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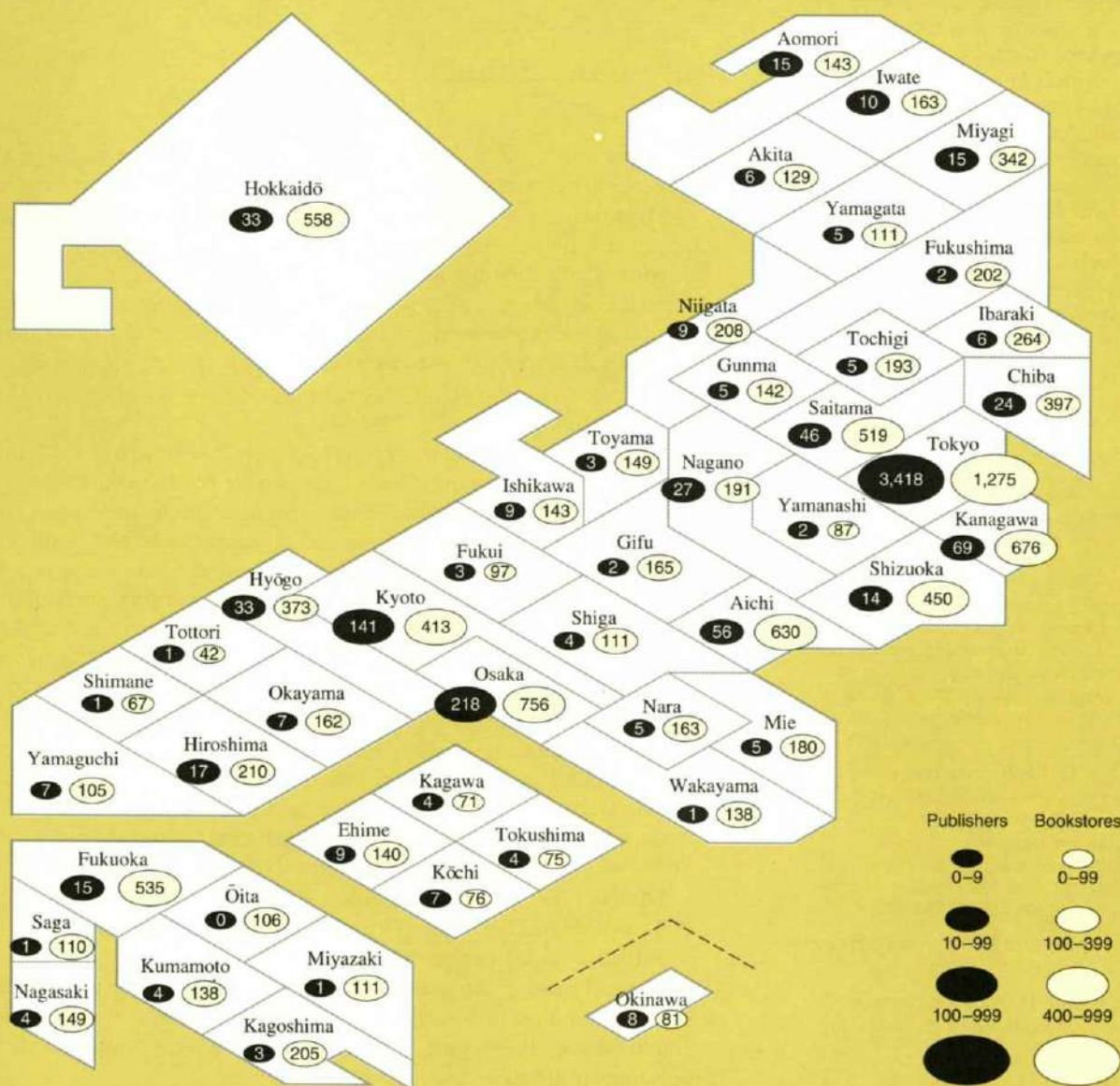
Japanese Book News

Literary Prizes in Japan

Business Fiction: Window on Culture

New Titles/Events and Trends

Distribution of Publishers and Bookstores in Japan



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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

Literary writing in Japan today is diversifying and growing in many directions beyond the image created in other parts of the world through the translations of Mishima, Tanizaki, Kawabata, and other well-known writers of the pre- and postwar periods. Recent translations of fiction by Japanese reflecting values and realities that transcend particular cultures are winning a degree of attention among overseas readers. The challenges for Japanese literature on the international stage in the 1990s perhaps lie in how effectively it can be both a touchstone for common human experience and a vehicle for explaining peculiarly Japanese patterns of thinking and behavior.

The long-established prizes that serve as major arbiters of Japanese literary taste, meanwhile, have come under public scrutiny as never before; journalist Koyama Tetsurō discusses their merits and some of the inherent problems and dilemmas. An unprecedented proliferation of new awards sponsored by public and private organizations is helping to accord recognition to local writers and achievement in particular genres.

One especially prolific genre is that of "business fiction," as illustrated by two titles introduced in Number 2 of this bulletin, *Tōdori no kubi* [Heads That Roll] and *Torihiki* [Deals]. An essay by critic Sataka Makoto comments on the interest being shown in these novels overseas and the penetrating insights they offer into Japan's corporate culture.

Reports on publishing Japanese books abroad introduce Iudicium Verlag publisher Peter Kapitza's efforts to bring out literary works in translation in Germany and the obstacles encountered in the United States as seen by Kodansha America executive Asakawa Minato.

The New Titles section includes 36 books selected from among recent and notable publications. The somewhat shortened summaries leave room for a wider variety of titles.

The fall issue of *Japanese Book News* will feature essays on children's literature and on publications dealing with problems that have arisen as Japanese society becomes increasingly internationalized and its foreign population grows.

