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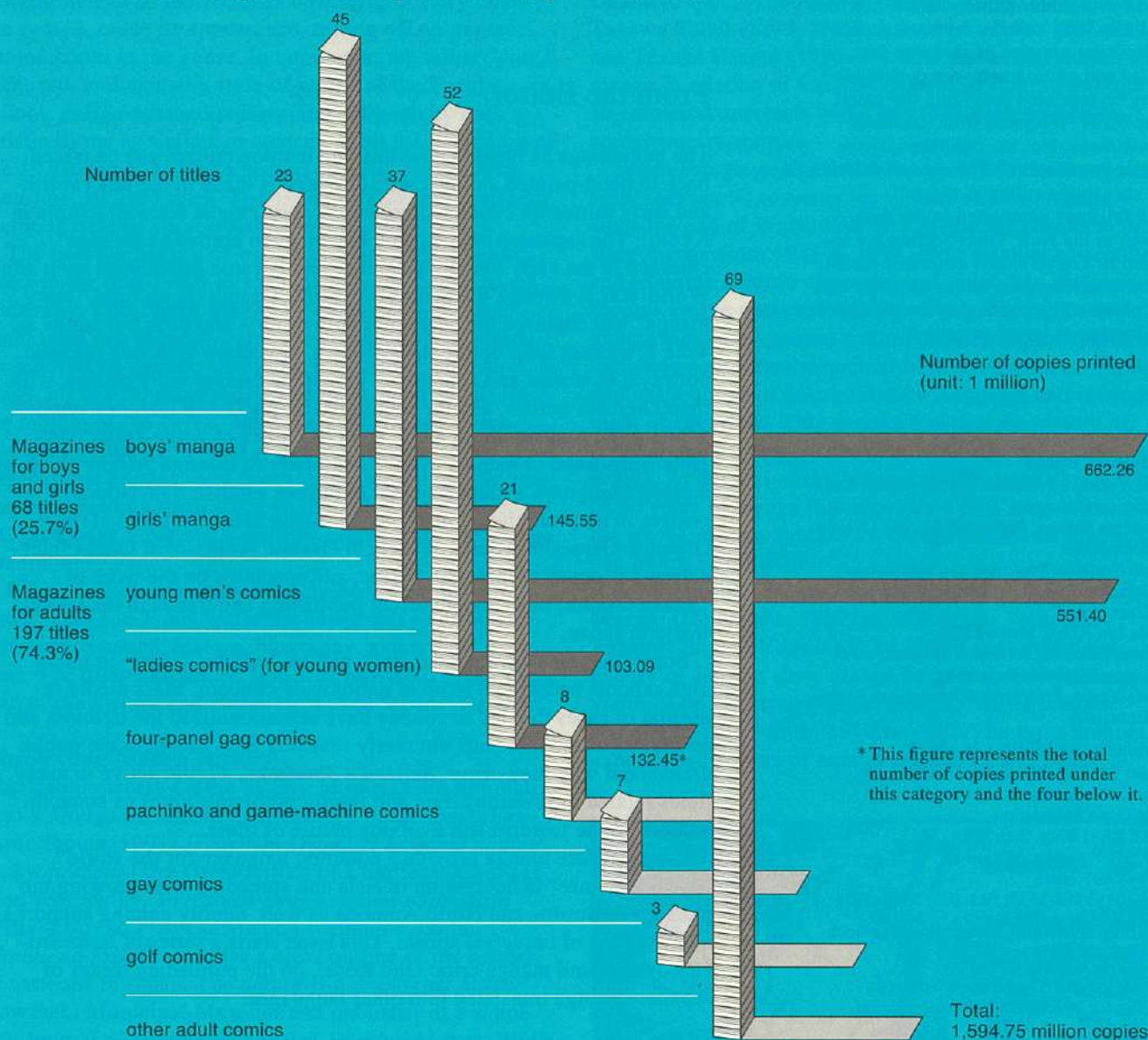
Japanese Book News

Japanese Manga: Research and Criticism

The Anatomy of School *Ijime*

Manga Publishing: Trends in Asia

Number of Comic Magazines and Copies Printed, by Genre (1995)



Total: 265 titles

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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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From the Editor

The beginnings of Japan's now-thriving cartoon culture can be traced back to hand-painted animal caricature scrolls made in the late twelfth and early thirteenth century (four scrolls surviving at Kōzanji temple in Kyoto). The Japanese comics now known even abroad as "manga" emerged in the early twentieth century and became established soon after World War II through the genius of Tezuka Osamu. In no time, "story manga" had captured the hearts not only of girls and boys but adults as well. It was not long before the *gekiga*, a new genre featuring realistic portrayal of stories and characters, joined the fantasy story manga, with their cherubic heroes, and the traditional strip gag and lampoon comics. While some register alarm at the sight of hordes of white-collar commuters absorbed in manga, even the Ministry of Foreign Affairs chose to include *Mangajin*, a magazine that publishes English translations of *gekiga*, in its promotional materials on Japan to be displayed at the Olympic Games in Atlanta. Takeuchi Osamu, professor at Osaka International Women's University, critic, and specialist on the work of Tezuka Osamu, talks about current publishing and trends in the manga world in Japan.

Some ten years have passed since vicious bullying (*ijime*) in junior high schools became an issue of nationwide concern. Mass media reporting of cases that led to suicide have sensationalized the ugliness and awfulness of the incidents but rarely revealed facts that help the public understand why they occur. Serizawa Shunsuke, a critic active in many fields related to juvenile crime and family problems, gives us some insights into the features and evolving nature of *ijime*.

Can Japanese manga provide a common language for the world? "Manga culture" is flourishing in Asia and spreading with growing momentum in Europe and North America as well, rapidly gaining support as a new media of universal appeal. This issue starts a series of three articles by film and manga critic Ono Kōsei, on the publishing trends of Japanese manga translated into other languages.

Cover: The graph shows that the ratio in terms of number of titles between comic magazines for boys and girls and those for adults is 1:3. About forty percent of all comic magazines are for female readers, 45 titles for girls and 52 for women. Comic magazines for boys and those for young men make up the largest share in terms of number of copies printed, although the number of titles is not as large.

Japanese Manga: Research and Criticism

Takeuchi Osamu

The genre of "story manga" (narrative comics) in Japan has traced a unique path since the end of World War II, developing into a publishing phenomenon without precedent anywhere in the world. Criticism of and research about comics, too, has matured and deepened in the course of that development. This article will outline the trends in manga criticism and research.

First, let us look at the general history of Japan's story manga since the end of World War II. During this period, the history of manga culture changed in roughly ten-year phases. The work of Tezuka Osamu, whose career began in the 1940s, laid the foundations for the evolution of comics that told a complete story, in contrast to traditional lampoon comics or short strip gag comics. Then, toward the end of the 1950s, a new style of story comic, the *gekiga*, made its appearance, setting off an unprecedented boom in the genre. In contrast to the rather "cute," idealized, and amusing style of works of the Tezuka school, *gekiga* pursued realism and authenticity both in artistic forms as well as in content. With the beginning of the 1970s came the *shōjo manga* or girls' comics with their fine, stylized lines. The 1980s brought the precisely pictorial style of Ōtomo Katsuhiro (of Akira fame).

The postwar history of manga criticism, meanwhile, starts in the mid-1960s as the manga boom began to get underway. Dominated mainly by educators until that time, from this point onward, the discussion was joined by scholars of popular literature, film critics, philosophers, art critics, sociologists and other intellectuals. In the middle of the 1970s, amid the girls' manga boom, criticism by the generation reared on postwar comics began. Now comics were being discussed by people who had been reading them since childhood; even the specialists on manga literature were now drawn from the manga generations.

Below I shall look at the leading books published about manga in Japan under the categories of criticism, scholarly research, history, biography, and artistic expression. The titles introduced here will provide a broad picture of the history and current trends of Japanese manga.

Chronicling Manga History

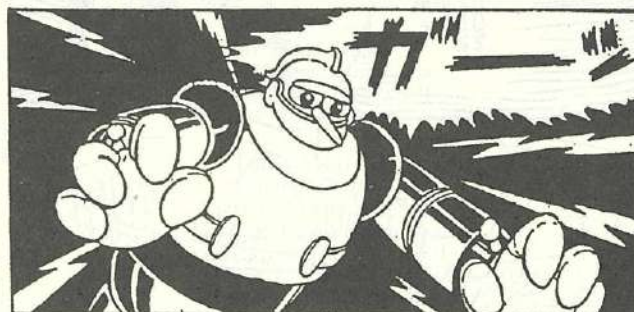
The leading works on the history of manga are Shimizu Isao's *Manga no rekishi* [The History of Comics] (Iwanami Shoten, 1991), Takeuchi Osamu's *Kodomo manga no kyojintachi* [The Great Artists of Children's Comics] (San'ichi Shobō, 1995) and *Sengo manga gojūnenshi* [Fifty Years of Postwar Manga] (Chikuma Shobō, 1995). *Manga no rekishi* provides a clear outline of the history of cartoons in Japan. The author is a researcher at the Kawasaki Municipal Museum and publisher of a scholarly journal of cartoon art entitled *Fūshiga kenkyū*. While the text of this book does discuss the history of story manga, it is mainly concerned with cartoons, beginning with comparisons of Japanese and French cartoon art of

the 1830s, and providing an introductory survey extending up to the *yon-koma manga* (four-panel gag strips) and cartoons found in contemporary weekly magazines. Its basic approach is focused on the impact of foreign cartoon art and advances in printing technology as well as on cartoon history in relation to political and social trends. Shimizu is the author of many other books about cartoons.

Kodomo manga no kyojintachi is my own study of the history of children's comics. The main text consists of a discussion of the genre from the 1880s to 1940s, looked at through the works of the nine leading manga writers who shaped each phase in the history of prewar comic culture. These comic and picture-story artists include Okamoto Ippei (1886–1948), Miyao Shigeo (1902–82), Tagawa Suihō (1899–1989), Yamakawa Sōji (1908–92), and Tezuka Osamu (1926–89). The discussion examines manga in relation to fashions in popular culture through an empirical approach based on extensive research in contemporary sources.

Sengo manga gojūnenshi takes up where the foregoing work leaves off, covering the history of story manga since the end of World War II. I divide the chronicle of story manga from 1945 to 1994 into a number of sections and examine them in chronological order. My discussion focuses on the various issues involving Japanese story manga that have aroused controversy during this period, including sensational depiction of cruelty, violence, and explicit sex, use of discriminatory language, and infringement of copyright. This approach places the history of postwar story manga in the context of contemporary events. At the end of the volume is a 43-page chronology of 50 years of manga that provides a bird's-eye-view of the works, manga magazines, manga-related incidents, and trends in criticism.

A further title, *Manga-den* [A Historical Account of Manga] (Heibonsha, 1987) by Murakami Tomohiko, Takatori Ei, and Yonezawa Yoshihiro documents the history of Japan's story manga by genre—boys' manga, young people's manga, girls' manga, "ladies comics," gag comics, etc.—from 1970 to 1987. The three authors, experienced editors of manga magazines and books,



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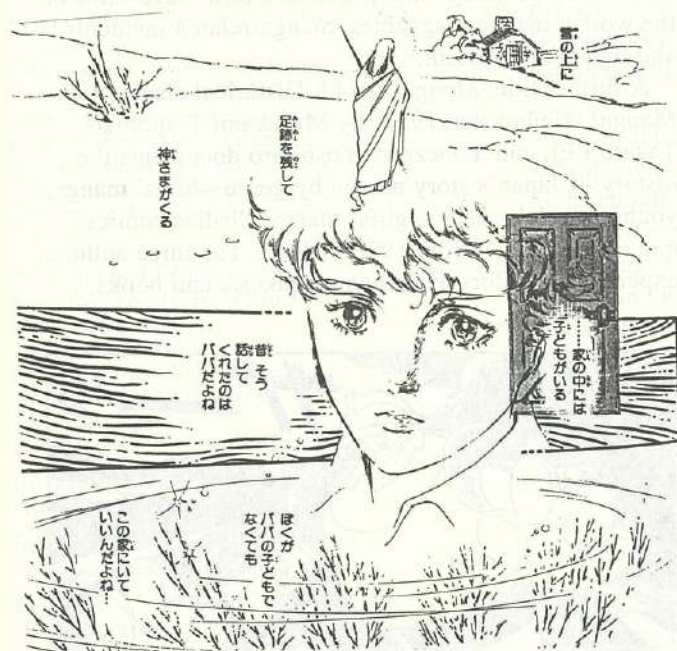
provide an intimate and expert survey of nearly two decades of manga.

These publications appearing from the latter half of the 1980s show that manga has become firmly established during the fifty years since the end of World War II.

