend that the protagonist of either *Michikusa* or *An'ya-kōro* would find new admirers of Japanese manhood among English and American readers, male or female. The fact is that I wanted to translate these novels because I could identify with their authors and their heroes in a way that was very special to me, and I felt that perhaps I could recreate in English the poetry I found in Sōseki's or Shiga's language as no one else had done.

So I am resigned to the fate of having to address a far smaller audience, composed of more private people, than is available to translators of more "entertaining" (in a good sense) and more eventful fiction. And I shall surprise no one when I say I am the least likely person to become absorbed in the sales figures for translations of Tanizaki, Mishima, Kawabata, Ōe, Ibuse, et al. (It is a tribute to the translator John Bester that a nice, quiet man like Ibuse should have found himself in the company of such superstars.) But though unmoved by graphs indicating sales abroad of Japanese novels in translation, I readily admit that if the majority of these novels were like *Michikusa* or *An'ya-kōro*, there would be no graphs and columns at all, and probably most of us now teaching Japanese literature in the United States would have been doing something else; and only at a very few universities would we have found any attempt being made to introduce non-specialist undergraduates to modern Japanese fiction in English translation.

At a university like Yale, the standard practice for a professor in the arts and sciences is to divide teaching between graduate and undergraduate courses. And so, more or less typically, I teach a year-long graduate seminar on the modern Japanese novel, using only the original texts, and a semester lecture course designed for non-specialist undergraduates using only English translations. In the latter course, students read some twelve novels (always in their entirety) in about twelve teaching weeks. At Yale, the undergraduates tend to be more literary than their counterparts at other, like institutions. In teaching them modern Japanese fiction, one does not, therefore, want to present them either with blatantly mediocre novels, even if readably translated, or translations of better novels done by wobbly, tin-eared writers of English, apparently a growing breed among English-speaking Japanologists.

The Meeting Point of Literature and History

For reasons I consider fairly obvious, some of the great Japanese writers of an earlier generation have not been so well represented in translation. That much of Kōda Rohan or Ozaki Kōyō may never appear in print in readable (never mind stylish) English I accept with relative equanimity. After all, we really don't have to have every novel that has won recognition in Japan since the Meiji Restoration translated for the lay English reader, especially if the translation is likely to be mediocre.

What is of more concern to me as translator of *Michikusa* and *An'ya-kōro*, however, is the seeming reluctance on the part of English readers to read literature from Japan that is heavily autobiographical and confessional and

therefore demands greater identification with the protagonist/author. Such literature even in Japan is often seen as lacking entertainment value. But there is, I think, an added dimension to the English reader's resistance to it, which is something like an insistence on emotional remove from the Japanese novel in question. To put it another way, Kenzō of *Michikusa* or Kensaku of *An'ya-kōro* may suddenly sit before you in your drawing-room and, forgetting he is a foreigner, demand, much to your discomfort, an honest and meaningful conversation with you—behaving, that is, not at all like those reassuringly "different" people in some of Tanizaki's or Mishima's novels.

It was many years after I translated *An'ya-kōro* that I translated Yoshikawa Eiji's *Wasure-nokori no ki* (*Fragments of a Past*, tr. 1995). (In those years that intervened, I was engaged in a study of Ōgai's *Shibue Chūsai*, a biography of late-Edo period doctor of Chinese medicine, 1916). The two books belong to different genres, and of course are very different in tone. Yoshikawa is much the more exuberant writer, "popular" where Shiga is austere and "patrician." And if Shiga had written a memoir, it probably would have been a stately affair, self-revealing perhaps but not half so touchingly erratic and not half so lively. Yet for all their differences, I have no doubt that what partly drew me to *Wasure-nokori no ki* was its being an intensely personal work of literature, just as *Michikusa* and *An'ya-kōro* were. True, one is a memoir, and therefore history; and the other two are novels, and therefore fiction. Yet there is a point at which they meet, where all three authors reveal themselves as writers concerned with their own histories. And because they were all powerful writers, in their act of writing their own histories they forced me to share in a very personal way their experience of living in their specific time and place. In a manner of speaking they invoked in me, in my capacity as translator, the desire to make their voices mine.

Ever since I was in my teens, I have loved biographies, autobiographies, and memoirs, probably because being more literal-minded than most, I have wanted to associate the past, or history, with people I could identify with, people I thought I had come to know even a little. How rich Japan is in such narratives, I don't know. My feeling is that somehow, for whatever reason, they are less important in Japan than they are in England. Perhaps the predominance of the *shi-shōsetsu* ("I-novel") in Japan sapped whatever energy there might have been for the writing of memoirs. At any rate, such a work as Yoshikawa's *Wasure-nokori no ki* reminds us of our need to touch Japan's past through individuals a writer like him has made real for us—individuals who are as memorable as any characters of fiction can be, and who belong in a literary genre as proud as any other in prose. (Edwin McClellan is Sumitomo Professor of Japanese Studies at Yale University.)



RELIGION

Zōho, Shūkyō ni naniga okiteiruka [Changing Religion Today, Enlarged Edition]. Nakamaki Hirochika. Heibonsha, 1995. 194 × 131 mm. 238 pp. ¥1,980. ISBN 4-582-73909-1.

This book, by a religious anthropologist, shows that Japan's 1960s rapid economic growth wrought far greater changes than even the 1945 defeat in World War II. Nakamaki looks at the conditions surrounding Japanese religion today, examining themes closely linked to economic growth.

He selects thirty topics ranging from current affairs to seasonal events. Some examples are the imposing stone business card receptacles recently being built at the side of graves; the memorial stone stupas companies erect at Mt. Kōya for deceased employees; the rising frequency of memorial services held for stillborn infants and aborted fetuses (many Buddhist statues for this purpose began being built in the 1970s).

The present book is an enlargement of the 1990 edition, to which are added sections on the Great Hanshin Earthquake and the Aum Shinrikyō incidents.

The book makes an instructive reader about Japanese society and the Japanese from the perspective of religion, aided by numerous photographs that provide visual images of aspects of Japan not obvious to outside observers.



HISTORY

Kotō no tsuchi to narutomo: BC kyū sempan saiban [Destined to Dust on Remote Islands: The Class B and C War Crimes Trials]. Iwakawa Takashi. Kōdansha, 1995. 194 × 136 mm. 830 pp. ¥3,500. ISBN 4-06-207491-5.

War crimes trials dealing chiefly with cases of atrocities committed by Japanese troops during the Pacific War were held in several countries for five years and seven months following the end of World War II. The present book, resulting from three decades of research by the author, gives a full picture of the trials.



Cover design: Kamegai Shōji

More than 5,700 Japanese were tried in 2,200 cases judged at some fifty locations in the United States, Britain, China, France, Australia, the Netherlands, and the Philippines. The author's investigation into the actual proceedings of the trials was made difficult because only American trial documents are open to the public; to compensate, he searched extensively for facts through interviews and perusal of unpublished documents.

Iwakawa reveals there was much absurdity and injustice in the war crimes trials, and numerous cases of cruel treatment of defendants as well as misjudgments. Nevertheless, he is severely critical of atrocities committed by Japanese troops, which saves the book from nationalistic zealotry.

Nihonjin hanayome no sengo: Kankoku Keishū Nazare-en kara no shōgen [Postwar Japanese Brides Overseas: Testimonies from the Nazareth Home in Kyongju, South Korea]. Itō Takashi. LYU Kōbō. 1995. 187 × 128 mm. 193 pp. ¥2,060. Many people became victims of Japan's colonial rule of the Korean peninsula. Most of them were Koreans forced to serve as laborers or as "comfort" women. There were also Japanese women who married Koreans in the service of the national policy of "Japan-Korean Unity," crossing the sea and destined to remain there for the rest of their lives.

In 1972, a senior citizens' facility called the Nazareth Home was founded in Kyongju, South Korea, for Japanese women left alone in their old age who had nowhere else to go. Privately run by a Christian organization, it is the home of some thirty Japanese wartime brides who continue to live in South Korea.



Cover design: Itō Megumi, LYU Kōbō

The present book is based on interviews with these women. Emphasizing the accounts as a record of history, the author writes down what the interviewees related as faithfully as possible. Photographs provide a vivid picture of the faces of these women and how they live. Born in 1952, the author is a photo journalist whose focus over the past ten years has been on Asian victims of the fifteen-year war in Asia and the Pacific (1931-1945).