Literary Prizes in Japan

Koyama Tetsurō

Literary prizes have recently proliferated in Japan like mushrooms after rain. The *Saishin bungakushō jiten* [Up-to-date Dictionary of Literary Prizes] (Nichigai Associates, 1989) reports that there are now 345 active literary prizes. Including those subsequently founded, some 360–70 literary awards are regularly presented, an average of nearly one each day throughout the year. Many of the newer ones were established by local governments, as was the Botchan Literary Prize, sponsored by the city of Matsuyama, Ehime prefecture. Matsuyama is the setting for Natsume Sōseki's novel *Botchan* (translated into English under the same title) about a Tokyo-bred teacher posted to a school there in the early 1900s. Another is the Itō Sei Literary Prize, launched by the city of Otaru, Hokkaido in commemoration of the 20th anniversary of the death of the native-born critic, novelist, and translator (1905–69). The city of Uji, Kyoto prefecture, likewise named a prize after Murasaki Shikibu, author of *The Tale of Genji*, the last ten chapters of which are called "Uji jūjō" (The Ten Uji Chapters). In most cases the funds behind these prizes come from the grant of ¥100 million each distributed to local governments for the purpose of reinvigorating economy and culture. In terms of the amount and exploitable local resources, establishing a literary prize seemed the most suitable way to utilize these windfall gifts.

A number of very generous prizes, many offering as much as ¥10 million yen (such as the Period Novels Grand Prize [Kōdansha and Asahi Broadcasting Corporation], and the Japan Mysteries Grand Prize [Nippon Television and Shinchōsha]), have been created and co-sponsored by television stations and publishing companies in the attempt to remedy the shortage of original works upon which TV dramas can be produced. There is even a new computer-network literature prize, called the "Pascal New Short Story Writers Prize" which solicits entries, presents screening procedures, and provides access to works submitted through a special computer network.

Despite this remarkable flowering, the best-known and most highly respected are still the oldest: the Akutagawa and Naoki prizes, both founded in 1935 by the Bungei Shunjū publishing house. The Akutagawa Prize recognizes outstanding novels and short stories of pure literature by new writers published in literary journals. The Naoki Prize is aimed at works appearing in popular entertainment books and periodicals. Their screening committees meet twice yearly and awards have been presented 109 times.

The recipients of the Akutagawa Prize include many names well known even outside Japan: Ōe Kenzaburō, Endō Shūsaku, the recently deceased Abe Kōbō, Inoue Yasushi, and others mentioned as candidates for the Nobel Prize in foreign wire services. From about ten or so years ago, however, the number of cases when this pres-

tigious award passed over outstanding talent has become conspicuous. Important female writers, Tsushima Yūko, Tomioka Taeko, and Masuda Mizuko were not chosen, nor was the young and upcoming Yamada Eimi. It has not been bestowed on Tatematsu Wahei, known for his *Enrai* [Distant Thunder], which depicts the problems of borderline urban-rural areas, Murakami Haruki, whose best-selling *Noruegi no mori* [Norwegian Woods] was taken up even in the American press, or Yoshimoto Banana's *Kitchen*, vastly popular not only in Japan but the United States and Italy.

One leading writer of the younger generation, Shimada Masahiko, made a splash recently when he staged an "anti-literary prize" show in which the nominees participated in the screening process. Like Shimada, who was nominated for the Akutagawa Prize six times but not selected, many fine writers who have been recipients of other important prizes would seem well deserving of its honors. While the winners have of course included outstanding authors, among them Ikezawa Natsuki and Murata Kiyoko, the fact that others were overlooked can hardly go unnoticed.

While there are usually members within the screening committee that enthusiastically support particular entries, it often proves difficult for writings with a very strong individual style to gain acceptance among the ten-member strong committee, and authors capable of pleasing a wider critical spectrum tend to be chosen.

The case of the Akutagawa Prize does not necessarily directly reflect on trends in Japan's literary prizes as a whole. But some people in Japan, even if they do not ordinarily read fiction, make a point of perusing at least the Akutagawa Prize-winning works in order to gain a grasp of contemporary trends in fiction writing. In that sense the Akutagawa Prize's responsibility to society, and its role in encouraging writers whose work reflects the trends of the times is by no means small.

It would be unfair, of course, not to mention the good side of Japan's literary prizes. During a return visit in Japan in April 1993, Akutagawa Prize-winner and writer now living in California, Kometani Fumiko, known chiefly for her *Sugikoshi no matsuri* [Passover], applauded the system whereby Japanese literary journals solicit submission of manuscripts from the public and award prizes for promising new writers.

The screening committees of the literary magazines' new writer awards routinely review between several hundred and 1,500 works submitted from the general public. Since any work in Japanese is eligible, quite a few entries are from Japanese living abroad. Some years ago, Kometani herself sent in stories to different awards for new writers from the United States and won the Bungakukai New Writer's Prize (Bungei Shunjū) and the Shinchō New Writer's Prize (Shinchōsha). Subsequently she also won the Akutagawa Prize. Ōba Minako was liv-

ing in Alaska when she won the Gunzō New Writer's Prize (Kōdansha) for "Sanbiki no Kani" [The Tale of Three Crabs] and shortly thereafter, the Akutagawa Prize. Ōba later became one of Japan's leading contemporary female writers. She now serves on the screening committee of the Akutagawa Prize. A more recent example is Tawada Yōko, a resident of Hamburg, Germany, who won the Gunzō prize in 1991 and the Akutagawa Prize in 1993. Many now successful writers, in fact, made their debut in the literary world through works submitted to these prizes.

Kometani believes that the new writers awards, which are completely open, requiring no special connections with an editor, and which offer a chance to anyone who can write well, are more rational than comparable prizes in the United States.