Tezuka Osamu

From the beginning of his career in 1946 to his death in 1989, Tezuka Osamu was active at the forefront of Japanese comics, and his creative lifetime overlaps completely with the development of the story manga genre. Two of leading works on the godfather of the manga genre are film critic Ishigami Mitsutoshi's *Tezuka Osamu no jidai* [Tezuka Osamu and His Age] (Tairiku Shobō, 1989) and my two-volume *Tezuka Osamu ron* [A Study of Tezuka Osamu] (Heibonsha, 1992). Ishigami's work includes particularly close examination of the characters appearing in Tezuka's works. He observes, for example, that Tezuka's female characters are modeled after female insects. There is also a detailed study of the young male character named Rock, who appears recurrently from the earliest to the latest works Tezuka produced; the evolution of Rock's character, the author points out, displays the transformations that took place in Tezuka's own appraisal about postwar society.

In *Tezuka Osamu ron*, I unravel some of the puzzling images that characterize Tezuka's manga under a number of topics, including his ideas about science, eros, image of women, the "character copy" (*bunshin*) motif, and cinematic techniques. Eroticism in Tezuka's works can be found in his numerous depictions of sexual partner-substitute dolls, artificial skin, and other features. Previous studies, similarly, overlooked the way Tezuka learned from cinema techniques, such as overlapping the perspective of the reader with that of the characters.



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Manga on Their Own Merits

Comics are a distinctive art form featuring visual images with the story told in dialogue boxes and speech balloons that need to be read and appreciated on their own merits rather than in comparison with other forms of art or literature. Among the many books that have come out with this concern in mind, let me introduce just two here.

Manga no yomikata [Reading Manga] (Takarajimasha, 1995) is a generously illustrated introduction to manga art that dissects the various forms of expression in manga. The editorial team that prepared this volume was led by essayist Natsume Fusanosuke and writer of original stories for manga Takekuma Kentarō. Inventing an original vocabulary for the genre—e.g., *mahaku* (white space), *keiyu* (shape metaphor) and *on'yu* (sound metaphor)—they are attempting to forge a new language of manga expression. Unfortunately, for all their new words and novel vocabulary, their work has not progressed to the point of formulating a meaningful grammar for the genre.

Yomota Inuhiko's *Manga genron* [The Principles of Manga] (Chikuma Shobō, 1994) studies manga expression very broadly. A scholar of French literature by training, Yomota is also known as a film critic. Utilizing the language of the cinema, the techniques of the illustrated story, and the terminology of semiology, he presents a multi-dimensional analysis of the variety and meaning of manga expression. The major drawback of this book is its lack of historical perspective. The attempt to lay out manga on the same plane, removing all temporal filters, is somehow dissatisfying. Discussion of manga expression has only just begun and we can look forward to increasingly penetrating studies.

Since 1990, the matter of sexually explicit manga has been the focus of quite vigorous debate. Taken up by the mass media, the issue of sensational sex in magazines for young people has been brought to public attention by local citizen's movements and emerged as a leading social problem. In one case a bookseller who sold obscene literature to minors was arrested. This incident is described in "*Yūgai*" *komikku mondai o kangaeru* [Considering the "Harmful" Comic Problem] (Sō Shuppan, 1991). This book outlines the development of the issue and its main points with specific reference to primary sources, making it indispensable to the study of the social impact of manga.

In closing, I should like to mention an anthology of postwar manga criticism. Many leading figures of postwar Japanese culture have written about manga, from novelist Mishima Yukio and poet Terayama Shūji, to cultural anthropologist Yamaguchi Masao. *Manga hihyō taiki* [Library of Manga Criticism], 4 vols. plus 1 supplement (Heibonsha, 1989), by Murakami Tomohiko and myself is the first anthology of its kind to be compiled in Japan. The essays, 56 in all, are arranged in chronological order, filling the first three volumes. Volume four contains 41 pieces written by manga artists themselves. The supplement, entitled, *Tezuka Osamu no uchū* [The Universe of Tezuka Osamu] consists of 15 critical writings about Tezuka manga written after World War II. This anthology has been well received, perhaps because it is a first, and it has been reviewed several times. It is

nevertheless strange that in a country where manga publishing is such a thriving industry, such a collection was not published long before.

The titles outlined above represent serious works of criticism and research. While a plethora of amusing and entertaining books about manga has been published in Japan, there are few that provide an informed, dispassionate look at manga culture. Since manga is a genre intended to be read for enjoyment, there has been a tendency to think that critical works ought to be entertaining as well, but this situation is gradually improving through the efforts of a few committed critics. (*Takeuchi Osamu is professor of communications at Osaka International Women's University and a manga critic.*)



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

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The Anatomy of School *Ijime*

Serizawa Shunsuke

Bullying, teasing, cruelty, and sheer meanness among children in the schools have been escalating beyond the bounds of ordinary human nature in Japan in recent years, resulting in a number of tragic reported incidents and widespread unreported suffering among school children. All manifestations of this increasingly worrisome social problem are encompassed under the rubric of *ijime*.

Debate on *ijime* is still in the incipient phase. Everyone talks about it but few have adequately defined it. Many documentary accounts reporting on specific cases of bullying have been published, and some of them are worth reading in order to understand the problem. But works approaching the subject from a comprehensive, analytical viewpoint are scarce, and this is indicative of the general neglect of the concept of *ijime*. While it is unsettling to see numerous books being published with analyses and "solutions" to the problem even before the terms of the subject have been properly defined, it does indicate the crisis that families and schools currently face.

Definitions and Distinctions

A few noteworthy efforts have been made to analyze the *ijime* that is sickening schools today. The National Police Agency's Juvenile Division was the first to grasp the situation of *ijime* as a phenomenon of group cruelty in the schools, defining it as "the repetitive application to a single or more than one specific person of either physical cruelty or psychological pressure through threat by word/deed, harassment, and ostracism." This definition became an important reference point for grappling with the bullying problem. It has two key points. First, the victim or target of *ijime* is a single or a few individuals, at most, and the targets are specific. Second, the target is subjected to repeated physical or psychological acts of cruelty.

Though not expressly mentioned, we may deduce from the NPA definition two other crucial points. First, the "threat" derives from many and unspecified individuals within a group whose membership may be fluid.

Second, the fact that victims are subject to repeated harm does not mean that the hurt or harassment takes the same form every time. It may take one form one day and a completely different form the next. What makes school *ijime* a serious problem is that it consists of physical assaults and psychological pressures that may be repeated over a long period of time—in some cases continuing over many years from elementary school through junior high school. As children get older, it comes as no surprise that this sort of chronic bullying easily escalates into criminal behavior, such as inflicting injury and extortion.

In some extreme cases *ijime* drives victims to suicide. This phenomenon demonstrates one more crucial point. That is, there are no essential differences between phys-

ical assault (punching, kicking), psychological pressure through such means as deliberately ignoring or ostracizing the victim, and criminal acts (gang beatings, extortion of money, etc.). Any type of *ijime* carries a message that "You don't belong here." Therefore, comparing the seriousness of specific acts of bullying is meaningless. This is a distinct feature of school bullying that we cannot afford to overlook.

What kind of bullying drives a victim to suicide? Case after case shows that it does not have to be physical violence such as hitting or kicking, nor even repeated demands for money under threat of physical retaliation. Psychological pressure is all it takes. If such pressure is kept up long enough, it can drive the victim to suicide.

Other definitions fail to note some of these important distinctions. For instance, one scholar defines the *ijime* as "aggressive acts carried out intentionally and one-sidedly among members of a particular group, and acts that inflict psychological, physical pain or injury on the victim." (Egawa Binsei et al., *Saishin kyōiku kiwādo* 137 [137 New Key Words in Education], Jiji Tsūshinsha, 1995). This definition does not say the bullying is done by many or that its target is a specified few, or that the bullying is repeated. The only notable point of the definition is that the *ijime* occurs among members of the same group.

In British critic Rosemary Stones's view of bullying presented in *Don't Pick on Me* (Shōbunsha, 1995), the target is chosen on the pretext that he or she is different from the others and subjected to various kinds of attacks. In today's bullying, however, the target does not necessarily have to be someone who is different in any particular way. There are more and more cases of *ijime* in which an individual is *made* to be different by choosing him or her as a target. I therefore believe more attention should be drawn to the dynamic aspect of the bullying, that is, the dynamics of the groups that perpetrate bullying.

A classic study on the subject is Morita Yōji and Kiyonaga Kenji, *Ijime: Kyōshitsu no yamai* [Bullying: The Classroom Crisis] (Kaneko Shōbō, 1994). The authors depict the structure of bullying as consisting of four concentric layers. At the center is the target, surrounded by those who directly inflict the bullying, and on their periphery are their leaders, the real instigators or ringleaders. On the outermost ring are the bystanders. This four-ring structure is true to the NPA definition.

Yoshida Shūji's *Ijime no shinri kōzō o toku* [The Anatomy of the Psychological Structure of Bullying] (Kōbunken, 1996) makes an important contribution to the discussion of *ijime* in that it delineates the concept of *kyūgun kanjō* (lit., "group-seeking impulse"). Yoshida draws attention to the strong Japanese tendency to flock together in spontaneous, tenuous groups or "herds," described using the word *mure*. Japanese have always identified their place and self-image within the world of "us,"

that is, within the group or groups to which they belong, he argues. How is the problem of bullying seen in the light of this tendency? For the majority, the effect of *ijime* is to confirm that they themselves have avoided being bullied for the time being; they know that, as long as they are not themselves the target of *ijime*, they are safely part of the majority and escape being expelled from the advantageous "our" world to the disadvantaged world of the isolated individual.

Earlier we defined the *ijime* problem as a phenomenon of group cruelty in the schools. If Yoshida's *mure* and what we referred to in that definition as "group" were identical, our understanding of bullying would be the same as Yoshida's. But *mure* and "group" seem to differ.

The former is like a crowd that gathers and disperses spontaneously, and while it exists its movements are fluid. The impulse to join a crowd is an instinct all human beings possess. It is only natural, too, that children are inclined to join such loosely formed groups. The members of these groups act in unison, with little sign of individual initiative, as in an animal herd. More formal groups take shape according to enduring, cohesive factors for some identifiable purpose, and with a clear organization and leadership. Classes in the schools do have some of the characteristics of the spontaneous *mure* group (in that those included are gathered at random and without individual volition), but are artificial in that they are made up of children who are all the same age. Also, the dynamics of a school class are governed by the student-teacher relationship, rather than according to the children's natural instincts.

School is a place not just where children can flock together in spontaneous groups but also where they are forced to move as part of artificially organized groups. I believe bullying needs to be understood as a mixture of two sets of dynamics children face—the internal forces of the spontaneous "herds" they themselves form as well as of their formal groups (the latter involving the question of authority). In considering the concept of the "group" cruelty in the schools, therefore, we must take into account the "herds" children also form in that environment. Yoshida's concept of *mure* has introduced an important dimension that had been a blind spot in the *ijime* debate. In the discussion of juvenile culture, in fact, the concept of the spontaneously formed *mure* was totally missing.

The Evolving Nature of *Ijime*

A recent book, *Ijime kō* [Analyses of Bullying] (Shunjūsha, 1995), authored by two playwrights and a critic (Betsuyaku Minoru, Yamazaki Tetsu, and Serizawa Shunsuke), argues that the aforementioned four-ringed structure presented by Morita and Shimizu is no longer valid in explaining group bullying in the schools and introduces a new structure. While bullying in the not-so-distant past was usually focused on an outsider, a weakling or deviant member of the community, in the more recent structure of *ijime*, the majority in a *mure* or other type of group discriminate against one or a few persons, making them targets of cruelty, but do not exclude or cut them off from the group.

Morita and Shimizu's paradigm fits the kind of *ijime*

that is known about to the entire classroom. The new type of bullying has a different structure. It takes place within groups that are ostensibly made up of good friends. The bullying within these groups, moreover, is not necessarily known to anyone outside them. As elsewhere, the target of cruelty within this group is a specific person or persons. The target is obvious to the members of the group, but in the eyes of outsiders, no victim appears to exist, and the members of the group seem to be getting along well. Even the target may be convinced that the beatings they are forced to endure and the stealing they are expected to perform are merely expressions of loyalty to the group and the role they must serve to remain in the group in which they define themselves.

I should like to emphasize here that the coalescence of a group has unique features that may be easier to understand by introducing the concept of the "group-seeking impulse." The group has no particular purpose, but it is not merely a spontaneously formed "crowd." Its members, who have a strong desire to be part of an almost exclusive group, are so intimately united that they act in unison in everything, like the gaggle of junior high-school boys who even go to the toilet together.