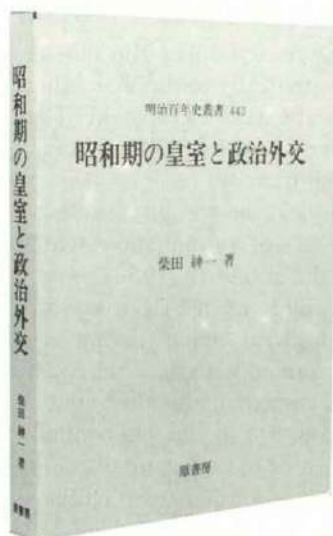
Shōwaki no kōshitsu to seiji gaikō
[The Imperial Family and Foreign Policy during the Shōwa Era].

Shibata Shin'ichi. Hara Shobō, 1995. 216 × 151 mm. 290 pp. ¥9,888. ISBN 4-562-02692-8.

This book is a collection of eleven essays focusing on the complex and delicate relations during the Shōwa era (1926–89) between Japan's foreign policy and the imperial household, including the Shōwa Emperor. The author is a young historian in his late thirties.

All the topics discussed are fundamentally important in elucidating the nature of the Shōwa era, including the debate among Japanese leaders on martial law and how the Berlin-Rome-Tokyo pact agreeing not to unilaterally settle peace treaties was concluded (Dec. 11, 1941). The book also discusses the real profile and role of Yoshida Shigeru, the statesman who shaped the postwar course of the nation. For example, its description of his tenacious endeavors to end the war, for which he was arrested by the military police in April 1945, is more detailed than any other work of its kind, making a substantial contribution to the study of the influential postwar leader.

The book reveals the author's familiarity with almost all previously published studies on the Shōwa era and critical perusal of new materials he uncovered in the course of his research. He calls the reader's attention especially to the fact that Japan was virtually under martial law prior to the outbreak of hostilities between Japan and the United States.



INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Bunmei shōtotsu jidai no seiji to shūkyō [Politics and Religion in the Era of Clashing Civilizations]. Noda Nobuo. PHP Kenkyūsho, 1995. 195 × 133 mm. 272 pp. ¥1,700. ISBN 4-569-54860-1.

Harvard University professor Samuel Huntington's article "The Clash of Civilizations?" stimulated the historian Noda Nobuo to look afresh at Japan in the context of the world from the viewpoints of history, civilization, and religion. The present book is a collection of his essays thus produced.



Cover design: Yasuhiko Katsuhiko

Huntington's "clash of civilizations" sees the confrontation between civilizations, especially between Western European Christian civilization and the Islam-Confucian "connection," as the fundamental conflict in post-Cold War international politics. Japan could become isolated in the world as ideological/economic friction gives way to the collision of civilization, Noda warns, because it did not adequately address the issue of religion in the course of its modernization beginning in the mid-nineteenth century, failing to properly place religion in the context of politics and society. As a result, Japanese have no orthodox religion to fall back on to support their cultural and spiritual identity. To avert international isolation, Noda urges that Japanese reconfirm their religious mainstream and establish a wholesome conservative ethos strong enough to deal with Asia-centric eschatology.



Nichibei sensōkan no sōkoku: Masatsu no shinsō shinri [The Japan-U.S. Perception Gap and World War II: A Psychoanalysis of Friction]. Yui Daizaburō. Iwanami Shoten, 1995. 188 × 129 mm. 236 pp. ¥1,800. ISBN 4-00-001720-9.

The year 1995, marking the fiftieth year since the end of World War II, brought into sharp relief the differences between Japanese and Americans in the way they view the war in the Pacific. For instance, in holding an exhibition about the atomic bomb, the Smithsonian Institution in Washington D.C. ultimately left out most of the originally planned displays (including explanations of why the bombs were dropped, the degree of damage in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and so forth). Japanese, on the other hand, decided that a peace memorial hall to be built by war-bereaved families associations and the Ministry of Health and Welfare would be dedicated to Japanese war victims only. As this shows, each side's view of war centers around its own country.

To discover why the perception gap seems only to grow wider, the author, a sociologist born in 1945, examines how Japanese see not only the Pacific War but other conflicts such as those in Korea, Vietnam, and the Persian Gulf, and compares their views with those of Americans in an attempt to identify the features of their respective views. He also discusses the differences between American and Japanese nationalism.

In order to overcome the psychological friction between them that stems from diverging perceptions, he believes both sides will have to adopt a multicultural view that accords full respect to the circumstances and conditions of the other country.

Denshi media ron: Shintai no media teki hen'yō [The Electronic Media: The Physical Impact of the Media]. Ōsawa Masachi. Shin'yōsha, 1995. 194 × 130 mm. 352 pp. ¥2,987. ISBN 4-7885-0521-5.

Many Japanese today are ambivalent about the contemporary age. On the one hand they want to believe in the rosy future constantly promised by the advocates of multimedia and the information highway. On the other, they cannot ignore the alarming implications of the human-perpetrated and natural calamities occurring around them, including the terrorist acts of the Aum Shinrikyō cult and the massive destruction wrought by the Great Hanshin Earthquake. Inevitably, then, they perceive the emerging age with a mixture of optimism and dread.



Cover design: Katō Kōtarō

This book probes the nature of that contemporary ambivalence through a look at the current state of media and telecommunications. The author, a sociologist, focuses on how today's diverse media are physically transforming the nature of, and the modes of communication between, "self" and "other." He discovers the hallmarks of media deeply imprinted in the contemporary consciousness of interpersonal time and space, and in the book's conclusion provides a fascinating commentary on the Aum cult, the Great Hanshin Earthquake, and the rise of the introverted, media-addicted "otaku" generation.

Hadasamuki shimaguni: "Kindai Nihon no yume" o aruku [Bleak Archipelago: Treading Among the Relics of the Dream of Modern Japan]. Matsuyama Iwao. Asahi Shimbunsha, 1995. 194 × 132 mm. 382 pp. ¥2,500. ISBN 4-02-256853-4.

Matsuyama Iwao is a critic with deep interest in modern and contemporary Japanese history. He believes that modern Japan was sustained by the hard work of digging coal, catching fish, melting iron, plowing fields, manufacturing products, assembling parts, and distributing products. His concern with what has happened to these industries in various parts of the country led him to travel the Japanese archipelago from Hokkaido to Okinawa, visiting ten locations, including a coal-mining town, fishing port, steel mill, rubber factory, fish market, farming village, and a forestry region. His observations are presented in this book.



Cover design: Tada Susumu

Matsuyama finds that the problems confronting these places vary but that, generally, the ties between materials and the labor of people who make use of them to produce goods have grown much weaker. Focusing on phenomena at the micro-level and relying only on his own sensibilities, rather than on economic theories, the author seeks to explain changes in the industrial structure, shifts in public policy, business conditions, and other factors.



Cover design: Shinchōsha

Heishi ni kike [Listen to the Soldiers]. Sugiyama Takao. Shinchōsha, 1995. 196 × 135 mm. 542 pp. ¥2,000. ISBN 4-10-406201-4.

Despite the recent inclusion of Japan's Self-Defense Forces (SDF) in international peacekeeping activities, few people in Japan itself, let alone overseas, have an accurate understanding of the nation's 250,000-strong armed forces. Since its founding not long after the end of World War II, the SDF has often been the subject of politically charged debates over its constitutional legality. Rarely, however, does the Japanese public turn its attention to the problems of the inconspicuous, hard-working soldiers themselves.

The SDF has a tricky role to play, one which the president of the Defense Academy, speaking at a graduation ceremony, summed up as follows: "The Japanese people do not have an adequate understanding of the Self-Defense Forces. But they may turn gratefully to the SDF when the fate of the nation is at stake. They are happier when the SDF remains hidden in obscurity."

This book is the weighty product of three years of journalistic research that took the author (b. 1952) right into the daily lives of SDF troops at bases throughout Japan. Having lived and even trained with the soldiers, he constructs an exhaustive flesh-and-blood account of the people behind the cold armor of tanks and warships. This is feature journalism at its finest from the author of *Media no kōbō* [The Rise and Fall of the Media].

Kaji no seijigaku [The Politics of Housekeeping]. Kashiwagi Hiroshi. Seidosha, 1995. 195 × 133 mm. 298 pp. ¥2,200. ISBN 4-7917-5398-4. In this book, one of Japan's few specialists in the theoretical history of design makes a comparative analysis of the modernization of housekeeping in Japan, Europe, and the United States.

In Japan, the term *kaseigaku* (home economics) still carries the connotation of indoctrinating young women to become dutiful wives and wise mothers. From a review of the process by which the field arose and developed in modern times, this author asserts that the true nature of home economics is quite different from that image. Beginning as a movement to free women from an unfair burden of domestic responsibilities and to ensure a basic level of food and shelter for the urban poor through cooperative housekeeping, home economics came to champion efforts to rationalize and standardize all areas of domestic labor.