While the most-coveted prize among new writers is the Akutagawa Prize, the Tanizaki Jun'ichirō Prize (established by Chūō Kōronsha in 1965) is sought after by those already established in the profession. It is awarded to the best full-length novel published during the previous year. This prize became the center of controversy when it passed over Nakagami Kenji, who had been nominated five times and whose works had won widespread attention overseas before his early death at age 46 last year. In 1989, novelist Maruya Saiichi caused an uproar with his criticism of Nakagami's novel *Kiseki* [The Miracle]. Because opinion was too divided among the members of the selection committee no award was made for two years. This incident sparked considerable debate over literary prizes. Since that time, when press conferences are held by Tanizaki Jun'ichirō Prize screening committee members upon announcement of the winners, only questions regarding works selected are accepted, suggesting an unfortunate tendency to close the doors on the screening process.

Part of the prestige these leading prizes have always

held derived from the openness of the screening process. In the case of both the Akutagawa-Naoki pair and the Tanizaki award, the nominees are announced before the selection committee meets, and after the winners are chosen, the press is given a detailed explanation of how the decision was made by members of the screening committee. Bungei Shunjū's rival publisher Shinchōsha inaugurated the Mishima Yukio Prize and the Yamamoto Shūgorō Prize only six years ago, but these relatively new awards receive wide coverage in the press because they too announce the nominees in advance and give screening members free rein to express their views after the winners are chosen. It can only be hoped that the former openness of the Tanizaki prize will be restored.

Two other important prizes are the Noma Prize for outstanding works by veteran writers and critics (sponsored by the Kōdansha publishing house) and the Kawabata Yasunari Prize named after the Nobel-prize winning novelist (1899–1972) presented for the best short story published during the previous year. Among literary prizes sponsored by newspaper companies, only the Yomiuri Literary Prize is well established among literary circles. There are also many prizes for fiction, plays, essays, travel writing, criticism, biographies, poetry, haiku, academic research, translation, and other genres. The national government recognizes outstanding literary talent with its Geijutsu Senshō, Minister of Education Prize, and Academy of Arts Prize. The first is awarded for fiction by mid-career writers, and winning the Academy of Arts Prize is considered the first step to eventual appointment to the Japan Academy of Arts, considered by some the highest honor accorded to artistic achievement.

Two drawbacks of Japan's literary prizes seem to me to be of particular concern. One is that there is far too much overlap in the membership of the screening committees of different prizes for a healthy selection process. It is not

Other Major Prizes

Genre	Name of Prize	Year Founded	Sponsor	Notes
<i>Non-fiction</i>	Ōya Sōichi Non-fiction Prize	1969	Japan Society for Promotion of Literature	
	Kōdansha Non-fiction Prize	1979	Kōdansha	
<i>Essays</i>	Japan Essayists' Club Prize	1952	Japan Essayists' Club	
	Kōdansha Essay Prize	1985	Kōdansha	
<i>Poetry</i>	Mr. H Prize	1950	Japan Modern Poet's Society	newcomers
	Japan Poet's Club Prize	1968	Japan Poet's Club	
<i>Tanka</i>	Japan Tanka Poet's Club Prize	1974	Japan Tanka Poet's Club	newcomers
<i>Plays and scripts</i>	Kishida Kunio Plays Prize	1955	Hakusuisha	newcomers
<i>Children's literature and fairytales</i>	Noma Children's Literature Prize	1962	Noma Society for Public Service	
	Japan Juvenile Literary Arts Association Award	1975	Japan Juvenile Literary Arts Association	
	Sankei Children's Publishing Culture Award	1954	Sankei Shimbun	

unusual for one person to be serving simultaneously on the committees of three or four prizes. However conscientious they may be, it is inevitable that they would be inclined to favor works of a similar type. A little more variety on the committees would go far in ensuring that different types of works and authors are given due recognition in the world of literature.

The other drawback is the stratification of the literary world reflected in the prizes introduced here. There are separate awards for newcomers, for established authors, and for veteran writers, but there is no prize in Japan for the best work encompassing all these categories together. It seems that there has been a reluctance from the very start of the history of literary prizes in Japan to choose the definitive "best one." It goes back to the very first attempt to award the Bungei Senshō prize in 1912. The final nominees included many famous titles: Natsume Sōseki's *Mon* [The Gate], Shimazaki Tōson's *Ie* [The Family], Nagai Kafū's *Sumidagawa* [The Sumida River],

Masamune Hakuchō's *Bikō* [Faint Light], Tanizaki Jun'ichirō's *Shisei* [The Tattoo], Yosano Akiko's collection of poetry, *Shundeishū*, Tsubouchi Shōyō for his translations of Shakespeare, and Kimura Takatarō as translator of *The Complete Works of Plato*. On the screening committee were more famous names, including Mori Ōgai, Ueda Bin, and Kōda Rohan. On the day of the selection meeting, they voted eight times, but finally adjourned without picking a winner. Later, a proposal was made that Tsubouchi be presented the award for his achievements in literature, and despite the Shakespearean scholar's protests, the committee persuaded him to accept.

That may have been unavoidable eighty years ago, but certainly we have come a long way since that time. In the recent proliferation of literary prizes, there ought to be at least one with a truly open selection process for the single best work of literature each year. (*Koyama Tetsurō is a culture section reporter at Kyodo News Service.*)

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

Publishers

Asahi Shimbunsha
5-3-2 Tsukiji, Chuo-ku, Tokyo 104-11
Tel: (03) 3545-0131 Fax: (03) 3545-8175

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

Buronzu Shinsha
4-26-6-301 Minami-Aoyama, Minato-ku, Tokyo 107
Tel: (03) 3498-3272 Fax: (03) 3498-5966

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

Gakuyū Shobō
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Heibonsha
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Mita Shuppankai
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Nihon Keizai Shimbunsha
Shuppankyoku
Nihon Press Center Bldg. 4F,
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Tokyo 101
Tel: (03) 5512-1506 Fax: (03) 5512-1549

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Tokyo 101
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Shinchōsha
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Sōshisha
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Business Fiction: Window on Culture

Sataka Makoto

The recent spate of Japanese novels focusing on the world of business and finance has drawn attention of journalists abroad. The New York Times introduced the genre in a large spread under the titles "Making Drama of Japan Business" and "Chronicling the Darker Side of Japanese Business" on May 17. The well-researched article by journalist Andrew Pollack shows a portrait of Shimizu Ikkō and photos of Shimizu's *Keiretsu* (1992, Shūeisha) depicting the exploitation of the "captive suppliers" who make up the network of corporations affiliated with an industrial giant, and Takasugi Ryō's *Chōkai kaiko* [Disciplinary Dismissal] (1985, Kōdansha) chronicling an elite salaried worker suddenly dismissed in disgrace by his company. Pollack goes back to the business fiction of Shiroyama Saburō in explaining the history of the genre, and quotes my comment that "economic novels are the middle manager's enka [soulful ballads of loves lost and found]. . . . Middle Managers always have the feeling of one-sided love for the company, but they are always betrayed by the company."