The bullying that takes place within such cohesive groups is hard to recognize outside the group. Even those who are bullied may not be aware that they are targets, as revealed in a detailed report of the experiences of being bullied in *Watashi no ijimerare nikki* [My Diary of Being Bullied] (Seikyūsha, 1993), written by Tsuchiya Rei with commentary by her father, psychiatrist Tsuchiya Mamoru. As long as the victims consider those who bully them to be friends in the same group, the bullying is not easy to detect. It is also difficult to draw the line between normal adolescent play and cruel behavior (violence, physical and psychological) that takes place within the group.

The authors of *Ijime kō* describe what they call the "forced complementarity" of the victim of this new type of bullying: the victim is not a full member of the group, but is not permitted to leave the group either. For the members of the group to keep on with the bullying, which itself becomes an objective of the group, it is absolutely necessary to maintain a bullying target within the group. The target student is forced to impress on outside people that he or she gets along very well with the other members of the group, but in fact remains alienated within the group. He or she is not really a part of the group of friends, and yet cannot get away from them. The suicide of Ōkōchi Kiyoteru, a junior high student in the city of Nishio, Aichi Prefecture, that occurred as a result of *ijime* in 1994, was a typical case that can be explained only by introducing the concept of such "forced complementarity." Kiyoteru's female homeroom teacher even thought he was part of the group of friends who actually bullied him. He behaved as if part of the group by joining them in disturbing classes. From the outside, he looked like a member of the group. Needless to say, he disturbed classes not of his own will, but was forced to. Such internalization of bullying within a group is a major factor behind the difficulty in discerning and dealing with cases of *ijime*. (Serizawa Shunsuke is a scholar of contemporary thought and a critic.)

Manga Publishing: Trends in Asia

Ono Kōsei

In the autumn of 1995, the department in charge of overseas affairs at Kōdansha, one of Japan's biggest publishers of manga comic books and magazines, received an urgent communication from a manga publisher in Hong Kong. The translation and publishing of Japan's comics has grown into a big business in Hong Kong over the past few years, with new titles being introduced in Cantonese in book form one after another. Among these publications was one called *Kaji Ryūsuke no gi* [The Matter of Kaji Ryūsuke] by Hirokane Kenshi, which was being serialized in Kōdansha's monthly comic magazine *Mister Magazine*. The story is set in the world of the Japanese Diet. Reflecting the high standard and quality of comics today, it is among realistic manga, based on thorough research into the way the Diet works and the actual activities of politicians. It is among the so-called information manga popular among adult readers.

The Hong Kong publisher's urgent call was to say they were very sorry, but they had to terminate the contract for publication of the series in Hong Kong. Their reason was that the story to appear in the forthcoming installment was to deal with the issue of China's nuclear testing program. Naturally, the manga would portray Japan's criticisms of China's position of nuclear arms. With Hong Kong facing the reversion of the British territory to Chinese sovereignty in 1997, it would not do to publish material with such controversial content. *Kaji Ryūsuke no gi* was well received in Hong Kong, but the publisher did not want to do anything to aggravate the Chinese government. Reluctantly, Kōdansha had to agree to terminate the publishing contract.

The conclusion of this incident notwithstanding, it demonstrates how Japan's best-quality comic publications are being published in Hong Kong. The popularity of manga is growing in many countries in Asia, and in many cases, the process begins with the broadcast of animated series from Japanese television. As the series gains popularity, the original comic work is translated and published in book form. This was the case for *Doraemon*, which has been very popular in Thailand and Vietnam, as well as for Toriyama Akira's *Dragonball*, currently the rage in quite a number of Asian countries. Since 1995 in Hong Kong, the TV animated series *Crayon Shin-chan* by Usui Yoshito has been the overwhelming favorite, and children sporting Shin-chan T-shirts are a common sight. While the low-age range manga may be the more conspicuous, Hong Kong is one center in Asia where the characteristic variety of Japanese manga is flourishing. When we met at a party this January, Hirokane Kenshi expressed his surprise at how many of his works have been published in Hong Kong, even including the completely un-sensational, rather dismal *Ningen kōsaten* [Human Crossroads].

Another success was that of *Tokyo Love Story*, originally a work by Hirokane's spouse, manga writer Saimon

Fumi, which won widespread popularity among young women in Japan as a TV drama series. When the series was broadcast two years ago in Hong Kong, it became very popular, prompting a boom in the translation and publication of original manga by Saimon. Attention right now, however, tends to be more focused on the social themes treated in Hirokane's works, and Hong Kong is rapidly discovering high-quality comic works from Japan, both new and old. Last year, for example, publication of Umezumi Kazuo's multi-volume *Hyōryū kyōshitsu* [Classroom Transported to the Future] galvanized the young manga generations of Hong Kong. Apparently, contemporary readers in Hong Kong can readily identify with the world depicted in this unique SF epic first published in the 1960s in Japan. Other works that are selling well in a new Cantonese translation under formal contract this year are Mochizuki Mikiya's motorcycle adventure manga of the 1960s, *Wild Seven*, *Himitsu tantei JA* [Secret Agent JA], and other titles. Furuya Minoru's *Ike! Inachū takkyūbu* [Go! Inatoyo Junior High Ping-pong Club] has also won widespread popularity among junior and senior high school students in its Cantonese edition.

By-product of Economic Growth

The sudden popularity of manga in Asia over the past several years is closely related to the accelerated pace of economic growth and cultural advancement in the region. The impetus behind the proliferation of Japanese television cartoon programs is primarily economic. The importance and spread of television, in Hong Kong centering around the satellite channel Star TV, is growing throughout Asia, and programs to fill broadcasting time for children are badly needed. Until animated television programs begin being made locally (and some attempts have begun), it is easiest to purchase programs made abroad, and currently only American and Japanese animation is available. The diverse content and visual richness of Japanese animation captivates children. These broadcasts have led to the publication of the original manga works, but in many cases, pirated editions of Japanese manga were circulating well beforehand in places like South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, as well as Thailand and Vietnam. In the case of South Korea, for example, many of the now-popular manga artists grew up reading Japanese manga and were heavily influenced by them, but as one of them, Lee Hyun-se, noted, "We always thought those comics were made in Korea; it was much later that we realized they were originally created in Japan." Readers are easily misled, because pirate editions rewrote the background of the Japanese manga stories to suit a Korean context. So, while Korean readers are drawn by the appeal of Japanese manga, there is a strong tendency not to want to admit that they are made in Japan. The tendency to try to pass off Japanese manga as having been made in Korea remains strong even since 1987, when the Republic of Korea signed the Bern Convention on international copyright and began to publish manga on the basis of formal contracts in 1992. Lee Hyun-se (whose *Yumi* [The Bow] has been published in Japanese), admits that "it might not be such a good idea for Japanese manga to be freely published in Korea—

Korean manga would not be able to hold their own against the competition."

Pirated editions of Japanese manga have been in circulation since the 1970s in Taiwan. Internationally renowned film director Hou Hsia-hsien produced a film entitled *Daughter of the Nile* set in contemporary Taipei, and it deals with a young woman of Taipei who is absorbed in reading the pirate editions of *Ôke no monshô* [The Royal Crest], a popular girl's manga by Japanese artist Hosokawa Chieko. Pirate editions of Japanese manga works including *Hokuto no ken* [Hokuto's Fist] and *City Hunter* were rampant in Taiwan, but in 1992, Taiwanese publishers formed tie-ups with Japanese comic magazines, and today about 20 comic magazines, including many Japanese comics, are published there.

In the early 1980s, when the cartoon television series *Astro Boy* was broadcast from Beijing's central television station, a Chinese-language edition of Tezuka Osamu's original manga was published, but the publisher approached the author saying that it intended to put out only a cheap "linked picture" edition and would like to be exempt from paying royalties. Tezuka assented, thinking that the edition would be good advertising for his works. He was right, as the paperbacks of *Astro Boy* and *Kimba the White Lion* became best-sellers and *Astro Boy* became a household word throughout the continent. Now today again, *Astro Boy*, *Slam Dunk*, and *Dragonball* are being translated into Chinese, and they are revolutionizing the Chinese traditions of cartoon-writing. Hong Kong and Taiwan are both in the process of publishing complete anthologies of Tezuka's works. Tezuka's manga have a philosophical flavor and pictorial style that sets them apart from the Japanese comics that are the most popular today. In Hong Kong Tezuka sales are not as strong as those for other comics, so Culturecom Publishers found it somewhat of a strain to put out the 300 volumes of the Tezuka collection. Apparently, however, it is de rigueur for young comic fans to be seen carrying copies of the Tezuka anthology.

In Indonesia, the major publisher Gramedia has been putting out Japanese comics since 1993. Titles include *Doraemon*, popular among children and adults alike for its portrayal of universal human foibles, as well as girl's comics such as *Candy*, *Candy* and *Berusaiyu no bara* [Rose of Versailles]. While even the most successful Indonesian comics sell around 10,000 copies per volume, most Japanese manga generally sell over 30,000 copies per volume. Gramedia, too, has started publishing a Tezuka complete works edition and began to put out an *Astro Boy* set, but abandoned the plan after eight volumes. Perhaps Indonesians had difficulty identifying with the story, for even the television ratings for the animated series were not as high as expected. The most popular Japanese television program now is Ishinomori Shôtarô's *Kamen Raida burakku* [Kamen Rider Black], an action series played by real actors.

The Waning of Pirate Publishing

Indonesian publishers complain that, although pirate editions of Hôjô Tsukasa's *City Hunter* and other Japanese manga are circulating, the publishers in Tokyo show little

interest in doing anything to stop them. Indeed, very little of the boom in publishing of Japanese manga in Asia is the result of sales efforts on the part of the original publishers, and almost entirely due to foreign publisher initiative. Publishing of pirate editions was once predominant in many countries, but gradually it became clear that such practices interfered with the prosperity of the local industry. Also, as economic development advanced, and preserving good external relations became a priority, publishers gradually began to seek formal publishing contracts. In the meantime, because of the disparity in price standards, even formal publishing contracts did not bring large profits to Japanese publishers, and overworked publishing staff members have no extra energy or time to spend chasing down those responsible for pirate editions.

In the 1970s, Hong Kong produced its own martial arts comic books by local comic writers, but they tended to be mostly sensational, and served mainly as a release and diversion for overpressured young working people. Action manga, in short, were mainly a low-brow form of entertainment. With economic growth and improvement in standards of living, readers began to pay more attention to sophisticated Japanese manga, which in turn stimulated the work of local artists. Asian readers' standards have definitely matured, as reflected in the acceptance of now-classic works such as *Akira*, Ôtomo Katsuhiro's cutting-edge "new wave" comic now popular worldwide, Shirô Masamune's *Kôkaku kidôtai* [Ghost in the Shell], and *Apple Seed*, and in Singapore almost any manga is published, including Ueda Masashi's four-panel gag comic collection *Furiten-kun* [Our Mr. Furiten] based on incidents in daily life.

It was not so long ago that the television series "Oshin," set in Japan's own times of hardship and poverty, plucked heartstrings throughout Asia, but in the wake of subsequent economic growth, its appeal has plummeted. The broadcasting of "Oshin" on Myanmar television in 1995 is an interesting indication of the time lag in that country's economic development, and a comic book version by a local artist is currently being published there. The royalties from publication under formal contract of *Doraemon* in Thailand have been used by author Fujiko F. Fujio to create a trust fund to support programs for Thai children. The long-selling *Chibi Maruko-chan* by Sakura Momoko has been translated and published in Vietnam. Curiously enough, the household favorite in Japan for decades, *Sazae-san* by Hasegawa Machiko, has not been broadcast on television nor published in book form in any country in Asia.

In the Philippines, which falls predominantly under the sphere of influence of the United States, American comics continue to be the most popular, but *Dragonball* is now being broadcast on television and has won an enthusiastic following, so it is perhaps merely a matter of time until Filipino readers discover the attractions of Japanese manga as well. (*Ono Kôsei is a film and manga critic and SF writer.*)



New Titles

MEDIA

Besutoserā no sengoshi [A Postwar History of Best-sellers]. 2 vols. Inoue Hisashi. Bungei Shunjū, 1995. 194 × 136 mm. each. 216 pp.; 234 pp. ¥1,300. each. ISBN 4-16-502360-4; 4-16-502370-1.

Choosing one Japanese best-seller from each year from 1945 to the present, this book introduces their content and authors, as well as the social setting against which they became popular. The book begins with *Nichi-Bei kaiwa techō* [English title, *Anglo-Japanese Conversation Manual*] (1945; see *Japanese Book News*, No. 13, p. 19) and includes the *Kōjien* dictionary (1955). Inoue (b. 1934) is a novelist and playwright who has had enormous influence on postwar Japanese popular culture.



Cover design: An'no Mitsumasa

Inoue divides non-fiction best-sellers in Japan into six types: sex, investigative reporting, love and death, meaning of life, practical topics, and fortune-telling/prophecy. Some interrelationships can be observed among these types, he says. For instance, a decline in sales of books on love and death is followed by a boom of fortune-telling/prophecy. And he observes that the cycle

during which one type of book dominates the top titles on the best-seller list seems to last about 13 to 18 years.