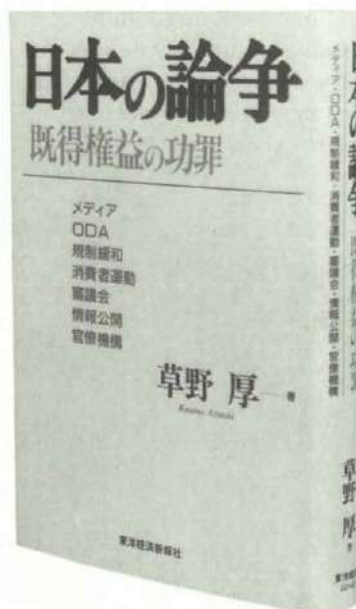
Cover design: Suzuki Seichi

In his analysis, is informed by the unique perspective of design studies, the author explains how, shaped by twentieth-century American industrialization and two world wars, this push toward rational standardization became the basis of the "American way of life" and a key factor in the pervasive system of modern capitalism.

Nihon no ronsō: Kitoku ken'eki no kōzai [Public Debate in Japan: The Impact of Vested Interests]. Kusano Atsushi. Tōyō Keizai Shimpōsha, 1995. 194 × 134 mm. 270 pp. ¥1,600. ISBN 4-492-22140-9.

Kusano Atsushi (b. 1947) is known for his commentaries on international relations from the viewpoint of sociology. In the present work, he looks at the issues currently at the forefront of public debate in Japan and posits further topics deserving similar attention. His central concern is with how the mass media treats seven key topics: ODA, the environment, deregulation, the consumer rights movement, government councils, disclosure of information, and the bureaucracy. In his view, public debate in Japan is characterized by the constant control exerted by those with vested interests in maintaining the status quo. As a result, he argues, truly open and vigorous debates are rare, and decisions are all too often made without much discussion.

A welcome feature of the book is that the author eschews abstract argument in favor of developing his position through case studies he himself researched and compiled. This is an informative account of the inadequacies of the Japanese mass media as a forum of debate for effective public decision making.



"Seken" to wa nanika [What is "Seken"?]. Abe Kin'ya. Kōdansha, 1995. 173 × 106 mm. 260 pp. ¥650. ISBN 4-06-149262-4.

One of Japan's foremost scholars of European social history, this author (b. 1935) has long had a deep concern with the concepts "individual" and "society." In this book, he considers the characteristic features of Japanese society and culture through an analysis of the concept of *seken*, which may be translated as "people in general" or "the social sphere at large."



Cover design: Sugiura Kōhei, Akazaki Shōichi

Seken provides the framework that has governed Japanese behavior, both at the subconscious level and in everyday activity, since antiquity. Though similar to the European notion of "society" in that both imply the archetypal forms of social relations, *seken* differs from "society" in that it is difficult to consciously define and describe and that it represents a restraining force upon the individual. Despite its integral role in the evolution of Japanese popular consciousness, however, the concept has been largely ignored by Japanese philosophers, sociologists, and historians. With this book, the author leads the way to filling that gap by identifying the workings of *seken*-consciousness in the writings of some of Japan's most important philosophical, religious, and literary thinkers.

Shōshi kazoku, kodomotachi wa ima [Small Families and the Children of Today]. Ogawa Nobuo. Tamagawa Daigaku Shuppanbu, 1995. 188 × 132 mm. 228 pp. ¥1,854. ISBN 4-472-09701-X.

The Japanese family today is very different from what it was just thirty years ago. One momentous change is the sharp decrease in the average number of children per family. The nuclear family is rapidly replacing the traditional extended family as the norm, and most couples are happy to have just one or two children. At the same time, familial and neighborhood ties have weakened and especially urban children, swept away by the flood of television and other media diversions, enjoy less and less direct contact with other people. This peculiar situation has begun to have adverse effects on child development, and may be linked to the prevalence of insidious *ijime*, or bullying, now a matter of deep concern nationwide.



Cover design: Nishida Masuhiro

This book looks at numerous cases of such unhealthy, some even say pathological phenomena emerging among the children and youth of Japan. It examines the qualities of the contemporary family and society that form the backdrop to those changes, and considers what should be done to give children a more positive social environment. Despite the fact that virtually every Japanese child today is a stranger to real material want,

many of the children discussed in this book are extremely unhappy. This is poignant evidence of a general psychological malaise afflicting the highly competitive society of contemporary Japan as a whole. The author, who draws on years of experience in child and youth education, is currently a professor at Tamagawa University in Tokyo.

Yasashisa no seishin byōri [The Psychopathology of Gentleness]. Ōhira Ken. Iwanami Shoten, 1995. 173 × 106 mm. 240 pp. ¥650. ISBN 4-00-430409-1.

In this book, noted psychiatrist Ōhira (b. 1949) draws on numerous clinical case studies in an attempt to delineate the prevailing psychological condition of contemporary Japanese youth. Many observers have noted that the younger generation of Japanese is remarkably quiet and unassertive (*otonashii*). In this quietness Ōhira sees the anxious effort to avoid the friction generated by the intense modes of communication characteristic of the information age.

He argues that, whereas in the past interpersonal relations varied along a wide spectrum from "hotness" to "coolness," today they take the form of "warmness." Refraining from imposing value judgments on the "warm" attitude (*yasashisa*) of young people, and from going into the depths of despair it might imply, he restricts his commentary to a lucid exposition of the psychological features that may be extrapolated from his clinical experience.



Kankoku no imēji: Sengo Nihonjin no ringokukan [Images of Korea: Postwar Japanese Views of Its Neighbor]. Chung Daekyum. Chūō Kōron Sha, 1995. 173 × 109 mm. 240 pp. ¥740. ISBN 4-12-101269-0.

A scholar of comparative cultural theory offers an account of the Japanese "regard" (*nagame*)—a key word throughout the text—of South Korea (Republic of Korea) through an analysis of various public statements made by Japanese during the postwar period.



Contemporary Japanese perceive their South Korean neighbors in diverse ways, ranging from antiquated contempt to tolerant cultural relativism, and in both ideological and non-political contexts. In this study, the author classifies numerous views on South Korea culled from Japanese newspapers, journals, and books of the postwar era, particularly from the 1970s and 1980s, into five attitudinal types: the colonial experience type, the atonement type, the ideological type, the ancient-history type, and the cultural-Other type. From his analysis of the texts thus grouped, he concludes that the prevailing Japanese attitude toward South Korea is characterized by ambivalence, the pendulum of intercultural response swinging broadly from sincere good will to outright loathing. Noting that South Koreans are similarly ambivalent in their attitude toward Japan, he explores the possibilities for "mutual regard" between the two countries.



Cover design: Ishihara Masahiko

Nishioka Tsunekazu to kataru, ki no ie wa sambyaku-nen [Houses Built of Wood Can Last Three Hundred Years: The Story of Nishioka Tsunekazu]. Harada Noriko, Photographs: Akiyama Minoru. Nō-san-gyo-son Bunka Kyōkai, 1995. 182 × 127 mm. 224 pp. ¥1,800. ISBN 4-540-95058-4.

Nishioka Tsunekazu (1908–95; see *Japanese Book News*, No. 9, p. 16) was the master carpenter who led the reconstruction and restoration of the Hōryūji and Yakushiji temples in Nara, two of the finest surviving examples of ancient Japanese architecture. This book is a compilation of conversations between Nishioka and his apprentices, and the author, a specialist in traditional Japanese architecture.

The author first became interested in Nishioka after interviewing him for an article in a bulletin published by the National Science Museum (Tokyo), where she works. In the interview, Nishioka criticized standard contemporary housing designs, in which a timber frame is erected on a concrete foundation, and remarked that even an average timber house built by traditional principles of design will stand for three hundred years if properly maintained.

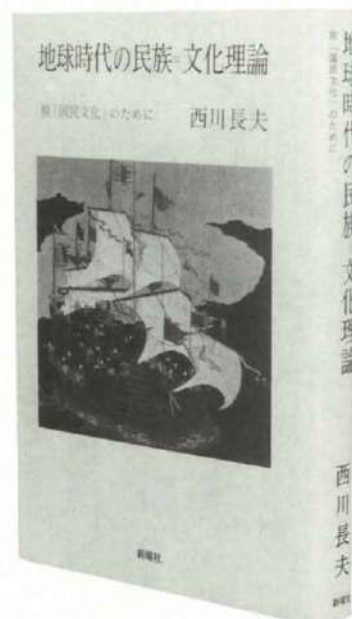
The discussion delves into various details of traditional house building, from design layout, building of foundations and framework, and choosing the timber and roofing materials, to building earth-plastered walls and selection of tools. The book closes with an appeal for the revision of the Building Standards Act, which in its current form is helping shorten the lifespan of timber used in residential construction.