Just about a month earlier, *Le Monde* featured a lengthy article on business novels. Under the headline "Romanciers du Business," journalist Philippe Pons introduces the work of Yamada Tomohiko, calling him the "Balzac of Kabuto-cho (Tokyo's 'Wall Street' district)." Pons, too, came to interview me, and sprinkles his discussion, dealing with Shiroyama, Shimizu, and Takasugi and Matsumoto Seichō, with Japanese terms.

No doubt this genre has entered the spotlight because people of other countries have discovered that reading business novels is the fastest way to learn about business practices in Japan where the corporation carries tremendous weight throughout the fabric of society.

On February 2, the national newspaper *Asahi shimbun* carried an article, "Economic Development Inside and Out: Chinese Learn from Japan's Corporate Fiction," about how translation of a work by Takasugi was chosen for use as a university textbook. Qu Wei, the Liaoning Teachers College lecturer who proposed this idea to Takasugi explains the reason for this move as follows: "In China, economic reform has just begun, so the stage upon which the plots of 'economic fiction' might unfold doesn't even exist. Takasugi's works portray both the joy and sorrow of the real corporate society that is not written in economic textbooks, so we can learn what goes on behind economic development."

Within Japan, however, business fiction is not accorded the respect one might expect of a genre that receives this much attention in other parts of the world. Literary critics ignorant of economic or business affairs don't mention them, and few works have become candidates for literary prizes. Readers, meanwhile, have given the genre their firm support.

The mainstays of business fiction include, in addition to the aforementioned *Keiretsu* by Shimizu, Takasugi's

Dakuryū [Muddy Stream] (Asahi Shimbunsha, 1993), and Asakawa Jun's *Shanai hanzai kōza* [Lectures on Crime in the Company] (recently out in paperback, Shinchōsha), a witty caricature of the much-vaunted Japanese management. Shiroyama Saburō's most recent work, *Biggu Bōi no shōgai* [The Life of "Big Boy"] (Kōdansha, 1993) is not a novel but a biography of chieftain of the Tōkyū Group Gotō Noboru, one of the rare examples of a Japanese manager who knew how to enjoy his leisure as well as run a business empire.

I recently heard a story from economic fiction writer Ōshita Eiji that came as something of a shock, making me wonder whether it is a good thing to possess the "stage upon which the plots of economic fiction might unfold" after all. Ōshita once wrote a documentary account that was critical of Okada Shigeru, the onetime dictatorial president of Japan's prestigious department store chain Mitsukoshi. He said the story was inspired after hearing the following episode: A housewife living in a Mitsukoshi apartment complex gossiped critically about Okada's mistress with the woman next door. Her catty remarks reached Okada's ears very quickly, and the next day her husband was called before Okada, who delivered a sharp rebuke and an order for his demotion, saying "A man who can't control his wife's tongue is useless." Back home, the husband glared at his wife and declared he would never speak to her again as long as he lived. The media denunciation of Okada began when the woman became a nervous wreck and told her story to a certain publishing company. Ōshita recently wrote *Shōsetsu Sagawa gigoku* [The Sagawa Scandal: A Novel] (Piipurusha, 1993).

A novel about the links of organized crime with businesses—what I call the "gangsterizing of business and the corporatizing of gangsters"—is vividly recounted in Honjo Jirō's *Kigyō shatei* [Corporate Gangsters] (Rippū Shobō, 1993). The Mainichi Shimbunsha's investigative report, *Soshiki bōryoku wo ou* [Tracing the Footsteps of Organized Crime] (Mainichi Shimbunsha), also provides useful background information. It is said that if you want to study the workings of Japanese politics and economy, you should start by examining the activities of *yakuza* (groups of outlaws governed by traditional leader-follower and obligation-human feeling [*giri-ninjō*] relationships), and this is not only because the human relations and values of Japanese politics and business closely resemble those of *yakuza* groups but because there are extremely close links between corporate society and the underworld.

In *Karōshi shakai to Nihon* [Japan and Death from Overwork] (Kadensha, 1992), executive officer of a national federation of lawyers who help families seeking compensation for their breadwinners' death from overwork (*karōshi*) Kawahito Hiroshi has observed many similarities between Japanese corporations and the Im-

perial Army, but points out one distinct difference between the two: "In the military, a person who dies in battle is praised and decorated and his family is paid compensation in pensions and other forms. But when a corporate footsoldier dies of overwork, companies are more inclined to heap him with abuse and blame than praise. And in most cases, his family or widow received no compensation whatsoever. Judging from these cases, Japan's corporate society is completely heartless."

The majority of books on economics continue to be those of the Nippon banzai type that celebrate the Japanese way, and the white-collar workers read them avidly and are for the most part effectively convinced that the bad side is the unavoidable trade off for the good side of life with the company. They remain largely under the spell of Hasegawa Keitarō's fortune-teller-like economic forecasts and Karatsu Hajime's incantations on the virtues of Japanese management. A classic example of this lack of persuasive substance may be found in Hasegawa's books forecasting how Japan will change, although what is really needed is a book on how we *must* change Japan.