Hon wa dono yō ni kiete yuku no ka [What Will Be the Fate of Books?]. Tsuno Kaitarō. Shōbunsha, 1996. 191 × 131 mm. 220 pp. ¥1,900. ISBN 4-7949-6244-4.

How will the spread of word processors and PCs as household items change the nature of traditional print culture? How should we respond to the rapid changes that have led from PC-data-based publishing to desk top publishing, and then to the CD-ROM, and to "electronic publishing" in which information is directly compiled within the World Wide Web through such digital networks as the Internet?



Cover design: Kusaka Jun'ichi

An editor of thirty years well acquainted with the use of personal computers since they were first introduced, the author argues that the emergence of electronic books will redefine the concept of "publishing," and that making information available on electronic networks is becoming synonymous with "publishing." Because of that, the definition of the "book" will probably expand to include "electronic media," he says.

Tsuno's arguments are convincing, although the book might offer more satisfaction if it had discussed the impact of the recent media revolution on the actual lives of people today.



Cover design: Kumagai Hiroto

Kadokawa Gen'yoshi no jidai: Kadokawa Shoten o ikanishite okoshitaka [The Times of Kadokawa Gen'yoshi: How He Made the Kadokawa Publishing House Prosper]. Yarita Seitarō. Kadokawa Shoten, 1995. 215 × 151 mm. 350 pp. ¥2,200. ISBN 4-04-883426-6.

This biography of the founder of a major Japanese publisher by a veteran editor who knew him well vividly tells the story of postwar Japanese publishing culture.

Kadokawa Gen'yoshi began writing haiku poetry as a middle-school student. He became an admirer of Orikuchi Shinobu, authority on Japanese literature, folklore, and tanka poetry, and decided to enter Kokugakuin University where Orikuchi taught. He was still a young scholar in his late twenties when he founded a publishing house in the fall of 1945. Kadokawa Shoten became known in the decades since for its wide publishing scope, ranging from *bunko* (B-6 pocket-size) editions, to collected literary works series, textbooks, and dictionaries.

The "Kadokawa bunko" series, started in 1949, was the first of the now vastly popular pocket-size editions put out by many different publishers. The Kadokawa series of *Shōwa bungaku zenshū* [Collected Works of Shōwa Literature] (25 vols.; 1952-53) also inspired a boom in publishing of collected works. The publishing house injected new life into the postwar haiku and tanka journalism, and took the initiative in the mixing of different media, and also is known for having introduced new management strategies to the publishing industry.

The chronology of the Kadokawa Publishing Co. included at the end of the book has columns giving information on "Conditions in the Publishing Industry" and "Events in Japan and Overseas" that place the history of the publishing house in a larger historical context.

Nyūsu hōdō no gengoron [A Linguistic Study of News Reporting]. Tamaki Akira. Yōsen-sha, 1996. 193 × 133 mm. 330 pp. ¥2,500. ISBN 4-89691-203-9.

Probably in reaction to the distorted reporting forced by the militarist regime during World War II, Japanese journalism in the postwar period has been relatively unaware of the ideological aspect of the "neutrality" and "objectivity" the United States introduced to Japanese journalism during the Occupation. Those in the profession, says Tamaki, have never doubted that they were being faithful to the myth of "reporting the truth."

The no byline practice prevalent in newspaper journalism is one example of the reason the myth has persisted. This practice stems from excessive emphasis on news organizations as opposed to individual reporters, he says. Reporters are given no leeway to exercise individual judgment, and the result is not increased fairness but distortion of the news and loose self control on the part of reporters.

The remedy Tamaki prescribes for this situation is to return to the origin of language, starting with the "now," the "here," and the "I." He shows how the loss of "I" has rendered journalism indistinguishable from ambiguous and irresponsible "public opinion."



Cover design: Kikuchi Nobuyoshi

IDEAS

Ishibashi Tanzan chosakushū [Collected Writings of Ishibashi Tanzan], 4 vols. Chō Yukio, Nakamura Takafusa, Kamo Takehiko, Tanizawa Eiichi, eds. Tōyō Keizai Shimpōsha, 1995-96. 194 × 133 mm. each. 328-368 pp. ¥2,266. each. ISBN 4-492-06081-2; 4-492-06082-0; 4-492-06083-9; 4-492-06084-7.

The four-volume work demonstrates that Ishibashi Tanzan (1884-1973) was a staunch liberalist and uncompromising realist from the perspectives of philosophy of economy, politics/foreign policy, and literary, social, and biographical criticism. The four volumes were prepared and commentaries added, by separate compilers, each a prominent authority in the field.



Cover design: Tokyo Zukan

Editorials, articles, critiques, and reviews not only tell the story of the turbulent Shōwa era (1926-89) but offer many insights that are still valid today. They suggest that if Ishibashi had not been struck down by illness soon after becoming prime minister in December 1956, Japan's politics today would have been quite different.

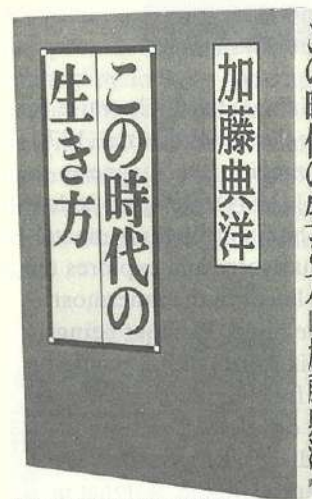
The son of a Buddhist priest, Ishibashi majored in philosophy at Waseda University and taught himself economics after entering the employ of Tōyō Keizai Shimpōsha, publisher of a well-known economic journal. He soon emerged an able political and economic journalist, and in 1941 became president of the publishing house. After World War II he gave up the post to enter poli-

tics. In 1946 he was appointed finance minister in the first Yoshida Shigeru Cabinet, and in 1956 was elected president of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party and concurrently Japan's prime minister. Only three months later, however, he fell ill and had to resign. In his later years he devoted himself to improvement of relations with China and the Soviet Union.

Kono jidai no ikikata [A Lifestyle for Our Times]. Katō Norihiro. Kōdansha, 1995. 194 × 130 mm. 250 pp. ¥1,800. ISBN 4-06-207833-3.

This is a collection of reviews and essays published by literary critic Katō in various magazines over the past twelve years. The articles are organized into three groups: "The Importance of Egocentrism," "A Lifestyle for Our Times," and "Being Yourself."

Trust your personal insights and experience: this is the message Katō reiterates throughout this book in our age when values have rapidly diversified. This approach inherently involves narrow-mindedness, mistaken judgment, and prejudice, but as a starting point it is crucial to reflect on one's perceptions and feelings, expose contradictions in thinking and acquire the subjectivity that will resolve your doubts.



Cover design: Tamura Yoshiya

The present book attempts to persuade young people today, who are hesitant to put themselves before others, to be more self-assertive. The important point is to not to accept ideas initiated by others uncritically and to resolutely pursue your own interests, which, the author says, will

ultimately be linked to the self-interests of others and thence to the public interest.

Shūkyō to reisei [Religion and Spirituality]. Kamata Tōji. Kadokawa Shoten, 1995. 189 × 127 mm. 412 pp. ¥1,800. ISBN 4-04-703266-2.

The deadly sarin gas attack on the Tokyo subway systems by the Aum Shinrikyō in March 1995 sent out shockwaves worldwide. Why did a religious organization attempt to commit mass murder?

A specialist in religious studies, Kamata believes the incident brings into question the fundamental *raison d'être* of everyone involved in religion. He delves into the cultural background for the religious problems facing Japan today through observations on intellectual history in the first of this book's four parts.



Author Kamata has high praise for philosopher Suzuki Daisetz's (1870–1966) *Nihonteki reisei* [Japanese Spirituality] (1944). Religion is derived from humanity's fundamental awe of the universe and explores the spirituality latent in the innermost layers of the mind. Without being aware of this spirituality it would be impossible for religious thinking to deepen and develop, says Kamata.

He then discusses how to overcome the temptation to evil that is bound to visit those who engage in ascetic practices in the attempt to achieve enlightenment. Sending out a warning to young people who seek spiritual salvation against this evil, he explains what genuine spirituality should be. The volume consists of essays written for newspapers and magazines between 1987 and 1995.

HISTORY

Edo jidai o tanken suru [Exploring the Edo Period]. Yamamoto Hirofumi. Bungei Shunjū, 1996.

194 × 134 mm. 270 pp. ¥1,500. ISBN 4-16-351150-4.

What were the *bushi* (samurai) of the Edo period (1603–1867) like? Just as the age of the pioneering of the western frontier is still the setting of many films in the United States, "period dramas" for television and the cinema are often set in the Edo period. They are made for entertainment, but the heroes are too chivalrous and the stories too contemporary for authenticity.

Yamamoto, a historian, attempts to refocus the gaze of modern viewers and portray a real picture of the *bushi* based on historical documents, treating them as human beings just like ourselves, the only difference being that they lived in a different period.

A distinctive feature of the present book is its description of how the samurai of Edo would have dealt with some of the recent incidents that shook Japan. The human fallout from restructuring, he notes, could be compared to the fiscal rehabilitation drive by the Mōri family, lord of the Chōshū domain, in 1640; the Great Hanshin Earthquake to the earthquake that struck Osaka in 1707; the Aum Shinrikyō incidents to the religious rebellion at Shimabara in Kyushu in 1637; and so forth. Yamamoto's observations through such comparisons help give us a better understanding of our contemporary situation.



Cover design: Sakata Masanori



Cover design: Shimizu Yoshihiro

Ikusanga: Sejima Ryūzō kaisōroku [Endless Suffering: The Memoirs of Sejima Ryūzō]. Sejima Ryūzō.

Fusōsha, 1995. 216 × 150 mm. 510 pp. ¥2,800. ISBN 4-594-01809-2.

Sejima Ryūzō (b. 1911) is known as a personification of postwar Japan. He served as a staff officer of the Imperial General Headquarters during World War II, was detained for eleven years in Siberia by the Soviet Union, and after returning to Japan, became chairman of C. Itoh & Co. (now the Itochu Corporation), one of Japan's leading general trading companies.

In this 500-page-long book Sejima divides his unusual autobiography into five phases (chapters 1–5): from boyhood to Army War College days (1911–40); leadership of the war effort at General Headquarters (1940–45); detention in Siberia (1945–56); work at C. Itoh & Co (1956–75); and contributions to the country and society, including his service as vice-chairman of a council on administrative reform between 1987 and 1990. In the last and sixth chapter he talks of his diverse relations with political and economic leaders and former members of the Japanese military. Through this network of human relations he has been involved in one important state-level event after another. Sejima overcame overwhelming odds over and over, managing each time to open up a new path for himself.

His stories about the strategies and policies he was involved at the General Headquarters of the Imperial Japanese Army and about his long detention in Siberia are valuable additions to the historical record.

Nihon kindai shigaku kotohajime [An Introduction to the Study of Japan's Modern Period]. Ōkubo Toshiaki. Iwanami Shoten, 1996. 173 × 105 mm. 200 pp. ¥620. ISBN 4-00-430427-X.

The author, born in 1900 the grandson of prominent Meiji-era statesman Ōkubo Toshimichi (1830–78), died last year at the age of 95 prior to the publication of this book. His life, which covered almost the entirety of the tumultuous twentieth century, coincided with the modern history of Japan during which it started as a fledgling nation-state in the remote "Far East," then emerged as a newly developing power, and further grew into a major world power, especially in the realm of economy and technology.

Ōkubo studied at the Peers' School (Gakushūin), and after graduating from the Japanese history department of the Imperial University of Tokyo, he worked part-time in research on Japanese history at the university, and there almost single-handedly compiled the *Tōkyō Teikoku Daigaku gojūnen-shi* [Fifty Years of the Imperial University of Tokyo]. This project allowed him to engross himself in modern cultural and educational history, and later his interest expanded to political and economic history. He undertook many pioneering projects in compiling historical materials for publication.

Probably his greatest contribution was the founding of an archive of constitution-related historical materials within the Diet Library after World War II to house materials that threatened to be scattered amid the confusion following the defeat.



Shinsho Edo-jidai [Paperbacks on the Edo Period]. 5 vols. Ōishi Shinzaburō et al., Kōdansha, 1995. 173 × 105 mm. each. 178–240 pp. ¥650. each. ISBN 4-06-149257-8; 4-06-149258-6; 4-06-149259-4; 4-06-149260-8; 4-06-149261-6.

Aimed at a general readership, this series seeks a three-dimensional portrayal of the Edo period, presented from the five perspectives of politics, social structure, agriculture, information, and commerce, each for one volume. Highly respected historian Ōishi, author of the first volume and prologues for each of the other volumes, and the four other researchers who author the texts of the other volumes critically examine the mainstream historiographical view of the Edo period as a "dark age" which has largely shaped current images of the period among Japanese in general.