THE JAPANESE

Chikyū jidai no minzoku, bunka riron: Datsu "kokumin bunka" no tame ni [Cultural Theory for the Global Age: Beyond National Culture]. Nishikawa Nagao. Shin'yōsha, 1995. 194 × 132 mm. 248 pp. ¥2,163. ISBN 4-7885-0533-9.

This book expands upon the cultural theory foreshadowed in *Kokkyō no koekata* [Transcending National Borders], an earlier work by the same author. A scholar of Japanese-French comparative culture, the author sees the concepts of "nation" and "state" as the products of imagination cultivated since the late eighteenth century. From his reading of the works of early-modern thinkers, including Comte de Mirabeau, Herder, and Kant, he also finds that the notions of "culture" and "civilization," which are often seen as values that can transcend the concepts of "nation" and the "state," in fact were formulated and created in parallel with them. Aiming to supersede them all, he advances what he calls a "dynamic model of culture" whereby culture is understood to shift and change through interaction and conflict with other cultures.

The book includes a comprehensive appendix listing key Nihonjinron and other discourses on Japanese and Japanese culture.



Kome no jinruigaku: Nihonjin no jiko ninshiki [A Cultural Anthropology of Rice: Japanese Perceptions of Themselves]. Ōnuki Emiko. Iwanami Shoten, 1995. 194 × 133 mm. 312 pp. ¥2,500. ISBN 4-00-002892-8.

This author, a professor of anthropology at the University of Wisconsin, focuses her research on the topic of symbolism in Japanese culture. This book is a Japanese edition of a work originally published in English as *Rice as Self* (Princeton University Press, 1993), augmented with a new postscript on the controversy that flared up in Japan in late 1993 over the relaxing of rice import restrictions.



The author argues that rice has long held crucial symbolic significance for the self-image of the Japanese people. She points to its special importance in mythology and ritual, to the role of rice agriculture as the mainstay of state management, and even to the place of the seasonal transformations of the rice-field landscape in traditional aesthetics. She maintains that the considerable resistance mounted against the opening of the rice market to imports reflects a widespread feeling among Japanese that rice symbolizes the purity of the people and land.



Cover design: Kawabata Hiroaki

Nihonjin no kōdō bumpō: "Nihon rashisa" no kaitai shinsho [The Socio-grammar of Japanese: The Anatomy of "Japaneseness"]. Takeuchi Yasuo. Tōyō Keizai Shimpōsha, 1995. 194 × 134 mm. 378 pp. ¥1,800. ISBN 4-492-22138-7. In this book, scholar of economic ethics Takeuchi (b. 1935) analyzes Japanese behavior patterns as observed in a broad range of situations. He criticizes Nihonjinron-type assertions that Japanese people display a unique mode of cultural existence, particularly such notions as that Western people are essentially "rational" while the Japanese are essentially "non-rational" or "affective."

Instead, he explains traits he believes may truly be called "typically Japanese" in patterns of behavior. In this way, he arrives at two central hypotheses: that the Japanese unconditionally accept prevailing circumstances as givens, and that they try to adjust their behavior to those circumstances. While testing these two propositions against various actual situations, he argues that they conform to the fundamental economic hypothesis that people always pursue what is in their own interest and avoid what is not.

Nippon no uta: Kempō to shomei no kenryoku kōzō [Song of Japan: Signatory Power in the Constitution of Japan]. Wakamori Yoshiki. Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 1995. 194 × 131 mm. 292 pp. ¥2,600. ISBN 4-309-24168-9.

Chapter I, Article 1 of the Constitution of Japan states that "The Em-

peror shall be the symbol of the State and of the unity of the people, deriving his position from the will of the people with whom resides sovereign power." At first glance, this provision seems straightforward enough, but on closer scrutiny raises an intriguing question: Whose was the voice of authority in which this declaration was made?

This book, a collection of essays published in journals since 1991, consists of inquiries into the hidden authority implied by this key article of the Constitution. The author, a Dokkyō University professor and expert on the works of psychoanalyst and linguistic theorist Jacques Lacan, points to the presence of a statement that precedes the preamble of the Constitution: "I hereby approve the revision of the Constitution of the Empire of Japan . . . and have it [the postwar Constitution] promulgated. *Gyomei gyoji*." "Gyomei gyoji" [lit., "Honorable Name" (i.e., emperor), Seal] is synonymous with "the signature of imperial subjects that testified that the Emperor's seal has been placed on the document." In other words, the ultimate authority which formally antecedes and sponsors the Constitution is none other than the Emperor himself—hence this book's subtitle. Neither for nor against the emperor system, the author thus delineates a penetrating angle of insight from which to analyze contemporary Japanese society.



Cover design: Iwase Satoshi

Tan'itsu minzoku shinwa no kigen: "Nihonjin" no jigazō no keifu [The Myth of the Homogeneous Nation: The Lineage of the Self-Images of the Japanese]. Oguma Eiji. Shin'yōsha, 1995. 194 × 131 mm. 454 pp. ¥3,914. ISBN 4-7885-0528-2.

This is an intriguing inquiry into the origins of the myth of Japanese homogeneity based on an analysis of Japanese views expressed in the modern era. In the author's opinion, the myth took root after World War II. In the prewar and wartime period, when Japan was in the process of colonizing its neighbors in the name of Asian unity, the theory of racial kinship between the Japanese and other Asians held sway in Japanese ideology.



Cover design: Namba Sonoko

After the war, however, Japan's recognition of defeat, the radical reduction of its territory, and its desire, as a peace-loving nation, to distance itself from the mounting Cold War tension in Asia, all helped install the theory of ethnic homogeneity as the new basis of national identity. Under this revised consciousness of self, Japanese society was understood to have been, since antiquity, peaceful, homogeneous, and free from interracial conflict. In this shift of stance, the author identifies an ongoing phenomenon whereby the Japanese understanding of the cultural Self is remodeled whenever there is a major change in Japan's relations with other countries, its collective cultural Other.

Chikyū ondanka o kangaeru [On Global Warming]. Uzawa Hirofumi. Iwanami Shoten, 1995. 174 × 106 mm. 12 pp. ¥620. ISBN 4-00-430403-2.

A leading liberal economist active internationally, Chūō University professor Uzawa Hirofumi considers global warming, one of the portentous aberrations now endemic in the global natural environment. With the careful logic of a scientist, he explains how the phenomenon is caused by the sharp rise in the amount of carbon dioxide, looks at its effects on the global environment so far, and considers where it may lead in the years ahead.

He proposes a number of agricultural and industrial policy reforms aimed at weaning contemporary civilization from overdependence on fossil fuels, among them a worldwide "carbon tax." Though difficult to implement, this tax would be levied in proportion to each country's carbon dioxide emission levels and per capita income, thereby distributing the burden justly among developing and developed countries. He suggests that part of the revenue thus collected be used to establish an international fund for the stabilization of atmospheric conditions and other environmental conservation efforts. Hoping to reach young readers, Uzawa writes in a plain, easy-to-read style.



Kanazawajō no hikigaeru: Kyōsō naki shakai ni ikiru [Kanazawa Castle Toads: Life without Competition]. Okuno Ryōnosuke. Dōbutsu Sha, 1995. 193 × 131 mm. 243 pp. ¥2,200. ISBN 4-88622-285-4.

This is the thought-provoking record of a nine-year study made by a Kanazawa University ecologist of the toads (*hikigaeru*; *Bufo japonicus japonicus*) living in a pond near the remains of Kanazawa Castle in Kanazawa, Ishikawa Prefecture. What the author observed in the habitat of the *hikigaeru* was not the principle of survival of the fittest, but rather an easy-going intra-species co-existence. In other words, the small and weak toads were not always weeded out from the population, nor were the strong ones necessarily more likely to survive. In fact, one frog that lost a leg when it was just a year old survived for seven more years and even fulfilled its normal reproductive role. Observations like this convinced the author that exclusion and competition are virtually nonexistent factors in *hikigaeru* "society." From this vantage point, he questions the credibility of the evolution-through-competition theory to which most sociobiologists adhere. A specialist in marine biology, he worked for many years at a Kobe municipal aquarium, where he also found little evidence of competitive natural selection.

Although somewhat specialized, the text of this work is humorously written and thoroughly engaging.