One work that offers cogent alternatives is *Nihon no mieru ofisu* [Office with a Good View of Japan] (Shinchōsha) by Imakita Jun'ichi, who was scouted by the French multinational corporation L'Air Liquide when he served as head of the Régi Nationale des Usines Renault product development office and is now a senior executive living in Paris. It discusses practices that are the quintessence of European culture that Japanese seem to have forgotten about, offering hints on ways the closed nature

of Japan's "corporate state" could be made more open. It is written in easily accessible style as well, and is filled with interesting and specific episodes. No doubt Imakita was able to see Japan's closedness all the better once he found himself working outside the country.

A business novel that has been a best seller since 1992 is Yokota Hamao's *Hamidashi ginkō man no kinban nikki* [Work Diary of a Misfit Bank Employee] (OS Shuppan-sha). This insider's account of experiences working in a major bank, both in the original book and its sequels, has demonstrated remarkable popularity. Declaring that bank regulations are at the "kindergarten level," Yokota gives us a glimpse of the environment employees have to cope with through one intra-office circular: "Please exercise great care when using the shredder. Insert the paper a little at a time, not in large bunches. It is especially important not to force the paper in by pushing it down into the machine. Take care that cuffs and hems of clothing and neckties do not mistakenly fall into the feeder and get caught. Neckties should be removed when working at the machine." The author's comment after this story is sarcastic, "Don't you think this is an eloquent reflection of the surprisingly high IQ level at my bank?" Yokota, who was finally driven to quit after the bank's retaliation for his jibes became unbearable, says Japanese bankers have not repented the mistakes of the overheated economy (the so-called bubble) in the least. Considering the still-strong sales of books like those by Hasegawa, Japanese readers have not repented either. (*Sataka Makoto is a journalist and critic specializing in business fiction.*)

Best Sellers (1992)

Business, Hardcover

1. *Wotchi za wārudo* [Watch the World], by Ochiai Nobuhiko. (Shūeisha, ¥1,200). Latest information on world affairs provided by a journalist of international politics.
2. *Gekidō no sekai seikimatsu e no hasshin* [Our Turbulent World: Toward the End of the Century], by Ochiai Nobuhiko. (Shūeisha, ¥1,200). Analyses of the rapidly changing international situation.
3. *1992 Hasegawa Keitarō no sekai wa kō kawaru* [Hasegawa Keitarō Tells How the World Will Change, 1992], by Hasegawa Keitarō. (Tokuma Shoten, ¥1,500). Forecasts for the world economy by an internationally known economist.
4. *Hamidashi ginkō man no kinban nikki* [Work Diary of a Misfit Bank Employee], by Yokota Hamao. (OS Shuppan, ¥1,200). A collection of episodes from the workaday life of a white-collar employee.
5. *Mirai kigyō* (translation by Ueda Atsuo, et al. of Peter F. Drucker's *Managing for the Future*) (Daiyamondo Sha, ¥2,400). Depicts conditions for the survival of corporations.
6. *Chiteki seisansei kōjō shisutemu DIPS* [The DIPS System for Improving Intellectual Productivity], by Kobayashi Tadatsugu. (Daiyamondo Sha, ¥1,500). Study of a management control system.
7. *Rekishi no owari* (2 vols., translation by Watanabe Shōichi of Francis Fukuyama's *The End of History and the Last Man*) (Mikasa Shobō, ¥2,000 each). Controversial essays on the post-Cold War world order.
8. *Te ni toru yō ni keizai no koto ga waku hon* [A Handbook for Economics Made Easy], edited by the Kanki Shuppan Henshūbu. (Kanki Shuppan, ¥1,300). Explains basic eco-

omic affairs, including world and domestic economic mechanisms, taxes, and stocks, in layman's language.

9. *Heisei ishin Part 2* [Heisei Renovation, Part 2], by Ōmae Ken'ichi. (Kōdansha, ¥1,500). Presents a grand vision of a new Japan from various angles.
10. *Saigo no jūnen Nihon keizai no kōsō* [The Japanese Economy: A Plan for the Last Decade (of the 20th Century)], by Tanaka Naoki. (Nihon Keizai Shinbunsha, ¥1,600). Diagnoses Japanese society today and pinpoints problems for Japan to solve in preparation for the coming century.

Fiction, Hardcover

1. *Akegata no yume* (2 vols., translation by Tenma Ryōkō, et al. of Sidney Sheldon's *Memories of Midnight*) (Academy Shuppan, ¥1,000, ¥1,200). About an internationally successful businessman who leads a double life.
2. *Kokkyō no minami taiyō no nishi* [South of the Border and West of the Sun], by Murakami Haruki. (Kōdansha, ¥1,500). The first long novel by the popular writer in four years.
3. *Ukezuki* [Passive Moon], by Ijūin Shizuka. (Bungei Shunjū, ¥1,300). Collection of seven short stories which won the Naoki Prize.
4. *Arujānon ni hanataba o* (translation by Obi Fusa of Daniel Keyes's *Flowers for Algernon*) (Hayakawa Shobō, ¥1,500). Nebula Award winner describing the life and adventure of Charlie, who becomes a supergenius, by a New York-born writer.

(Based on wholesale book distributor Tohan Corporation lists, January–December 1992)

Germany

Publishing Between Cultures

Peter Kapitza

The publishing of books and periodicals related to Japan (as well as works on German studies and German as a foreign language) at Iudicium Verlag is directly connected to my own career. Working as a Germanist in Japan for eight years, I became familiar with the work at the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Natur- und Völkerkunde Ostasiens (OAG Tokyo), and was an active member of the publishing section of OAG for several years. After founding Iudicium in 1983 a few years after my return from Japan, I decided to establish a special section for projects on Japan and East Asia. In the meantime, we published series of monographs and editions in Germany together with OAG in Tokyo. These mainly consisted of translations of literary texts, biographies, and research works in culture, political science, and economics. Since the Deutsches Institut für Japanstudien (DIJ) of the Philipp-Franz-von-Siebold Stiftung foundation was formed in 1988, Iudicium Verlag has published three different series of publications for this important institution where professionals from diverse academic backgrounds explore conditions in contemporary Japan and organize conferences on selected issues. We have published monographs as well as the yearbook of the DIJ and various bibliographical materials.