Cover design: Sugiura Kōhei, Akazaki Shōichi

For instance, the third volume probes productivity data, rice tax rates, and other statistics to upset the established view that the Edo-period farmers were oppressed by heavy taxes and hard labor. The fourth volume questions the negative view of the shogunate's policy of seclusion as having delayed Japan's modernization. It argues instead that because of seclusion the shogunate was able to maintain monopolistic control over information from abroad as well as a system for adequately analyzing it. This was actually a tremendous plus, it argues, in terms of information management.

The other volumes, too, shed new, positive light on the *sobayōnin*, or aides to the shogun, as brilliant technocrat economists (vol. 1), as well as

on the origins of outcaste communities (vol. 2) and the network of commodity distribution (vol. 5).

Sombun to En Seigai: Chūka tōgō no yume [Sun Yat-sen and Yuan Shi-kai: The Dream of Chinese Unity]. Yokoyama Hiroaki. Iwanami Shoten, 1996. 193 × 131 mm. 234 pp. ¥2,500. ISBN 4-00-004396-X.

With the twenty-first century just around the corner, Asia's place in the world is the subject of close attention. Japanese, although their country is part of the region, still have a strong tendency to either see Asia superficially as a new market that might resolve Japan's current economic recession or embrace anachronistic notions of "Asianism" that backfired half a century ago.

The present book, dealing with two early twentieth-century Chinese revolutionaries, describes not only Sun Yat-sen (1866–1925), who was widely respected and admired in Japan, but Yuan Shi-kai (1859–1916), who has long been cast as the villain by historians, as leaders in building a new, post-Qing dynasty China. Another feature is that Sun Yat-sen, whose image has been overwhelmingly that of the great revolutionary, is depicted with more emphasis on his talent as leader of troops and local warlords.

The book is the first volume in a 15-volume series suggesting the prospects for Asia in the coming century by looking back upon the modern history of Asia. Among the figures who led the building of new nation-states in Asia highlighted in this series are Mao Zedong, Ho Chi Minh, Mahatma Gandhi, and Aung San.



Cover design: Toda Tsutomu, Toda Office VX

Dai-Nihon-shugi ka shō-Nihon-shugi ka: Miura Tetsutarō ronsetsumō [Collected Essays of Miura Tetsutarō: The "Big Japan" vs. "Little Japan" Debate]. Matsuo Takayoshi. ed. Tōyō Keizai Shimpōsha, 1995. 194 × 133 mm. 454 pp. ¥2,884. ISBN 4-492-21079-2. Miura (1874–1972) was the fourth chief editor of the *Tōyō keizai shimpō* journal known for its advocacy of liberalism since its inauguration in 1895.

Japan had been growing rapidly as a modern nation-state since the Meiji Restoration of 1868, and after the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–05, it faced a critical juncture: Should it become an authoritarian, militarist state continuing to invade the continent? Or should it choose to become a peaceful democratic state giving top priority to the improvement of people's lives? Miura was a courageous, farsighted journalist who rejected the former, or "Big Japanism" (*dai-Nihon shugi*), as the road to self-destruction, and advocated the latter, or "Little Japanism." (This Miura line was further developed and perfected by Ishibashi Tanzan, journalist-turned-statesman whose achievements have been earning growing appreciation in recent years [See page 9 in this issue of *Japanese Book News*]).

Eventually, though, Japan chose the expansionist path and suffered a devastating defeat in World War II. After the war it had no choice but to adopt Little Japanism, which brought it economic prosperity. With the slowing of the momentum of the

"miracle" economy, however, it is feared that Big Japanism may again be revived. Miura's writings offer valuable insights for a renewed appreciation of Little Japanism.

Gyōkaku to kisei kanwa no keizai-gaku [The Economics of Administrative Reform and Deregulation]. Yoshida Kazuo. Kōdansha, 1995. 173 × 105 mm. 214 pp. ¥650. ISBN 4-06-149266-7.

After fifteen years working in the Finance Ministry on economic planning and budget compilation, author Yoshida is currently an economist teaching at Kyoto University. Well-versed in fiscal policy, he stresses the pressing need for administrative reform and deregulation, which will be among the major issues of the next century.

Japan's financial situation is already on the verge of bankruptcy with a ponderous accumulation of national loans, he writes. With the population rapidly aging, moreover, the fiscal burden of paying for pensions, medical fees, and so forth seems certain to swell, which bodes ill for the future. The inevitable increase in the burden on citizens will in turn lower the rate of economic growth—a vicious fiscal and economic circle. As a remedy, Yoshida urges that a new fiscal system be adopted that will fit present and future social needs, and he discusses specific topics such as reform for the central and local governments and public corporations, and the role of politicians.

This small volume is packed with useful information on Japanese fiscal realities, the seriousness of the fiscal deficit in national and local govern-

ment, the impediments that hamper administrative reform and deregulation, and the superficiality of the debate on reform.

Hantokushu-shugi no keizaigaku: Nihon keizai ron no tsūsetsu o tatsu [A New Economics: Rebuttal of Japan-Is-Unique Economic Theories]. Otani Kiyoshi. Tōyō Keizai Shimpōsha, 1996. 194 × 135 mm. 242 pp. ¥1,700. ISBN 4-492-39220-3.

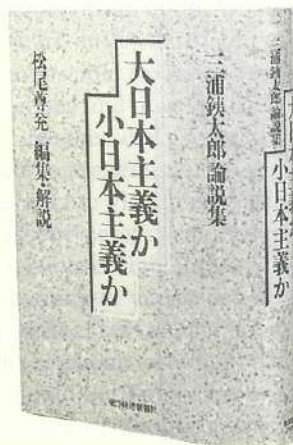
Both in Japan and overseas, many people firmly believe that Japan's economic problems, including exorbitant urban land prices, the slowness of the deregulation process, and continued economic frictions with other countries, are the result of the peculiarities of Japanese society and culture. This book by a Tsukuba University professor refutes the widely accepted idea that Japan's economic system is fundamentally different from that of the United States and Europe.



Cover design: Tokyo Zukan

The market mechanism works according to conventional patterns in Japan as elsewhere, writes Otani. However, because the market mechanism in Japan has worked under objective and physical conditions quite different from other parts of the world, its ways of dealing with problems as they arise happen to be different from other countries.

Using, for example, such familiar economic themes as housing and urban problems, disparities in the prices of goods and services between Japan and other industrial nations, social overhead capital, trade friction with the United States, and political corruption, Otani identifies the weak-



Cover design: Tokyo Zukan



Cover design: Sugiura Kōhei, Akazaki Shōichi

nesses of the popular view through reexamination of data and skillful application of elementary economic theory.

***Isuramu to Amerika* [Islam and America]. Yamauchi Masayuki.**

Iwanami Shoten, 1995. 193 × 133 mm. 260 pp. ¥2,300. ISBN 4-00-000147-7.

American relations with the Islamic world will be the keystone of international relations in the rest of this century and into the next, says Yamauchi, University of Tokyo professor and authority on Islam. What the United States faces today is not just the distant Arab world. Pressure from the Islamic movement is now being felt within the American homeland itself, as evidenced by the World Trade Center bombing of 1993 and the Million Man March in 1995.



Cover design: Hirose Iku

The present book is a collection of nine essays that appeared in *Sekai*, *Chūō Kōron*, and other magazines during 1992–95. The articles probe the unfamiliar world of Islamic fundamentalism and terrorism to reveal the complex interaction of Islam vs. Western Europe in the context of world history. Through analysis of theories on Islam by the nineteenth-century French statesman and writer Tocqueville and others, Yamauchi demonstrates that the ideological view of Islam held by Americans goes a long way back in U.S. history.

The author admits that it was only during a period from the Gulf War to the collapse of the Soviet Union that he realized it was impossible to understand what has been happening in

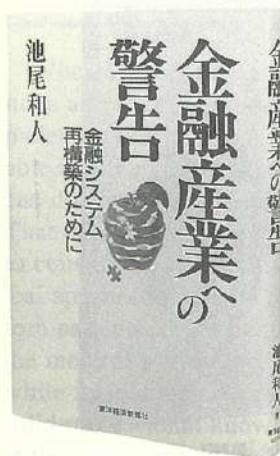
Middle East and Central Asia without a firm grasp of the background of U.S. perceptions. He expresses hope that the United States and the Islamic world will be able to coexist through the principle of cultural diversity.

***Kin'yū sangyō e no keikoku: Kin'yū shisutemu saikōchiku no tame ni* [A Warning to the Banking Industry: Toward a Reconstruction of the Financial System]. Ikeo Kazuhito.**

Tōyō Keizai Shimpōsha, 1995. 194 × 135 mm. 214 pp. ¥1,600. ISBN 4-492-65176-4.

Uncertainty and worries about the financial system overshadow the Japanese economy as a whole. This book by an economist teaching at Keiō University examines and diagnoses the banking business in Japan and prescribes a remedy for its woes.

Ikeo has high praise for the role of the banking industry in the infrastructure of the Japanese economy. According to his diagnosis, the nation's economy is facing the behest to do away with the postwar structure and adjust itself to the mechanisms of the free economy, and the banking industry is no exception.



During a period when the social structure is undergoing drastic changes, often the banking sector works to absorb the impact. But the problem today is that the financial system is losing its management ability. Ikeo outlines the necessity for the government to quickly use public funds to deal with the problem of the bad loans of financial institutions. He says it is no longer possible to discuss economic issues without providing choices for people to choose from.



***Ōkawa Shūmei: Aru fukko kaku-shin shugisha no shisō* [Ōkawa Shūmei: The Ideology of a Reactionary Reformist]. Ōtsuka Takehiro.**

Chūō Kōron Sha, 1995. 172 × 109 mm. 224 pp. ¥700. ISBN 4-12-101276-3.

Confrontation between Westernization and nationalism was a universal phenomenon among non-Western countries that were swept by the tide of modernization. For fervent nationalist ideologue Ōkawa Shūmei (1886–1957), the struggle against Westernization was the fundamental theme throughout his life.

In the mid-nineteenth century, Japan discarded its seclusion policy and began its drive to become a capitalist power, dissociating itself from Asia and attempting to join the Western powers. After World War I there emerged many reformist groups discontented with the existing governing system. One of them was Yūzonsha, a political society founded by Ōkawa Shūmei and others. As a "reactionary reformist" Ōkawa's argument was three-faceted. In the realm of psychology he called for "Japanism" in resistance to the tendency of the times toward adoration of the West; in the area of domestic policy he advocated socialism and a controlled economy and opposed capitalism, and in foreign relations he called for solidarity with, not dissociation from, Asia.

In contrast to the general run of nationalist polemic, Ōkawa expressed his arguments in a well-reasoned fashion, and this is what makes his ideas worthy of serious study even today. He was a pioneer in Asia studies in Japan, and also was an educator who trained many of the people who later entered careers building bridges between Japan and Asia.

Gōmanizumu sengen: Sabetsu-ron supesharu [Declaration in Favor of Straight Talk: A Debate about Discriminatory Language]. Kobayashi Yoshinori. Kaihō Shuppansha, 1995. 210×149 mm. 179 pp. ¥1,442. ISBN 4-7592-6031-5.

Leading comic artist Kobayashi Yoshinori's works are known for their skillful gags and devotion to nonsense. He has a strong following among younger people who find it difficult to adjust to the rigidities of conventional school and corporate life. This recent work tells what happened when Kobayashi's preference for plain honest language ran up against the rigid insistence in Japanese society today that certain words and expressions should be avoided as "discriminatory." It is absurd, he says, that *buraku* outcast communities that came into being hundreds of years ago are still being discriminated against. A collection of his manga works addressing the issue of discrimination, the book is a visually dynamic, searing critique of Japanese society.

There is little awareness in Japanese society of the need to come to grips with the discrimination that exists in its midst, and this is because it is actually taboo to even mention the matter of social discrimination in public discourse. Among the many reasons for this taboo, perhaps one of the most important is that no one took a personal interest in resolving

matters of discrimination. This book is a declaration of the new ethical position that thinking about discrimination is itself an important and interesting exercise.

Ijime: Norikoeru ni wa dō suru ka [Bullying: What Needs To Be Done to Combat It]. Takuma Taketoshi. Saiensusha, 1996. 188×130 mm. 204 pp. ¥1,236. ISBN 4-7819-0786-5.

This book, which consists of sections based on twenty-one often-asked questions about the problems of bullying (*ijime*) currently troubling Japanese schools and answers from the author, a specialist in personality psychology, is aimed particularly at parents, teachers, and university students. Some examples include: What is the difference between bullying and fighting (or quarreling)? Between bullying and teasing? What characterizes the children victimized by *ijime*? What are the characteristics of the bullies? How can you tell if a child is being bullied?