Cover design: Toda Tsutomu, Oka Kōji

Kabuki saijiki [Kabuki Almanac]. Hattori Yukio. Shinchōsha, 1995. 191 × 130 mm. 244 pp. ¥1,100. ISBN 4-10-600480-1.

A *saijiki* is a uniquely Japanese form of annual chronicle. Originating in the world of *haikai* poetry, *saijiki* are comprised of lyric fragments arranged according to and evoking the respective moods of five periods of the year: the four seasons and the New Year. *Saijiki* thus take their place among the numerous literary forms that epitomize the centrality of seasonal change in Japanese aesthetics.



Cover design: Shinchōsha

Modeled on the *saijiki* genre, this book offers a commentary on over fifty well-known Kabuki texts organized by seasonal theme. With famous lines from each of the plays heading each entry, the book evokes the popular Edo aesthetic at the very heart of Kabuki theater. Though cultivated since ancient times in the songs and literature of the courtly and literary elite, traditional aesthetic sensibilities became part of popular consciousness in the Edo period thanks to *haikai* linked verse, Kabuki theater, *nagauta* songs and other new art forms.

Hattori Yukio is a professor of Edo cultural history at Chiba University and a respected authority in the field of Kabuki studies. In the present work he offers an accessible yet comprehensive Kabuki reader and a useful introduction to Japanese culture.

Kyōgen, denshō no waza to kokoro [Kyōgen: The Art and Spirit of Tradition]. Nomura Manzō. Heibonsha, 1995. 193 × 131 mm. 26 pp. ¥3,000. ISBN 4-582-24608-7.

Though both are esteemed as classical forms of Japanese drama, Kyōgen is generally overshadowed by the Nō theater. Perhaps because most Kyōgen's plays are satirical and lighthearted, they are subject to Japanese audiences' tendency to consider comedy below tragedy. Nonetheless, Kyōgen, in which the pomposity of authority figures is impaled with incisive wit and imagination, and which portrays the flesh and foibles of the powerful as ordinary human beings, conveys the robust, down-to-earth spirit of the medieval Japanese populace in a way that audiences all over the world can enjoy and appreciate even today.

Born to a family whose lineage of Kyōgen performers goes back to the Edo period, author Nomura Manzō now ranks as one of the foremost actors and producers of Kyōgen plays. His frequent performances in the West have spearheaded the introduction of the genre to overseas audiences. This book presents over sixty Kyōgen plays along with lucid commentary and expert hints on the performances from the actor's point of view. Including many helpful comments by specialists in the field, such as on historical changes in the content and performance styles of each of the plays covered, this small volume offers an informed grasp of a unique dramatic art.



Cover design: Kikuchi Nobuyoshi

Nihon eiga shi 1-4 [A History of Japanese Film, Vols. 1-4]. Satō Tadao. Iwanami Shoten, 1995. 215 × 153 mm. each. 316-444 pp. ¥3,800. each. ISBN 4-00-003785-4; 4-00-003786-2; 4-00-003787-0; 4-00-003788-9.

This four-volume work is probably the best history of Japanese film published to date. Its coverage of historical background of the social and cultural context of the film industry also throws the contours of Japan's modern era into sharp relief, and even at almost 1,400 pages, it is enjoyable and absorbing reading. Known for translations and writings on Japanese film in English, Satō is a film critic whose many publications include *Kurosawa Akira no sekai* [The World of Kurosawa Akira] and *Currents in Japanese Cinema* (Kodansha International, 1982).



Cover design: Hirano Kōga

The present work, he tells us, took some forty years to conceptualize and twenty to write. It covers the entire history of Japanese film-making, with a period-by-period chronicle from the *karakuri-megane* viewing gadget and "magic lanterns" of the late Edo period up to the present day. Attention is given especially to screenwriters and directors, and from there extends to the broader social and cultural currents out of which the individual films arose. The work is also distinguished by its unbiased exposition of the ties between Japanese films and those of both Western and other Asian countries. It is winner of the 1996 Minister of Education Award of Arts.



Cover design: Shinchōsha

Ozu Yasujiro to Chigasakikan [Ozu Yasujiro and the Chigasaki Inn]. Ishizaka Shōzō. Shinchōsha, 1995. 196 × 133 mm. 332 pp. ¥1,600. ISBN 4-10-385602-5.

One of the giants of Japan's golden age of cinema, today director Ozu Yasujiro (1903-63) is revered by film lovers around the world. By the late-1920s, he had already earned a reputation as one of the brightest makers of silent film. Every autumn from 1946, the year he returned from the war, until 1955, Ozu and co-writer Noda Kōgo (1893-1968) retreated to the Chigasakikan, a seaside inn at Chigasaki, southwest of Tokyo, where they would spend almost 200 days a year writing the script for the next Ozu film. This "Chigasaki period" of Ozu's career generated such enduring masterpieces as *Banshun* (Late Spring), *Bakushū* (Early Summer), and *Tōkyō monogatari* (Tokyo Story).

Written as a eulogy to the great director, this book is a critical biography of Ozu's Chigasaki days. The author was born and raised in Chigasaki, reportedly the location for every sea and coastal shot in all Ozu films, and as a young cinema journalist enjoyed the friendship of Ozu himself. Exploring the influence of the Chigasakikan and local culture on Ozu's art, he points to the freedom the inn environment afforded Ozu, a life-long bachelor, from everyday concerns, and keenly observes that the distinctive rhythm of dialogue in Ozu films closely echoes that of the waves breaking on the Chigasaki shore in spring.

Bokei ron [The Mother Paradigm]. Yoshimoto Takaaki. Gakushū Kenkyūsha, 1995. 194 × 131 mm. 270 pp. ¥1,800. ISBN 4-05-400524-1.

Advanced years have not prevented this author sustaining a reputation as a thinker of the keenest insight. Throughout his career, Yoshimoto has remained deeply concerned with language, the Japanese language in particular. In this anthology, he undertakes to follow the trail of the Japanese language, and therefore of Japanese culture, back to its pre-linguistic origins. In the first half, he explores the mother-child relationship, which then becomes the metaphorical basis for the second half, in which he develops his own provocative theory of Japanese language and culture.



Cover design: Kikuchi Nobuyoshi

His topics include the distinctive vowel systems in the languages of Japan and certain Southeast Asian societies, and a comparison among these societies with regard to the relationship of the pre-linguistic fetal or infant child with its mother. He notes that, almost without exception, these societies have traditionally been matriarchal, regarding the mother-child relationship as one of such physical and psychological affinity as to constitute a single, indivisible entity within which understanding is implicit rather than dependent on outward communication. The implication is that the origins of Japan's language and culture may be traced to its historically enduring matrilineal society.

Kōraku [Withering Leaves]. Sae Shūichi. Shinchōsha, 1995. 197 × 133 mm. 284 pp. ¥1,500. ISBN 4-10-309008-1.

This mostly autobiographical "I-novel" is the story of a middle-aged man who rents a house near his home so that his aging parents can spend their final years near him and his wife. His father and mother, 81 and 76, respectively, both get along well with his wife, and at first all four enjoy a peaceful life as neighbors. Eleven years later, however, things begin to turn sour when the mother, now 87, suffers a fall. With the son now 59 and his father 92, suddenly the family is beset by the many difficulties involved in providing adequate care for the elderly couple.



Cover design: Shinchōsha

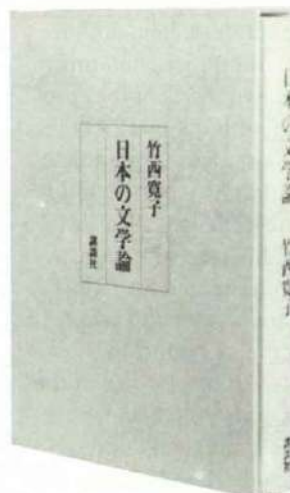
Torn between his sincere devotion to his parents and his involuntary anticipation of their deaths, the son finds himself caught in the love-hate nexus common among blood relatives, while his marriage verges on collapse. Drawing heavily on his own experience, the author, a professional novelist, leaves nothing unrevealed as he probes each link in the complex of relationships between the two couples struggling to share the autumn and winter of their "withering" lives.

With Japan's population rapidly aging, the story strikes all too close to home for many readers. Indeed, the touching warmth with which it captures the very real sorrow of growing old has understandably made it a best-seller in Japan.

Nihon no bungakuron [Studies in Japanese Literature]. Takenishi Hiroko. Kōdansha, 1995. 195 × 131 mm. 286 pp. ¥2,400. ISBN 4-06-207670-5.