In its Japan and East Asia program, because of the close cooperation with OAG and DIJ, Iudicium Verlag publishes studies on selected topics which are neither purely popular nor very specialized. A large part of the translations from Japanese into German or English are contributions to OAG and DIJ publications, including the following: *Japan ohne Mythos*, edited by Karl Friedrich Zahl (on postwar society), *New Impacts on Industrial Relations*, edited by Shigeyoshi Tokunaga, N. Altmann and H. Demes, *Othernesses of Japan*, edited by Harumi Befu and Josef Kreiner, *Technologie transfer Deutschland-Japan*, edited by Erich Pauer (on technological transfer between Germany and Japan), *Militärmacht Japan?*, edited by Heinz Eberhard Maul (on Japanese military politics), *Landwirtschaft und Ökologie in Japan*, edited by Albrecht Rothacher (on agriculture and ecology), and *Japan—ein Land der Frauen?*, edited by Elisabeth Gössmann (on women).

Concerning translation, one thinks first of complete literary works or research monographs rather than the kind of specialized studies mentioned above. In working on translations, one becomes involved in the complex interaction of one's own and another culture as well as with the uncertainties as to whether the original text will be thematically or formally accepted in the German cultural context. Political and economic concerns come into play: What are the preferences as far as "cultural exports" are concerned for private and public sponsors? What kind of publication will sell? Those interests influence to a certain degree what is communicated from one culture to another through translation. Anyone who starts to translate

before having contacted sponsoring institutions or publishing houses is confronted with these questions. The successful Japanese play, "Scarred Hands—The Life of the Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Poetess" by Fujikawa Takeo (English edition translated by Don Kenny published in Tokyo), unfortunately could not be published in the planned German-French version despite the fact that the translations were completed and accepted for publication when support for the translating and printing to cover extensive costs turned out not to be forthcoming.

This situation applies to other kinds of literary translation as well. Since the successful publication of an anthology of literary texts by contemporary Japanese women writers, *Das elfte Haus* (edited by Barbara Yoshida-Kraft in 1987 and supported by OAG Tokyo), Iudicium Verlag came to be in demand for literary translations despite our advertised focus on Japan and East Asia studies. Reviews of that volume appeared in well-known journals and the manuscript was reprinted in a famous paperback series, drawing increased interest in this publishing house from translators. In order to continue that development we published several literary texts translated from Japanese into German *Scharlachrot (Kurenai)* by Sata Ineko, translated by Hilaria Gössmann; *Das Gemeine und andere Erzählungen (Dasu Gemeine)* by Dazai Osamu, translated by S. Wundt and F. Hirataka; *Engel ohne Flügel (Tobenai tenshi)* by Matsushiro Tatsuo, translated by Wolfgang E. Schlecht. Unfortunately, these books have not been taken up by the most prestigious German book reviewers or by readers in the same way as the *Das elfte Haus* anthology. The same has been the case for art books on Japanese painters Higashiyama Kaii, Hirayama Ikuo, and Kayama Matazō which were published in cooperation with Asia Press Tokyo. Introductory essays and commentaries were translated from Japanese into German in these books.

Our journal, *Hefte für ostasiatische Literatur*, containing Chinese, Korean, and Japanese literature in translation (edited by W. Baus, V. Klöpsch, O. Putz and W. Schamoni) presents a particularly complex matter. The recently published Volume 14 of this journal contains literary texts by Chinese and Japanese authors on the theme of "death." Although this journal has received favorable attention in the press, it has not reached a wide readership despite the breadth of the field of literature it covers. We seem to live in a time when literary historians and sophisticated readers no longer share a common literary experience. For example, at the conference of European experts on Japanese affairs held in Berlin in 1991 attended by over 500 specialists, only one copy of *Hefte für ostasiatische Literatur* could be sold in three days. Of course, this experience does not encourage us to continue publishing literary translations. It has taught us to ask on the one hand for even more financial support, and on the other to urge translators to focus on books dealing with contemporary culture and society in Japan and Europe and on texts that promise to be successful on the market. But at the same time, it is not desirable for translation of books of a journalistic



nature, whose relevance is short-lived, to overly dominate the dialogue between cultures. (*Peter Kapitza is managing director of Iudicium Verlag, Munich.*)

United States

Dilemmas of Particularity

Asakawa Minato

The great imbalance in Japan's book trade with the West has been discussed at length in foregoing issues of this quarterly. In sharp contrast to Japan's overall trade picture, imports far exceed exports in the book publishing business. Between Japan and the United States alone, there is an approximately 100-fold imbalance: about 5,000 new titles from the United States are translated and published annually in Japan, while only 50 to 100 titles from Japan reach an American commercial audience each year. Though perhaps not as large as at times in the past, this enormous gap shows no signs of closing.

A similar disparity surely exists between other countries and the United States, the superpower of the book publishing world, but it is especially troubling given the close economic and political ties between the two countries. If we scrutinize the reasons for the small number of Japanese titles published in the United States and the West in general, I believe the most important are as follows:

1. Few Japanese publishers make any active effort to sell foreign rights, and contracts with authors (if they exist at all) rarely include foreign rights clauses.

2. Most Japanese rights agents are not interested in marketing Japanese books overseas because it is very costly and time-consuming to prepare basic materials such as synopses and sample chapters in English.

3. American publishers do not actively look for translations from abroad. (In the United States, translation is not as important as it is in Japan and, unfortunately, translators do not enjoy high status.)

4. Generally, Japanese non-fiction books do not include the usual ancillary material such as indexes, footnotes, and so forth which are deemed essential in the West. This can be a crucial defect, because in scholarly works in the West footnotes are meant to show the exact sources of ideas and information, and indexes reflect the responsibility of the publisher and author to the readers.