Cover design: Hasebe Takashi

Takuma defines *ijime* as psychological or physical pressure accompanied by abnormal attacks over a comparatively long period of time deliberately and repeatedly aimed to inflict pain on a specified target by one or a number of persons. He adds that those attacks are invariably "cruel, cowardly, and unforgivable." Presenting numerous actual examples, the author reminds readers that Japanese society today does not provide enough guidance to young people in learning social rules.



Cover design: Kuramoto Shū

Nihon josei shōzō daijiten [A Portrait Encyclopedia of Japanese Women]. Nagahara Kazuko, ed. Nihon Tosho Center, 1995. 304×213 mm. 198 pp. ¥16,480. ISBN 4-8205-7275-X.

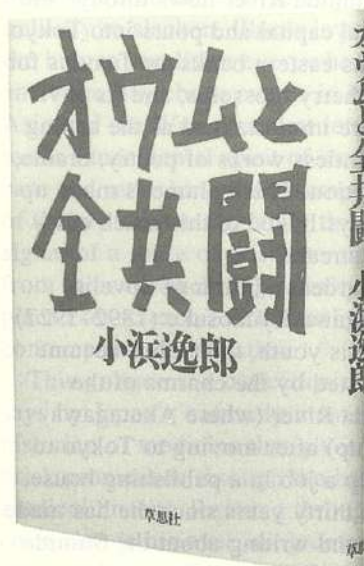
This A4-size, clothbound book is a companion to the *Nihon josei jinmei jiten* [Encyclopedia of Japanese Women] published three years ago. Consisting of black-and-white portraits accompanied by short biographical sketches, it is designed to present a visual image of each entry in the context of her times. The 800 entries are limited to women for whom some kind of portrait (including paintings, prints, and photographs) has been preserved and includes many who are not well known even in Japan, but whose inclusion adds breadth and depth to our understanding of history and human nature. The portraits of women of ancient and premodern ages are often ones created in later times.

The appendices contain a lengthy outline of the history of Japanese women, an explanation of the way naming of women changed through the ages, a glossary of terms for women's history, a listing of famous phrases and well-known poetry by Japanese women, and an illustrated sketch of female attire and work performed by women through history.



Cover design: Nakasone Takayoshi

Ōmu to zenkyōtō [Aum Shinrikyō and the Zenkyōtō]. Kohama Itsuo. Sōshisha, 1996. 194×134 mm. 214 pp. ¥1,600. ISBN 4-7942-0676-3. A participant of the radical student movement of 1968–70, critic Kohama seeks to elucidate the characteristics of the subversive activities of the Aum Shinrikyō cult of 1995 through a comparison with the student movement a quarter century ago.



Cover design: Motoyama Yoshiharu

The author addresses two problems in particular: Why did so many young people so unquestionably place absolute faith in cult leader Asahara Shōkō? And why did such an iconoclastic, exclusivist sect emerge within Japan's apparently peaceful society? In order to answer these questions, he first looks back on his own experience in the nationwide student movement, noting that a great deal of it really did not make sense. The same was true, he says, of both the Aum-perpetrated incidents and the pronouncements of the intellectuals who attempted to defend the sect's activities.

What both the student protests and the Aum Shinrikyō case demonstrate, Kohama argues persuasively, is that creating a truly decent civil society in Japan today is the most urgent ideological task for dealing with Japanese who have long harbored anti-social sentiments.

Sabakareru no wa dareka [Who Is Really in the Wrong?]. Harada Masazumi. Seori Shobō, 1995. 194×132 mm. 248 pp. ¥2,369. ISBN 4-906388-30-2.

This book tosses out a radical challenge to the *raison d'être* of so-called specialists in our contemporary society. Harada's essays are based on his personal experience as a physician who has been involved with Japan's most serious tragedy of the rapid-growth period, the Minamata disease for more than thirty years.



Cover design: Mamura Toshikazu

When Harada first visited Minamata as a medical student in 1961, patients suffering from various incurable ills demanded to know "what can doctors possibly do for us?" That experience prompted the author to consider an alternative to the medical approach that puts doctors before patients. In his conception of the medical profession, doctors, while maintaining a strong stock of solid professional knowledge, should at the same time stress empathy with the (non-professional) viewpoint of the patient in administering medical care. This book is a commentary on the tendency among individual specialists to deemphasize the need for attention to the lay person's concerns. Harada concludes that the intransigence of the Minamata problem stemmed from the fact that civilized society does not foster vigorous links between the lay person and the professional.



"Uma" no bunka to "fune" no bunka: Kodai Nihon to Chūgoku bunka [The Culture of the Horse and the Culture of the Ship: Ancient Japan and Chinese Culture]. Fukunaga Mitsuji. Jimbun Shoin, 1996. 192×136 mm. 344 pp. ¥2,884. ISBN 4-409-54050-5.

China had a tremendous impact on ancient Japan, but in many ways it was the impact of two countries, because the culture of its northern and southern regions was so very different. A specialist on ancient Chinese intellectual history, Fukunaga Mitsuji describes the stark contrasts between what he calls the culture of the "horse" of northern China and the culture of the "ship" of southern China.

The north was the cradle of Confucian traditions, stressing aggressive human action, the "horse-riding," patrilineal society that respected right over left, control over benevolence, odd numbers over even, and directness over indirectness. The south was the world of Taoist traditions that stressed obedience to the laws of nature over human action and artifice. A maritime-centered society revolving around ships carried by wind and water, it was a culture that appreciated the passive virtues of non-action and selflessness. Kinship traditions were matrilineal, and left was stressed over right, benevolence over control, even over odd. Up until now the Confucian-centered "horse" culture has formed the mainstream of Japanese culture, says the author, a specialist on Taoism; perhaps now it is time for a reappraisal of the "ship" lineage in ancient Japanese culture.

Yama ni sumu: Minzokushi joshō [Life in the Mountains: An Introductory Folk History]. Katsuki Yōichirō. Miraisha, 1995. 215 × 150 mm. 394 pp. ¥7,004. ISBN 4-624-20067-5. This book is the record of the life in a mountain village in a remote part of Kōchi prefecture (Shikoku) over a period of about twenty years. The small village of 32 households located on the edge of a river once worshiped the deities of the mountains and supported itself through communal use of local mountain resources. Slash-and-burn agriculture was practiced until recently.



Cover design: Mōri Kazue

In undertaking this field study, the folklorist author was determined from the outset to avoid dry, objective compilation of statistics, but to create a folklore record that would be both readable as literature and clearly reflect his own concerns. The author is among those who believe that the norms and priorities of contemporary Japanese life should be subject to a thorough reappraisal, but in this study, Katsuki strives to withhold subjective judgment as much as possible. He records the customs and practices of daily life that evolved in the history of settlement in the mountains, the changes in folk tools and in the village today, and tremendous detail about the events of that history supported by accounts and stories told by the older people of the village. In this vivid portrayal of life in the village as well as the inner world of the people who dwell there, we can observe a certain universality. Written in superb documentary style, this book represents a new style of folklore history.

EDO / TOKYO

Meiji Tōkyō kijin den [Memorable Lives of Meiji Tokyo]. Mori Mayumi. Shinchōsha, 1996. 196 × 135 mm. 262 pp. ¥1,600. ISBN 4-10-410001-3.

The author is a native of the old commercial section of Tokyo known as *shitamachi*. Since 1984, she and two other women have hand-published a quarterly guide to the attractions of this area entitled *Yanaka, Nezu, Sendagi*. Based on accounts from older residents and documentary research, the guide has featured articles about notable residents and important events that took place in these communities where the atmosphere of the Meiji era (1868–1912) still lingers.



Cover design: Shinchōsha

This volume presents biographical accounts of 25 personages whose stories they found to be linked to this area in the course of their interviews and research. They include novelist Kawabata Yasunari, the German physician Erwin Bälz who came to Japan to teach modern medicine, as well as many others—a composer, a rakugo storyteller, a puppet maker, a zoo keeper, a businessman, a millionaire, a poet, and a number of scholars. They include not only historical figures found in biographical dictionaries but people who were once famous in these communities but who live only in the memory of the residents. The *kijin* of the title usually means “eccentrics” or “oddballs,” but Mori uses it to mean people whose lives had a glamor, sophistication, or character that was out of reach to the ordinary city

dweller. Mori Mayumi’s “lives” express her pride in the history of her native place and the vibrance of a person who loves to take walks in the streets of old Tokyo and the unexpected encounters they can bring.

Sumida gawa o watatta hanayome [The Bride Who Crossed the Sumida River]. Matsumoto Hajime. Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 1995. 194 × 131 mm. 254 pp. ¥2,000. ISBN 4-309-01020-2.

The Sumida River flows through the national capital and pours into Tokyo Bay. Its eastern banks are famous for their cherry blossoms, and its environs are immortalized as the setting of countless works of poetry, drama, and fiction. This volume is made up of essays linked to this much eulogized stream.

An ardent admirer of novelist Akutagawa Ryūnosuke (1892–1927) since his youth, the author became captivated by the charms of the Sumida River (where Akutagawa grew up) after moving to Tokyo to take up a job in a publishing house. In the thirty years since, he has made study and writing about the Sumida a lifetime hobby while working at a local publishing company. The “bride” mentioned in the title is Akutagawa’s mother.



Cover design: Kikuchi Nobuyoshi

The essays deal not only with Akutagawa but with other literary luminaries of the 1920s and 1930s including Nagai Kafū (1879–1959) and Tayama Katai (1871–1930), along with many nostalgic and vivid episodes. Currently active as a writer and landscape artist, the author has generously illustrated the book with his own ink sketches of riverbank scenes.

MEDICINE

Kami no te hito no te: Gyakkō no igakushi [The Divine Hand, the Human Hand: The Other Side of the History of Medicine]. Tachikawa Shōji. Jimbun Shoin, 1995. 193×135 mm. 262 pp. ¥2,472. ISBN 4-409-04034-0.

Modern medicine has advanced to the point where scientists can manipulate genes, and the pace of development in the science of medicine is unlikely to slacken. Illness is part of the human condition everywhere, and there have been moves in both Asia and the West aimed at returning to the fundamental spirit of medical care and rethinking the assumptions of the profession. Certainly this is a signal of a sense of crisis stemming from the overwhelming priority placed on science and technology in contemporary civilization.

This volume is a collection of essays by Japan's currently most active historian of medicine that gives us a brisk promenade through the halls of medical history. Running through the collection is his overriding determination to get back to the rudiments. He demonstrates that the original concept of curing was based on confidence in the human body's powers to cure itself, and of doctors as merely the mediators helping to activate those powers. Reappraising modern medicine in the context of this history shows how very odd modern medicine, with its excessive reliance on modern science, has become. The author calls for restoration of humility, and for a greater endeavor to unite the "hand of humanity" (human thought and artifice) with the "hand of the divine" (i.e., that which is beyond human reach).



ARTS

Gendai kōgo engeki no tame ni: Hirata Oriza no shigoto 1 [Contemporary Vernacular Theater: The Work of Hirata Oriza]. Hirata Oriza. Banseisha, 1995. 189×126 mm. 262 pp. ¥2,060. ISBN 4-89188-245-X.

Japan today reportedly has more than 3,000 groups of small theater (*shōgekijō*) players which proliferated in the 1960s and 1970s under the charismatic leadership of mainly two men, Terayama Shūji and Kara Jūrō. Terayama passed away in 1983 and Kara has ceased to be as energetic a force as before, so the movement seems from the outside at least to be at a low ebb. Author Hirata Oriza, leader of the Seinendan (Youth Corps) players and currently one of the most active playwrights in the genre, gives us a full account of the small theater world, discussing his own approach to playwriting, the activities of the small theater players, as well as his own critique of Japan's national administration of culture.



Cover design: Suzuki Hitoshi, Kabaya Takao

The small theater movement emerged in reaction to the Shingeki movement, which in turn began in the early twentieth-century embracing the realism of Western theater as opposed to the refined stylization of traditional Kabuki and Noh. Despite its emphasis on realism, Shingeki had tended to be overly oriented to principles and lacked refinement of expression, with dialogues in a high-flown literary rather than colloquial style. Hirata's exclusive use of the colloquial vernacular for plays has had a great

impact upon Japanese theater as a whole.

Sado mangekyō: Garasu kampan shashinshū [Sado Island 1917–1945]. Kondō Fukuo, photos, Tomiyama Haruo, ed. Kyōdo Shuppansha, 1994. 257×258 mm. 246 pp. ¥6,800. ISBN 4-87663-264-2.