Although most non-Japanese with an active interest in Japanese culture recognize such words as *wabi*, *sabi*, and *mono no aware* as central to traditional Japanese aesthetics, many take them to be incorrigibly ambiguous terms connoting nebulous, esoteric sensibilities. Taking up several such keywords from the realm of classical Japanese literature (*waka*, *haikai*/*renga* linked verse, *Nō* drama, etc.), this book seeks to demystify them and reveal their universal intelligibility.

The author, a novelist, eschews scholarly historical survey and cerebral dissertation in favor of total immersion in the mind-set of the classical texts themselves. By adhering to the spirit in which her literary predecessors actually used the words in classical literary commentaries, she discovers that the terms spring to life on their accord, as lucidly as if the ancients themselves had uttered them in her ear. Her emic, hermeneutic approach reflects her conviction that language is the link between the past and the present as well as her professional understanding that, as long as a writer writes in the Japanese language, he or she cannot claim indifference to its classical roots. Unveiling the quintessence of the Japanese literary aesthetic in an aptly elegant style of its own, this book is a delight for readers who love beautifully crafted prose.



Cover design: Babasaki Hitoshi

Saigyō kaden [The Legend of Saigyō]. Tsuji Kunio. Shinchōsha, 1995. 224 × 154 mm. 526 pp. ¥3,500. ISBN 4-10-314216-2.

The life of the poet-monk Saigyō (1118–90) spanned the turbulent period of transition from the Heian period to the Kamakura period, when effective political power shifted from the court nobility to the samurai warrior class. A samurai in his youth, Saigyō served as a palace guard for retired emperor Toba, but at the age of 23 his Buddhist awakening to the transience and vanity of worldly things led him to enter the priesthood. Though retiring thereafter to an ascetic life, he wrote numerous brilliant poems that earned him a place among the most revered poets of the Japanese literary tradition.



Cover design: Shinchōsha

This book is a novelization of Saigyō's life as "told" by various people closely associated with him. That is, the narrative voice shifts from chapter to chapter in a literary madrigal depicting both the spiritual flowering of the man and the decline of Heian court culture. The author, one of Japan's foremost contemporary novelists, evokes Saigyō's profound concern with the conflict between ideal beauty and mundane reality, particularly by portraying his love for Empress Taiken Mon'in, Toba's wife, and his confrontation with her son, retired emperor Sutoku. More than a major literary task, this is a work of crucial import to the author's own life: "Saigyō lived at the very limits of consciousness of life and art; unless I, too, can overcome the mundane and embody, from the depths of my soul, the supremacy of

the aesthetic, this book will have been written in vain."

Tsuji's success in the coming to grips with one of the giants of Japanese cultural history through this novel artistic approach won him the Tanizaki Jun'ichirō Prize. The book also won the Minister of Education Prize at the 30th Japan Book Design Concours/Exhibition (see also back cover of this issue).

Shishōsetsu: from left to right [A Personal Story: from left to right]. Mizumura Minae. Shinchōsha, 1995. 196 × 136 mm. 392 pp. ¥2,000. ISBN 4-10-407701-1.

Japanese literary works are conventionally published in vertical print, even if the author's manuscript is written horizontally. The "from left to right" in the title of this novel tells us that it is an exception to that rule. Far from a pointless attempt at originality for its own sake, however, its left-to-right print and profusion of untranslated English words are necessitated by the nature of the story, which concerns a young Japanese woman who grew up in the United States after her father was transferred there for work. Though enrolled in graduate school, she feels rootless and alone, the only constants in her life being her long-held passion for Japanese literature and her yearning for Japan. The narrative develops primarily through her half-English, half-Japanese telephone conversations with her older sister, who lives in the United States. The jarring bilingual prose that results deftly captures the heroine's sense of cultural dislocation, of belonging to neither country.

Mizumura is known for her *Zoku meian* [Light and Darkness: A Se-



Cover design: Horiguchi Toyota; Cover art: William Morris

quel], in which she provides her own conclusion to Natsume Sōseki's unfinished *Meian* [Light and Darkness], in a brilliant emulation of the great writer's style. Currently living in Tokyo, she holds a doctoral degree in French literature from Yale University and is a recipient of the New Writers Prize, Minister of Education Award of Arts.

Zai-Nichi to iu konkyō [Why "Resident Alien"?!]. Takeda Seiji. Chikuma Shobō, 1995. 148 × 105 mm. 335 pp. ¥1,100. ISBN 4-480-08221-2. The status of Koreans living in Japan grows out of a long and painful history of bilateral relations that includes the period of Japanese colonial rule. This book deals with Koreans residing permanently in Japan as "resident aliens." The Korean community in Japan is an alienated minority in the literal sense whose members struggle with the issue of identity. Should they view themselves as part of a separate ethnic community or try to assimilate into Japanese society? Should they identify with North or South Korea?

The Japanese-born (1947) Korean author himself does not feel torn between alternatives. Content to switch from his Korean name, Japanese name or pen-name as the occasion requires, he says that asking either-or questions is absurd. He illustrates the point through a critique of the writings of second-generation resident Koreans in Japan Kim Hak-yong (1938–88), Kim Sok-pom (b. 1925) and Lee Hoesung (b. 1935). Also included in this enlarged edition is a selection of the author's other, recent critical essays. Takeda is a Meiji Gakuin University professor.



Cover design: Mamura Toshikazu

PERSONALITIES

Dan [Dan]. Sawaki Kōtarō. Shinchōsha, 1995. 197 × 133 mm. 260 pp. ¥1,500. ISBN 4-10-327510-3.

This is a fictionalized account of the relationship between writer Dan Kazuo and his wife Yoriko, presented as a first-person account by Yoriko herself. Dan, who died some twenty years ago, is generally grouped with Dazai Osamu, Sakaguchi Ango and other so-called decadants of postwar Japanese fiction. His *Kataku no hito* [Person in a Burning House], a candid autobiographical novel revealing how he left his wife for another woman, became a best-seller and the center of widespread public attention. Literally meaning "burning house," the *kataku* of that work's title is also a Buddhist metaphor for this world of desire and suffering.



Cover design: Shinchōsha

The novel tells the story of the breakup from Yoriko's perspective. Dan himself is vividly portrayed as less a "decadant" than an essentially timid, yet faithful and pure-hearted figure who, even as he chooses his lover, never really relinquishes his indulgent relationship with his wife. Author Sawaki is one of the most talked-about nonfiction writers publishing today. With this book, he helps open up a fertile new field of narrative in which an existing story can be imaginatively and provocatively retold from a different perspective.

Kimi ni tsuite ikō: Nyōbō wa uchū o mezashita [Where You Lead I Will Follow: My Wife Reached for the Stars]. Mukai Makio. Kōdansha, 1995. 194 × 131 mm. 382 pp. ¥1,800. ISBN 4-06-207785-X.

Mukai Chiaki became the first Asian woman in space when she lifted off in the Space Shuttle *Columbia* in July, 1994. This book is a tribute to Mukai written by her husband Makio, a lecturer in pathology at Keiō University. With wit and humor, he recounts his "Chiaki experience" from their courting days to her pioneering space flight. That his account remains free of even the slightest trace of dissent is a refreshing sign that this couple has managed to escape the strong gravity of traditional gender roles to which most Japanese, particularly men, are still bound. Not that Makio was always such a champion of equal rights; lip service aside, he did not really awaken to the practical realities of equality in marriage until Chiaki was already in the astronaut training program. The book includes a detailed description of Chiaki's training schedule that many readers will find intriguing.



Cover design: Nakamura Shihoko

Perusona: Mishima Yukio den [Perusona: A Biography of Mishima Yukio]. Inose Naoki. Bungei Shunjū, 1995. 193 × 134 mm. 404 pp. ¥1,900. ISBN 4-16-350810-4.

Writer Mishima Yukio (real name Hiraoka Kimitake) shocked Japanese



Cover design: Sakata Masanori

society when he committed ritual *seppuku* suicide at the Tokyo headquarters of the Self-Defense Forces in 1970. Well supported by numerous testimonials, this critical biography of the novelist makes a significant addition to studies of the cultural history of modern Japan.

In attempting to account for the elegance and elevated tone of Mishima's works, most critics and biographers have focused on the aristocratic lineage of his paternal grandmother, who was related to a feudal lord of the Tokugawa period. Inose, however, spotlights the little-known background of the writer's paternal grandfather, the influence of which Mishima himself deliberately excluded from his entire corpus of works. His grandfather, Hiraoka Sadatarō, rose from a farming background to success as a public servant during the infancy of Japan's modern bureaucracy, only to fall from favor soon after for his involvement in political graft. Mishima's father, Hiraoka Azusa, also failed in his career in the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, winding up as a disillusioned, nihilistic minor official, and Mishima himself started out working in the Ministry of Finance. By tracing this three-generational line of civil service, the author casts revealing new light on the personal background behind the internationally esteemed artist's works. A professional nonfiction writer, Inose supports this biography with extensive and scrupulous research.