All of the above-mentioned points may be obstacles to the publication of Japanese books in the West, but they are mainly technical questions. The real reasons for the imbalance are probably more cultural than technical. It is difficult to offer specific supporting evidence, but the following two factors do seem to underlie the problem.

1. Books created in accordance with the followers' culture of East Asia, strongly influenced by Confucianism (in which the people are taught to follow a wise and benevolent leader), may not be so appealing to readers in the leaders' culture of the West (with its instinctive distrust of leaders and idealism of the individual).

2. Unlike other products, books from Japan may not

be original enough to be appreciated by readers in the West. Japanese authors continue to learn from the West and, actually, many of Japan's best-selling titles are based on comparable books or even originals published earlier in the West.

First, Japanese writing tends to be overly ambiguous and implicit in comparison with the logical, rhetorical structure of Western writing. Communication is often repetitive and in-group-oriented. The editors at Kodansha America are often bothered by the redundancy of manuscripts translated without careful author/translator revision. For light fiction, such repetitiveness may be an asset, as in the successful case of the novels of Amy Tan; but open-ended, linear style of argument, lack of clear organization, and loosely written prose can be crucial liabilities in non-fiction English texts.

Though Simon and Schuster reportedly spent a lot of time and energy on the authorized edition of *The Japan That Can Say No*, for example, the result was still a mediocre book in terms of sales. All-too-obviously it is addressed to a Japanese audience—a defect which could not even be fixed by the efforts of an experienced translator or a very sizeable addition to the American edition by the author. The basic tone of the book remained that of an internal discussion filled with the mindsets and cultural codes of a particular group.

Secondly, for Western readers many translations from Japanese can inspire a feeling of *deja vu* because Japanese book ideas are often taken from the West. This is unfortunate. Just as Japanese readers may not be excited by a book about Japanese tradition translated into Japanese from English, Western readers may not find such imitative books very stimulating.

If a serious effort to publish more Japanese books in English is to be made, Japanese publishers and authors will have to adapt to a certain extent to the rules of the international book market. Japanese communication styles also need to change, to allow clearer, more articulate modes of discussion. There should be more by-lines, more accountability, less anonymity. But this is tantamount to asking for overall social change, not just reform of the publishing business.

At the same time, works by new writers from Japan are in growing demand. Murakami Haruki and Yoshimoto Banana, published by Kodansha International and Grove Press respectively, are enjoying great attention in the United States. I believe that many other Japanese writers, not only in the fiction world, will come to be appreciated by Western readers. Unlike Mishima, Tanizaki, and Kawabata, these new writers are not so very Japanese—they write about feelings, values, and experiences that are shared by readers in other societies. The universality of themes treated by Japan's new writers may eventually replace the particularity of those of the past, opening the way for Japanese publishing—and, indeed, Japanese culture—to find its place among the increasingly global world of literature and ideas.

(*Asakawa Minato is Senior Vice President, Kodansha America, Inc., New York.*)



New Titles

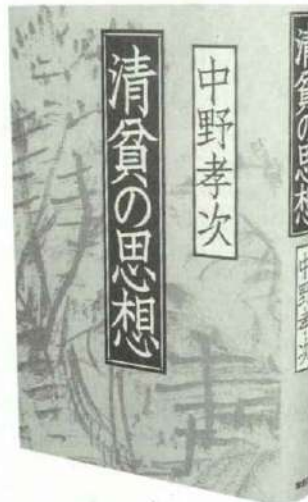
IDEAS

Kūkai. Ueyama Shumpei. Asahi Shimbunsha, 1992. 192 × 125 mm. 334 pp. ¥1,300. ISBN 4-02-259561-2. Kūkai (774–835), also known as Kōbō Daishi, is a monumental figure in Japanese history and religious thought and the subject of numerous biographies over the past 1,000 years. Among his many achievements, he founded the Shingon sect of Buddhism and established a major monastic center on Mt. Kōya. When he was thirty, in the early Heian period (794–1191), he went to the Tang capital, Chang'an, where he studied esoteric Buddhism for three years. Upon his return to Japan, he introduced Shingon Buddhism, at that time the latest form of Mahayana to reach China from India. Shingon grew into one of the two leading currents of religion and thought in the Heian period, the other being Tendai, which was brought to Japan by Saichō (Dengyō Daishi). Kūkai's teachings struck deep roots among the people and continue to influence the Japanese *Weltanschauung* today.

Ueyama Shumpei, Kyoto University-trained philosopher, states that the teachings of Kūkai helped him attain peace of mind when he was a young Navy officer during World War II. In the present work, he attempts what he calls a "critical" biography, seeking to relate bio-

graphical and historical fact by means of his own interpretive comments as he traces the life of Kūkai. His insights add a fresh dimension, making *Kūkai* a valuable source for contemporary readers.

Seihin no shisō [Philosophies of Deliberate Simplicity]. Nakano Kōji. Sōshisha, 1993. 193 × 134 mm. 222 pp. ¥1,500. ISBN 4-7942-0477-9. This book became a bestseller soon after its publication in a timely coincidence with the onset of recession following the collapse of the economic "bubble" of the 1980s. Born in 1925, Nakano Kōji is a versatile writer of fiction, criticism, and essays. In this volume he uses a central concept to frame his discussion of a particular lifestyle and its philosophical underpinnings. That concept, expressed by the word *seihin* in the title, denotes "the simplest possible way to live chosen of one's own volition to practice one's philosophy." It is not, Nakano points out, a passive, self-denying asceticism, but a positive principle of seeking union with the universe, based on Asian pantheism.



Cover: Tamura Yoshiya

As the author explains, the idea of *seihin*, although not dominant today, has a proud cultural heritage in Japan. He draws on a wealth of historical episodes to illustrate how poets, writers, artists, and priests embraced this idea in working out their own ways of life. Some of the better-known figures include Saigyō (1118–90), Yoshida Kenkō (1283–1350), and Hon'ami Kōetsu (1558–1637).