A northern island off Niigata Prefecture in the Sea of Japan, Sado is well known in Japanese history as an important place to which persons convicted of crimes during the medieval period were exiled and as the country's most productive gold mines during the Edo period (1603–1867). The photographer for this volume, Kondō Fukuo, was born on the island in 1900 and spent his entire life there until his death at the age of 57. He absorbed himself in his photography until he had used up all his family assets, but almost none of his work was exhibited during his lifetime. He was remembered by local islanders as an eccentric who squandered his fortune. It was photographer Tomiyama Haruo, editor of the present photo collection, who "discovered" the photos.

For this collection, 231 photographs were selected from the collection of more than 8,000, most of them glass dry plate photos, preserved at the Sado Museum. Taken between 1917 and the end of World War II in 1945, they show scenes of farming and fishing villages, geisha of the port towns, farmers, fishermen, and other scenes of daily life in bygone days now looked back on with nostalgia. Gone along with those days, we realize, are the inspired eccentrics like Kondō we once encountered in every corner of Japan.



Cover design: Tomiyama Haruo

Bōmeisha [Refugee]. Takahashi Takako. Kōdansha, 1995. 194×135 mm. 284 pp. ¥1,700. ISBN 4-06-207957-7.

We may feel there is no place where we really belong. We feel suspended, in limbo. Yet we manage to get along, adapting and making compromises. What is there to do if we cannot get along? One choice is to commit suicide. Instead of taking this option, the female protagonist in the novel *Bōmeisha* leaves Japan for France. She just cannot adjust herself to the way people behave in Japan. It seems to her that they do not squarely face questions arising from the deepest layers of human existence, but force themselves to compromise all the time. The book title not only represents her position vis-à-vis her own culture but apparently implies God's expulsion of humanity from the Garden of Eden.



Cover design: Kikuchi Nobuyoshi

In France she was led, as if guided by the invisible hand of God, to enter a nunnery. But this seems to be just one of many hurdles, like the many national borders she has to cross to get to France, she tackles in the course of her spiritual search for her ultimate goal. The author is one of Japan's very few Catholic writers. She is currently pursuing religious training in France. Her first long novel in ten years, this volume portrays the sincere inner search of a woman facing the silence of God.



Cover design: Minami Shimbo

Gaichi no Nihongo bungakusen [Selected Works of Overseas Japanese-language Literature]. 3 vols. Kurokawa Sō, ed. Shinjuku Shobō, 1996. 194×130 mm. each. 360–394 pp. ¥3,800. ¥4,200. ¥3,900. ISBN 4-88008-214-7; 4-88008-215-5; 4-88008-216-3.

Little has been published on the literature written in Japanese in the Japanese colonies during World War II and before. Even local writers and their Japanese counterparts have little knowledge of writing activities of those days. The past few years, however, has brought an increase in the number of works attempting to fill this gap.

This book, dividing the literary works written in Japanese overseas during the colonial days into three volumes by region, finally makes readily available works that have been hard to find. The first volume collects writings from Southeast Asia and Taiwan, the second volume from Manchuria (Northeast China), Inner Mongolia (now part of China), and Sakhalin, and the third volume those from Korea. They include not only works by local writers who lived under Japanese rule—the length of their repression varied by region—but also works by Japanese writers who lived temporarily in each region. For some of the area sections, all the writings are by such Japanese. Perhaps because of the circumstances of colonial rule, under which local writers were forced to use the Japanese language and Japanese writers were there as temporary visi-

tors from the ruling country, the literature tends to be downcast and gloomy. The book is also noteworthy for its useful commentaries on and introductions about the writers.

Nakahara Chūya: Inochi no koe [Nakahara Chūya: The Voice of Life]. Higuchi Satoru. Kōdansha, 1996. 188×129 mm. 266 pp. ¥1,500. ISBN 4-06-258068-3.

Nakahara was a well-known poet (1907–37) who died young, at age 30, after less than ten years of intense activity in the world of modern Japanese poetry. Along with the works of Miyazawa Kenji, who was active around the same time as Nakahara and also died young, his poems enjoy a strong following among young Japanese today. Nakahara's life has been chronicled and eulogized over and over by his friends, including literary critic Kobayashi Hideo and novelist Ōoka Shōhei, until it is virtually legendary.

In contrast with Miyazawa, however, Nakahara's thought and the background that shaped his character has been relatively little studied and discussed. This is partly because he was seen as a lyric poet of the remote past. An enthusiastic study full of new information and insights, the present biography aims at a fuller picture of Nakahara not only through his poetry but his translations and critiques that have heretofore been given little attention. Higuchi Satoru is a literary critic and author of another biography of Tominaga Tarō, a friend and rival of Nakahara who also died an early death.



Cover design: Yamagishi Yoshiaki, Nakatsugawa Minoru

Nihon no watashi kara no tegami [Letters from Japan and Myself]. Ōe Kenzaburō. Iwanami Shoten, 1996. 173×104 mm. 214 pp. ¥620. ISBN 4-00-430424-5.

Has the nuclear age added any new conditions to our lives? This is the main concern of Ōe Kenzaburō. His letters and lectures since he delivered his Nobel lecture entitled, "Japan, the Ambiguous, and Myself," have been brought together in this volume (*shinsho* pocket-size), along with an exchange of letters with the German writer Günter Grass (occasioned by the anniversary of the war's end exactly fifty years before) and his letters of protest against the French nuclear testing in the South Pacific in the early autumn of 1995.

The most impressive part of this book are the recollections of his boyhood the author sprinkles through its pages. He spent his early boyhood on an island separated from Hiroshima by only a narrow strip of the Inland Sea. The village surrounded by woods was his family home and the homeland of his literature. It was there that he heard the news of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, and listened to the Emperor, revered by the nation as a living god, denying his divinity over the radio after Japan's surrender. This book clearly shows that the source of Ōe's imaginative powers can be traced to this fertile landscape, while his complete trust in democracy is derived from his experiences around the time of the war's end. One cannot help being profoundly moved by the strength of spirit that has kept Ōe from giving up on humanity despite the cruelties of our age.



Cover design: Tamura Yoshiya

Shintoku mondō [Riddles of Shintoku]. Gotō Meisei. Kōdansha, 1995. 194×130 mm. 238 pp. ¥2,000. ISBN 4-06-207658-6.

Among medieval Japanese performing arts was a form of narration accompanied on the samisen known as *sekkyō bushi*. Originating in Buddhist sermons, the basic theme of its parables was that bad things have bad results, but salvation can be found in the end through the mercy of the Buddha. The main performers were itinerant begging priests, and the best known of the *sekkyō bushi* tales is the story of Shintokumaru (a handsome boy who goes blind because of his evil mother-in-law but can see again thanks to fervent prayers for the mercy of the Buddha by the girl who loves him).

The present book is a collection of eight short stories, three related to Shintokumaru, including the title story. The collected stories are told in the form of a lecture, a letter, and a diary by a university professor and novelist who started writing in the 1960s and belongs to the generation of "introspective" writers. The Shintokumaru story in this book is about a college professor (who is also the author)—who has left his family behind to take up a job in Osaka alone and whose commute passes not far from a sixth-century tumulus locally known as the tomb of Shintokumaru—visiting the ancient tomb with a map in hand. Because it is written like an evocative documentary report, the reader starts to visualize the mystic ancient past start to rise up in the urban space where almost no trace of the past remains. The author seems to be attempting through this experimental book to draw out the "local spirits" of the past.

Yomigaeru Taiwan bungaku: Nihon tōchiki no sakka to sakuhin [The Revival of Taiwanese Literature: Writers and Their Works Under the Japanese Rule of Taiwan]. Shimomura Sakujirō, et al., eds. Tōhō Shoten, 1995. 215×151 mm. 570 pp. ¥4,200. ISBN 4-497-95462-5.

Taiwan had been ruled as a colony by Japan for half a century when Japan was defeated in World War II, and soon thereafter became the base of activities for Kuomintang supporters driven out of mainland China by the communists. The people in Taiwan, therefore, have not enjoyed complete freedom of speech and writing for nearly a century.

The present book consists of twenty of the thirty-nine papers presented at an international conference of specialists on Taiwanese literature during the Japanese occupation of the island, held in Taiwan in the fall of 1994. The presenters were mostly from Taiwan but some were also from Japan, the United States, and Germany. The three-day meeting reflected the eagerness of Taiwanese to reappraise their own literature and culture.



For a long time it has been virtually taboo in Taiwan to discuss literature written between 1895 and 1945. Even when it was talked about, it was invariably divided into two categories: literature of resistance and literature of collaboration. At last freed from that taboo, this book pursues the identity of Taiwan through a rereading of the past. It reveals how writers in Taiwan remained dauntless and devoted to their task, though their stances might have differed, of seeking their identity despite the cruel conditions of Japanese control.

Events and Trends

Floundering Monthly Magazines

Many of the monthly, mass-market magazines that were started up in the 1990s are being forced to cease publication. Despite innovative and persistent efforts to carve out a corner of the market, these publications have apparently been unable to keep pace with the diversifying interests of readers.

Yomiuri Shimbun Sha's *Gekkan Kitan* published its eighth and last issue this May. The monthly advertised itself as a "multi-perspective magazine," and was aimed at urban dwellers in the 25-to-30-year-old age bracket. Introducing topics from a variety of angles, about one-third of its pages in each issue were devoted to feature articles. Still, it failed to sell steadily and secure an established readership.

Panja (Fusōsha), founded in 1994 for 25-to-35-year-old male readers, which suspended publication with its June issue, had also suffered from red ink. In January 1996, it attempted to rejuvenate itself, appealing to "adults who have put men's magazines and women's magazines behind them," but circulation did not grow and it was forced to close.

Women's Magazines Thriving

In contrast to the sluggishness of the market for men's magazines and for monthlies without any particular gender orientation, women's magazines are booming. Instead of those aimed at the generation in their late teens and twenties, moreover, it is magazines for "adult" women in their thirties that are doing well.

Up until recently, magazines for female readers in their thirties predominantly dealt with housekeeping and childrearing topics of a domestic orientation, but as women have become increasingly active in the workplace, volunteer activities, and other arenas outside the home, their lifestyles have greatly diversified. Now there is an increasing number of magazines devoted to keeping

readers abreast of trends in fashion and discussion of problems and dilemmas encountered in daily life. These publications are geared to the increasingly dynamic stratum of active adult women who are neither young and single nor full-time housewives and mothers.

Most of the successful magazines are luxury-oriented fashion magazines, including *Grazia*, Kōdansha's monthly launched this past spring which sold 250,000 copies of its first issue, as well as Kōbunsha's *Very*, and Fujin Gahōsha's *La Vie de Trente Ans*. These magazines feature articles about luxury brand, imported handbags designed by Feragamo and Prada and take up topics traditionally considered to be far removed from household routine, such as beauty care, interior decorating, and "lifestyles."

Magazines and the Internet

With not only big corporations and computer nerds, but individual users swarming to hook into computer communications like bees to honey, Net-fever is spreading throughout the publishing industry. A steady stream of new magazines is introducing the Internet for beginning users. New monthlies, such as *Internet ASCII* and *Internet Working* launched this spring by ASCII Sha, a publisher of computer books, and BNN's *Internet Life*, continue to appear. Even women's magazines, which never had any articles related to computers until very recently, have jumped on the bandwagon with easy-to-understand introductions to the Internet.

Behind the boom is the ease with which it has become possible to access the Internet from computer game hardware or personal computers now widely owned by individual users, the relatively unfocused but eager demand of many beginner users, and effectiveness of corporate advertising in magazines related to the currently topical subject.

Akutagawa and Naoki Prize-winning Works Sell

The works that won the Akutagawa Prize, Matayoshi Eiki's *Buta no mukui* [The Pig's Retribution] (Bungei Shunjū), and the Naoki

Prize, Koike Mariko's *Koi* [Love] (Hayakawa Shobō) and Fujiwara Iori's *Terorisuto no parasoru* [The Terrorist's Parasol] (Kōdansha), in 1996 are selling very well. By the end of March, *Buta no mukui* had gone through nine printings and sold 90,000 copies, *Koi*, 250,000 copies and *Terorisuto no parasoru* more than 340,000. *Koi* had had only had three printings and sold about 20,000 prior to the awarding of the prize, demonstrating an impact of the awards not seen in recent years.

Akutagawa-award winning works of the past several years have sold only around 50,000 to 60,000 copies, and the rapid pace of sales enjoyed by Matayoshi's humorous story of life Okinawan-style has not been paralleled since *Ninshin karendā* [Diary of a Pregnancy] sold over 300,000 copies after winning the prize in 1990.

Among Naoki Prize-winning works, Koike's crime suspense story and Fujiwara's hard-boiled fiction work have sold on a par with *Makusu no yama* [Marx's Mountain] (Takamura Kaoru, Hayakawa Shobō, 1993) which sold more than 200,000 copies in a few years and the equally popular *Shinjukuzame mugen ningyō* [Shinjuku Shark, Hell Doll] (Ōsawa Arimasa, Yomiuri Shimbun Sha, 1993).