Events and Trends

Knowledge Pathfinders

Interest in books aimed at helping people polish their intellectual skills has been high over the past few years. Noguchi Yukio's "*Chō benkyōhō* [The "Super" Study Method] (Kōdansha) is a guide to formal learning popular among students and mature readers alike. Published in December 1995, the book had sold a million copies by January and is still in the top rankings of the best-seller list. The study methods are drawn from the personal experience of the author, who graduated from University of Tokyo Faculty of Engineering, later left a job at the Ministry of Finance to study economics in the United States, and is now a professor of economics. Convinced that adult Japanese need to study more, he argues that society should reward all people who make the effort to improve their knowledge, regardless of age.

Another "brain book" that has become a best-seller since its publication last December is *Boku wa konna hon o yonde kita* [These Are Books I've Read] (Bungei Shunjū), by prolific journalist Tachibana Takashi. Meanwhile, the continued popularity of Jostein Gaarder's *Sofi no sekai* [Sophie's World] (Nihon Hōshō Shuppan Kyōkai), a novel that doubles as a thoroughly accessible introduction to the history of philosophy, is further evidence of the reading public's current zeal for improving their minds.

Women's Borderless World

The domain of fiction has seen a spurt of innovative novels by Japanese women who have, in one way or another, transcended Japan's physical and cultural borders. Written as a personal memoir, Mizumura Minae's *Shishōsetsu: from left to right* [A Personal Story: from left to right] (Shinchōsha, see page 18 this issue) is the story of a young Japanese woman who grew up in the United States. As a Japanese novel,

the book is unconventional in its mixture of Japanese and English text, in the horizontal, left-to-right script this necessitates, and in its inclusion of photograph illustrations. The author, who moved to the United States with her family when she was twelve and went on to graduate from Yale University, drew on her own past in writing the novel, which won her the 1995 Noma Prize for New Writers.

Chino Yukiko's *Han Sūin no tsuki* [Han Suyin's Moon] (Shūeisha) portrays a Japanese woman traveling from country to country and her relationship with a Chinese man. The author, who did her own share of international roving after graduating from university, has been living in Beijing since 1992. This work was recognized in winning the Subaru Literature Prize. Another cross-cultural novel enjoying strong sales is the Japanese edition of *Shizuko's Daughter* (Henry Holt & Co., Ltd) by Japanese-American Kyoko Mori, an associate professor at Saint Norbert College in the United States published by Aoyama Shuppan Sha.

Akutagawa/Naoki Prizes

The Akutagawa Prize was awarded to Matayoshi Eiki for *Buta no mukui* [The Pig's Retribution] (Bungei Shunjū). The Naoki Prize went to Koike Mariko for *Koi* [Love] (Haya-kawa Shobō) and Fujiwara Iori for *Terorisuto no parasoru* [The Terrorist's Parasol] (Kōdansha). *Buta no mukui* is set in Okinawa. The story tells about how a pig suddenly invades a small drinking establishment, and four people who happened to be in the drinkery at the time set out on a pilgrimage to a distant island to exorcise the bad luck brought by the pig. The author was born and bred in Okinawa. The work was praised for its depiction of the rich milieu of Okinawa as well as for its firm grasp of the lyricism inherent in religion.

Koi is a suspense story recounting the murder of a girl college student who gets involved in the degenerate life of a university professor and his wife set against the times of student campus revolts from 1970 to 1972. The work was acclaimed for its skillful portrayal of the world of perverted love.

Terorisuto no parasoru is hard-

boiled fiction about a bombing incident that occurred in a Shinjuku park, involving a number of unusual characters: a bartender who had participated in the radical student movement at the University of Tokyo, eccentrics, homeless tramps, and terrorists. The author is an employee at the big advertising firm, Dentsū, who based the story on his own experienced in the student movement. The novel won high marks for the entertaining dialogue of the characters and the high quality of the writing.

Ainu Legend Picturebook

Katayama Tatsumine of the Katayama Institute of Linguistic and Cultural Research has published an Ainu-language picturebook of the ancient mythic epics, *kamui yukara*, thought to be the oldest surviving Ainu oral traditions. The first ever printed version of the story, the book is the product of three years work involving two Ainu-speaking storytellers and three illustrators. Because the Ainu language has no writing system of its own, the text of the stories is transcribed in a mixture of *katakana* and Roman characters. Priced at ¥6,800, the book comes with a cassette tape of the stories, each about ten minutes long and narrated in Ainu, and a written commentary in Japanese and English. For further information, contact the Institute at 2-43-11 Kichijoji Higashimachi, Musashino-shi, Tokyo 180.

Winter Olympics Dictionary

Compiled and published single-handedly by former senior high school teacher Honda Hideo, *Tōki Orinpikku yonkakokugo jiten* [A Quadrilingual Dictionary of the Winter Olympic Games] is a unique cross-reference of English, German, Japanese, and Russian terms related to the sports and "culture" of the winter Olympics. In addition to technical aspects of the sports themselves—both familiar winter sports like skiing, skating and curling, and more recent ones like snow-boarding—it also covers customs and manners that have become established at the Games, and even useful expressions for making smalltalk in the stadiums. Published

in anticipation of the 1998 Winter Olympics in Nagano, the dictionary is first of its kind to appear in Japan. Honda got the idea for the project from a Soviet-published Russian-English sports-and-conversation manual he came across while teaching himself Russian, and began compiling terms for the 452-page lexicon three years ago. A part-time university lecturer, he is currently preparing the manuscript for a six-language dictionary of the summer Olympic Games, and is also planning an extensive, six-language sports encyclopedia covering all summer and winter Olympic events as well as such pop-

ular non-Olympic sports as rugby and golf.

Food Dictionaries Sell

Hefty dictionaries focusing on food ingredients that are amply illustrated and include detailed reference material are capturing widespread interest among non-specialist readers. Publishers are finding that deluxe, high-priced editions primarily intended for professionals in the food industry are unexpectedly popular among amateurs who cook for pleasure.

Both Shōgakusan's *Shokuzai zuten* [Illustrated Dictionary of Foods]

(¥5,800) published in March 1995 and Kōdansha's *Marché* (¥6,800) cover approximately 1,700 varieties of ingredients from meat, vegetables, and processed foods to spices and seasonings. Already the *Shokuzai zuten* has sold over 100,000 copies, three times the publisher's initial expectations. *Marché* sold out the 12,000 copies of its first printing and put out a second printing in February.

The brisk and steady sales of reference books on cooking and eating reflects the development of gourmet tastes in Japan, as people who like to cook expand their cooking and eating repertoires.

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

Publishers

Asahi Shimbunsha
Inquiries from overseas should be addressed to:
Mr. Hirano
Book Export Dept. 2
Japan Publications Trading Co.
P. O. Box 5030
Tokyo International, Tokyo 100-31
Tel: (03) 3292-3753 Fax: (03) 3292-3764

Bungei Shunjū
3-23 Kioi-cho
Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 102
Tel: (03) 3265-1211 Fax: (03) 3239-5482

Chikuma Shobō
Komuro Bldg.
2-5-3 Kuramae
Taito-ku, Tokyo 111
Tel: (03) 5687-2671 Fax: (048) 666-4648

Chūō Kōron Sha
2-8-7 Kyobashi
Chuo-ku, Tokyo 104
Tel: (03) 3563-1431 Fax: (03) 3561-5922

Dōbutsusha
4-27-4 Koenji-kita
Suginami-ku, Tokyo 166
Tel: (03) 3339-7123 Fax: (03) 3339-0747

Gakushū Kenkyūsha
Kokusai Jigyōbu
4-40-5 Kamiike-dai
Ota-ku, Tokyo 145
Tel: (03) 3493-3332 Fax: (03) 3493-3338

Hara Shobō
1-25-13 Shinjuku
Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 160
Tel: (03) 3354-0685 Fax: (03) 3226-7950

Heibonsha
5-16-19, Himon'ya
Meguro-ku, Tokyo 152
Tel: (03) 5721-1234 Fax: (03) 5721-1239

Iwanami Shoten
2-5-5 Hitotsubashi
Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 101-02
Tel: (03) 5210-4000 Fax: (03) 5210-4039

Kawade Shobō Shinsha
2-32-2 Sendagaya
Shibuya-ku, Tokyo 151
Tel: (03) 3404-1201 Fax: (03) 3404-6386

Kōdansha
2-12-21 Otowa
Bunkyo-ku, Tokyo 112-01
Tel: (03) 5395-3676 Fax: (03) 3943-2459

LYU Kōbō
71-705 Sayacho
Takasaki-shi, Gumma 370
Tel: (0273) 28-4651 Fax: (0273) 28-4651

Nō-san-gyo-son Bunka Kyōkai
7-6-1 Akasaka
Minato-ku, Tokyo 107
Tel: (03) 3585-1141 Fax: (03) 3589-1387

PHP Kenkyūsho
Kokusai Hombu
3-10 Sambancho
Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 102
Tel: (03) 3239-6238 Fax: (03) 3222-0424

Seidosha
Ichinose Bldg.
1-29 Kanda Jimbo-cho
Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 101
Tel: (03) 3291-9831 Fax: (03) 3291-9834

Shinchōsha
71 Yaraicho
Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 162
Tel: (03) 3266-5111 Fax: (03) 3266-5118

Shin'yōsha
Tada Bldg.
2-10 Kanda Jimbo-cho
Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 101
Tel: (03) 3264-4973 Fax: (03) 3239-2958

Tamagawa Daigaku Shuppanbu
6-1-1 Tamagawa-Gakuen
Machida-shi, Tokyo 194
Tel: (0427) 39-8935 Fax: (0427) 39-8940

Tōyō Keizai Shimpōsha
1-2-1 Nihonbashi Hongoku-cho
Chuo-ku, Tokyo 103
Tel: (03) 3246-5467 Fax: (03) 3270-4127

Agencies

The Asano Agency, Inc.
302 Tokuda Bldg.
4-44-8 Sengoku
Bunkyo-ku, Tokyo 112
Tel: (03) 3943-4171 Fax: (03) 3943-7637

Bureau des Copyrights Français
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8-2-1 Ginza
Chuo-ku, Tokyo 104
Tel: (03) 3570-4080 Fax: (03) 3574-1757

The English Agency (Japan) Ltd.
305 Azabu Empire Mansion
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Minato-ku, Tokyo 106
Tel: (03) 3406-5385 Fax: (03) 4306-5387

Japan Foreign-Rights Centre
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Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 101
Tel: (03) 3295-0301 Fax: (03) 3294-5173

Motovun Co., Ltd., Tokyo
103 Co-op Nomura Ichiban-cho
15-6 Ichiban-cho
Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 102
Tel: (03) 3261-4002 Fax: (03) 3264-1443

Orion Press
1-55 Kanda Jimbo-cho
Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 101
Tel: (03) 3295-1405 Fax: (03) 3295-4366

Tuttle-Mori Agency, Inc.
Dai-ichi Fuji Bldg. 8F
2-15 Kanda Jimbo-cho
Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 101
Tel: (03) 3230-4081 Fax: (03) 3234-5249

The Yamani Agency
2-6-501 Uenohara
Higashi-Kurume-shi, Tokyo 203
Tel: (0424) 73-5366 Fax: (0424) 71-5638

The Japan Book Design Concours/Exhibition mentioned in the first installment of this series (see *Japanese Book News*, No. 11) started in 1966 encourages higher professional standards in the book publishing industry and advancement of book design arts. For the 30th competition held in 1995, 41 works were chosen for prizes from 496 candidates. *Saigyō kaden* [The Legend of Saigyō] (Shinchōsha) by Tsuji Kunio, which won the Minister of Education Prize, is described on page 18, so we will introduce two other winners here. The award-winning books were exhibited at the Tokyo International Book Fair held February 8–11, 1996.

Maruzen Encyclopedia Daihyakka (Minister of International Trade and Industry Prize)

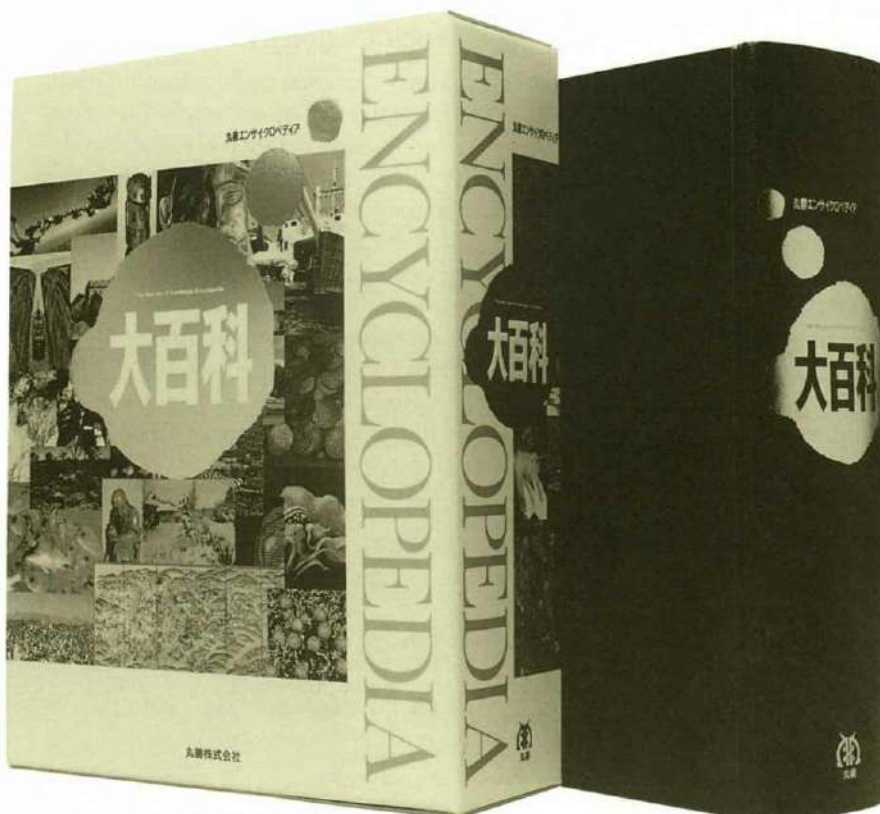
This one-volume encyclopedia is based on *The New Joy of Knowledge Encyclopedia* published in 1989 (Oriole Publishing; later published in 22 different countries). Maruzen has updated the entries and added new ones dealing with Japan, Asia, and Africa, making it a versatile general reference for basic knowledge. Part I contains 941 text and illustrated entries, Part II historical chronologies, and Part III entries given in Japanese syllabary order.

The 10,000-odd illustrations include artwork going back to the 1960s. The volume entices lovers of knowledge with well-written entries, a wealth of illustrations, and cross-referenced information. The book was recognized for its advanced grid system of page composition, excellent writing, editorial work, and design, as well as for the high standard of its typesetting, printing, binding, and other production techniques.

Yūyū shōyō Edo meisho (Governor of Tokyo Prize)

This work by Shiraishi Tsutomu presents 164 views of Edo (present-day Tokyo) selected from the early-nineteenth-century illustrated guidebook entitled *Edo meisho zue*, along with folding maps of Edo and explanatory texts. Blow-ups zoom in on famous places and townscapes, bringing into close-up the distinctive style and fashions of Edo-period culture.

The jacket features an enlargement of one of the illustrations that appear in the book, and the type display is attractively framed with contrast rule. The cover is printed dark blue on embossed paper, and the title type face, in a design following traditional Japanese style, is simple and consistent from jacket to inside title. The detailed landscape prints and maps produced by woodblock printing that make up the body of the book resonate with the artistic harmonies of the Edo period. The volume does not use particularly unusual cloth or paper, but displays sophisticated binding technique and design.



Maruzen Encyclopedia Daihyakka. Maruzen, 1995. 306 × 215 mm. 2,608 pp. ¥31,930. ISBN 4-621-03970-9. Slipcase: pasteboard, offset printing 4 colors and gold hotstamping; gloss laminated. Jacket: 160.0 gsm coated paper, offset printing 2 colors; gloss laminated. Cover: hard cover, dark blue leather-finished cloth, gold hotstamping. Cover design: Yakushiji Chikahiko.

Yūyū shōyō Edo meisho. Shiraishi Tsutomu. Shōgakukan, 1995. 263 × 185 mm. 400 pp. ¥4,800. ISBN 4-09-680433-9. Jacket: 150.0 gsm coated paper, offset printing 3 colors; mat laminated. Cover: hard cover, 130 gsm fine paper, offset printing 2 colors. Cover design: Matsumoto Tōru.