Book Sales Down Over 1995

Concern over declining interest in reading in Japan has been growing for several years, but recently the trend seems to have gained momentum. Sales for books in 1995 were recorded as falling below that for the previous year for the first time in 1996 since 1958.

According to the Research Institute for Publications, which monitors market research trends, sales for books, including new titles and reprint paperbacks, as opposed to periodicals, came to ¥1.47 trillion, an increase of only 0.9 percent over the previous year, but when the increase in sales volume of comic publications (which are calculated as part of the category of books) is subtracted, the total is substantially lower than for 1995.

One of the primary reasons said to be responsible for the chill that has

set in over the book publishing industry is the decrease in time people have available for reading. The spread of television, computer games, and personal computers has also contributed to the decrease in the number of books people read. According to a survey conducted by the nationwide daily Yomiuri Shimbun last October, the number of people who say they "read no books" has risen to 40 percent of samples surveyed.

Two other factors are the marked increase in second-hand bookstores and the growing availability of various types of publications via on-line sources.

Impressive University Presses

At a time when book sales as a whole are tapering off, university press book sales appear to be increasing. While these publishers specialize in scholarly studies, textbooks, and works that do not generally arouse popular interest, recently they have been showing up in the limelight with titles that make it to the best-seller list.

Tōkyō Daigaku Shuppankai, the largest of Japan's university presses based at the University of Tokyo, has made a particularly impressive showing. The memory of *Chi no gihō* [Academic Skills for the Human Sciences]'s sales of 300,000 copies within five months of its first publication in April 1994 is still vivid (see *Japanese Book News*, No. 9, p. 11), and its *Chi no ronri* [The Theory of Knowledge] published last year had sold 155,000 copies as of spring 1996.

A number of new university presses are also coming into being. With strong alumni backing, Tōhoku University (Sendai) is preparing to establish a publishing division, and expects it to be officially opened following approval at the autumn board of directors.

Hunger for "Books about Books"

Books on the arts of reading, book guides, and essays on good reading—the "books about books" genre—are selling well. Readers are apparently reaching out for help in picking their

way through the constant stream of new titles appearing in bookstores and coping with the deluge of information in general.

Popular and prolific writer Tachibana Takashi's *Boku wa konna hon o yonde kita* [These Are the Books I've Read] (Bungei Shunjū) became a best-seller. This book, which tells what Tachibana—known for his voracious appetite for books—reads and how, began to sell briskly as soon as it went on sale in December 1995, and 380,000 copies had been printed by June this year. Tachibana has written many highly topical books since his exposé of the backroom dealings of Tanaka Kakuei in 1974 led to the prime minister's resignation.

Research Institute for Publications figures show that approximately 51,100 new titles were published in 1995. Averaging 140 new titles every day, this represents a 43 percent increase over 10 years ago. Clearly readers are searching for aids to help them choose books wisely and make optimal use of them.

Manga Best-sellers in Japan, January–June 1996

The myth of unlimited growth in the manga market exploded when sales for 1995 dropped 0.5 percent over the previous year. Comics animated or dramatized for television once seemed assured a large readership, but this has not necessarily been the case over the past year. The following comic series (listed in alphabetical order) are typical examples of titles that have become best-sellers, most of them after versions for television were produced.

Akachan to boku [Me and My Baby Brother], by Ragawa Marimo (Hakusensha). Girls' comic series about a fifth-grade boy who takes care of his year-old brother after their mother is killed in a traffic accident.

Dokaben: Puro-yakyū hen [Power Batter Dokaben Goes Professional], by Mizushima Shinji (Akita Shoten). The Dokaben series (48 vols.) about senior high school baseball games centering around the powerful batter Yamada, whose nickname is Dokaben, now has a new series going on, this time about his activity in professional baseball.

H2 [H Two], by Adachi Mitsuru (Shōgakukan). A story about a high-school boy who loves baseball and cannot resist its lure despite a doctor's warning that he could ruin his arm.

Ike! Inachū takkyūbu [Go! Inatoyo Junior High Ping-pong Club], by Furuya Minoru (Kōdansha). Chronicles the crazy antics of a six-member ping-pong team that encounters frustration at every turn. They can't seem to win at the game, nor even with the girls, and their slap-stick reactions are entertaining and absorbing.

Inisharu D [Initial D], by Shigeno Shūichi. (Kōdansha). Series about the life and adventures of senior high school car enthusiast which has sold over a million copies without a TV version.

Kindaichi Shōen no jikenbo [Cases from the Files of Boy Detective Kindaichi], original text by Kanari Yōzaburō and comic by

Satō Fumiya (Kōdansha). A series dramatized on TV, about the grandson of a famed detective who is a genius at solving murder cases.

Meitantei Konan [Detective Conan], by Aoyama Gōshō (Shōgakukan). A brilliant senior high boy finds he has been dwarfed when members of a mystery organization inject him with a drug. He deals with various tricky incidents in the company of a group of elementary school pals. The animation television series version started last January.

Rurōni Kenshin [Wandering Ex-Samurai Kenshin], by Watsuki Nobuhito (Shūeisha). A period story centering around former samurai Himura Kenshin, once known for killing many people, who champions peace and non-violence in the turbulent years after the Meiji Restoration. The animated television version has been broadcast since January 1996.

Sazan aizu [3 × 3 Eyes], by Takada Yūzō (Kōdansha). A story of adventure and love between a three-eyed monster girl from Tibet and a man she makes immortal. Popularity among hardcore comic fans. Selling steadily in its video animation, TV game, and image-album versions.

Shinseiki Evangelion [Neon Genesis Evangelion], by Sadamoto Yoshiyuki (Kadokawa Shoten). A robot named Evangelion and the shy, introverted boy who operates it fight against enemies to save the human race. TV animation ended last March. Publication of the original comic began only last year. Popularity not limited to comic fans.

Suramu danku [Slam Dunk], by Inoue Masahiko (Shūeisha). Probably the most popular sports comic, this series is about a gangly social dropout who is invited to join a high school basketball team because he is tall. At first hopelessly inept, he develops a crush on the team captain's sister and overcomes his handicaps to capture leadership of the team. Ran as an animation television series ending in March 1996.

To Our Readers

In the four years that have passed since the inauguration of the *Japanese Book News*, we have received many letters from readers containing helpful suggestions and valuable advice. The responses to our questionnaire survey sent out in April this year reveals that readers continue to be very interested, not just in publishing on Japan but in Japanese culture and society. This feedback goes far in helping us to realize what our readers want and need. Further improvement of *Japanese Book News* to make it even more attuned to these needs requires continued close communication.

In addition to the existing form of *Japanese Book News*, we plan soon to open an Internet home page on which the quarterly magazine will also be available. We are sure the magazine will thereby play an even greater role in contributing to international exchange.

In the hopes that the introductions of successful Japanese books presented in the pages of *Japanese Book News* will encourage their translation and publication in other languages, the Japan Foundation would like to introduce two of its support programs.

Japan Foundation Grants

Publication Assistance Program

To encourage the publication of outstanding books on Japan in foreign languages, the Foundation subsidizes important projects. Assistance will be considered for books on, or relating to Japan in the humanities, the social sciences, and in the arts, in languages other than Japanese.

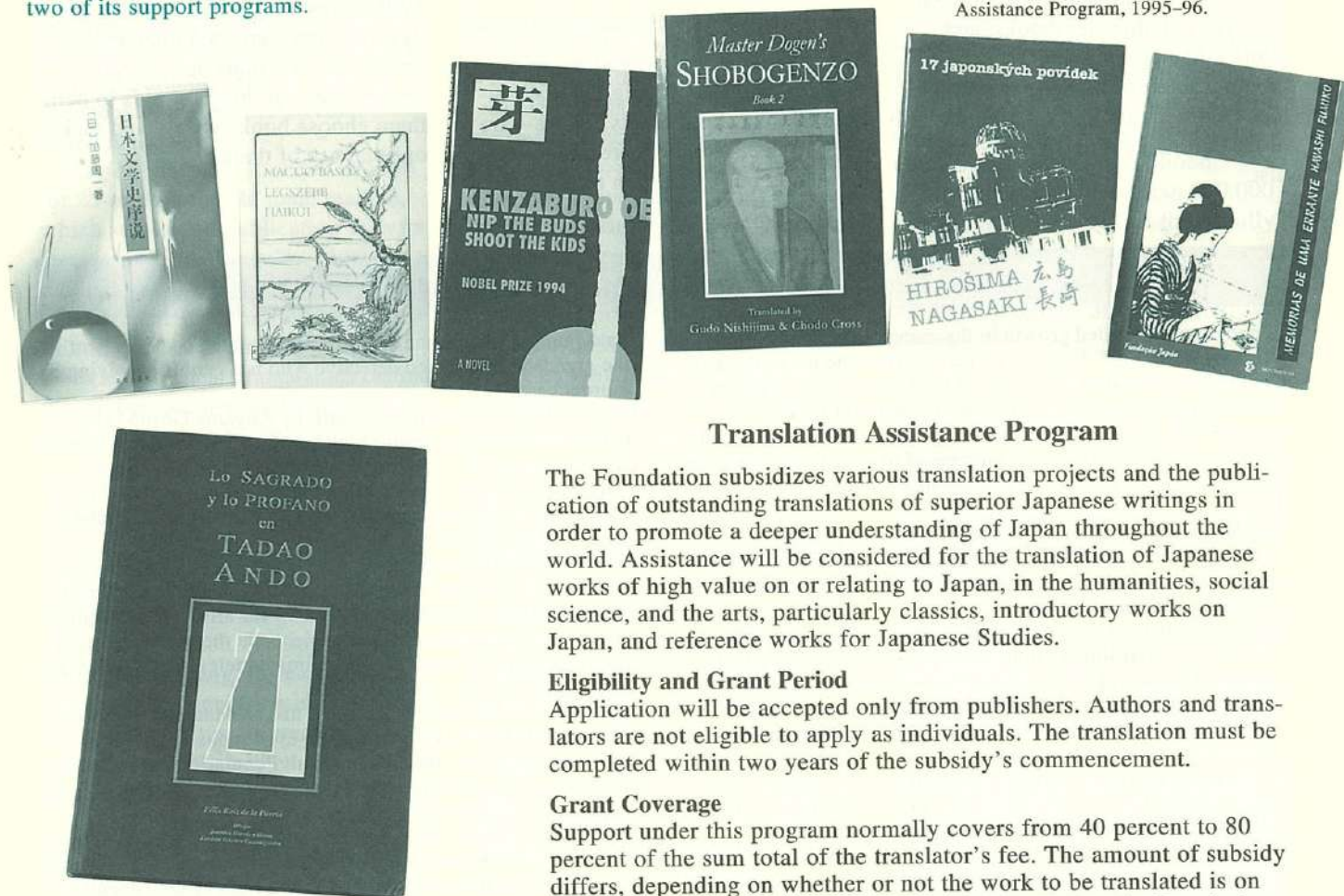
Eligibility and Grant Period

Applications will be accepted only from publishers. Authors and translators are not eligible to apply as individuals. Publications granted this assistance must be completed within the fiscal year for which the subsidy is offered.

Grant Coverage

Support under this program is normally limited to one-quarter of the sum total of printing and binding costs (including plate-making, paper, etc.), provided that the estimates therefor are approved by the Foundation. Special consideration may be given to applicants from developing countries or nonprofit organization and for academic works, in which cases the maximum subsidy may be extended to one-half of the printing and binding costs.

Books published under the Publication Assistance Program, 1995-96.



Translation Assistance Program

The Foundation subsidizes various translation projects and the publication of outstanding translations of superior Japanese writings in order to promote a deeper understanding of Japan throughout the world. Assistance will be considered for the translation of Japanese works of high value on or relating to Japan, in the humanities, social science, and the arts, particularly classics, introductory works on Japan, and reference works for Japanese Studies.

Eligibility and Grant Period

Application will be accepted only from publishers. Authors and translators are not eligible to apply as individuals. The translation must be completed within two years of the subsidy's commencement.

Grant Coverage

Support under this program normally covers from 40 percent to 80 percent of the sum total of the translator's fee. The amount of subsidy differs, depending on whether or not the work to be translated is on the "List of Recommended Works" and also whether the Foundation considers it an academic or a general work.

Grants Awarded in 1995/96

Publication Assistance Program

Works in English: 13 titles

Works in languages other than English: 37 titles

Translation Assistance Program

Works in English: 3 titles

Works in languages other than English: 11 titles

For detailed information and application forms, please contact the Japan Foundation office in your country or, if the Japan Foundation has no office in your country, the nearest diplomatic mission of Japan. Completed applications must be received no later than December 2, 1996. Earlier submission is encouraged.