Today, Japan has high-level industrial technology and produc-

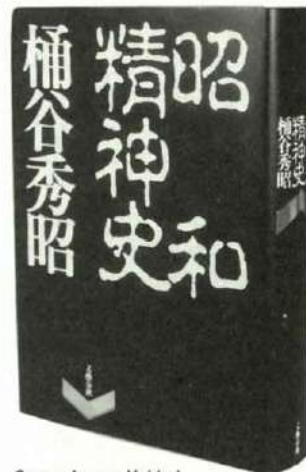
tivity, yet one often hears the criticisms that its products are visible everywhere, but the people who produce them are inscrutable. This book may provide important clues to understanding Japanese culture.

Shōwa seishinshi [The Spirit of Shōwa: A History]. Oketani Hideaki. Bungei Shunjū, 1992. 194 × 134 mm. 678 pp. ¥3,500. ISBN 4-16-346560-X.

The reign of Emperor Hirohito lasted from 1926 to 1989, sixty-three years known as the Shōwa era. Oketani Hideaki, a literary critic born in 1932, attempts in *Shōwa seishinshi* to portray a "history of the Japanese ethos" peculiar to that era, highlighting the years until the end of the Pacific War. By ethos, the author means the complex of values including the ambiguous, amorphous sentiments that are not yet systematized as thought or theory.

Defining the collective ethos of an epoch as the "totality of dramas played out as these inner sentiments come into conflict with the physical world," Oketani examines the experience, perceptions, and thought of numerous individuals in wide-ranging fields through their writing. According to the author, the "Shōwa ethos" came to an end in 1970, but in this volume, he deals with people active during the years up to 1946.

As many as 722 persons are listed in the name index, and the book is filled with extensive citations not only from literary sources, but also from essays, diaries, biographies, and autobiographies written by or about politicians, military officers, revolutionaries, philosophers, and many others.



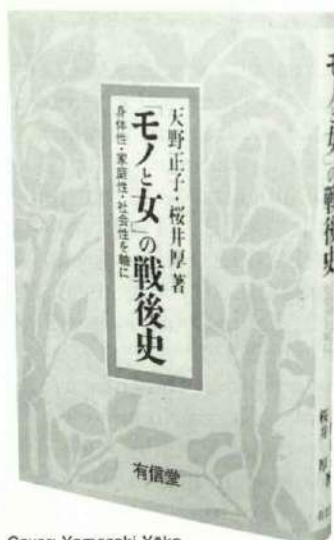
Cover: Azuma Yukimi



Cover: Tada Susumu

Mono to onna no sengoshi [Women and Consumer Goods in Postwar Japan]. Amano Masako and Sakurai Atsushi. Yūshindō, 1993. 188 × 128 mm. 264 pp. ¥2,472. ISBN 4-8429-6534-6.

Lifestyles in Japan have undergone revolutionary changes in the course of postwar economic recovery and the ensuing period of rapid growth in the sixties and seventies. The authors believe that in studying the thought patterns of contemporary Japanese, it is just as important to focus on the relationship of individuals and the consumer goods that have penetrated unawares into every corner of daily life as it is to examine the systems of ideas that have been transmitted via education and mass communication. The two sociologists who share this approach direct their investigation at women, who have always been most closely involved in daily affairs, and at the commodities most intimately connected to women's lives: panty hose, lingerie, sanitary napkins, contraceptives, washing machines, sinks, toilets, notebooks, and cigarettes. They point out how these products have also been responsible for an increasing standardization of lifestyles.



Cover: Yamazaki Yoko

Rojin [Lu Xun]. Yomota Inuhiko. Bronze Shinsha, 1992. 216 × 150 mm. 190 pp. ¥1,500. ISBN 4-89309-046-1.

A volume in a biographical series called "Human Stories" aimed at young readers, *Rojin* describes the

life of Chinese writer Lu Xun (1881–1936). Yomota applies his achievements as a scholar of comparative literature and his insights as a critic in literary and audio-visual media to an influential writer of great complexity to produce a book that goes considerably deeper than standard biography. Without condescending or simplifying, *Rojin* offers the challenge to teenagers to understand an important figure in Chinese history and literature through his works.



Cover: Wada Makoto

Lu Xun has special significance for Japanese. An ardent advocate of reform in pre-Communist China, he was one of many Chinese living and studying in Japan during the 1900s who hoped to gain support and knowledge in their effort to modernize the country's institutions. In Lu Xun's lifetime, Chinese history was riddled with tragedy, which he faced squarely in his writing. In *Kuangren riji* [A Madman's Diary] (1918), *A Q zengchuan* [The True Story of Ah Q] (1921), and others, he painted the harsh reality of his homeland with acrimony and sorrow. A China where "one man eats another" was not just a figure of speech in those times. Yomota gives a vivid portrayal of the conditions of life and the struggles and frustrations of Lu Xun and the other pro-revolutionary activists. His book is an enthralling introduction to Lu Xun and early twentieth-century China well worth reading by adults as well as young people.

Shōwashi, I, 1926–45 [The History of Shōwa, I, 1926–45] and Shōwashi, II, 1945–89 [The History of Shōwa, II, 1945–89]. Nakamura Takafusa. Tōyō Keizai Shimpōsha, 1993. 194 × 134 mm. 372 pp., 352 pp. ¥2,300, ¥2,300. ISBN 4-492-06058-8; 4-492-06059-6.

Nakamura Takafusa (1925–) is an economic historian familiar with both Marxian and Keynesian economics, who is recognized as an incisive critic of contemporary Japanese economic policy. These two volumes, drawing abundantly on historical statistical data, comprise a carefully argued, reliable history of Japan in the Shōwa era (1926–89).



Cover: Michiyoshi Gow

For the generations of Japanese who lived through those six decades, the name "Shōwa," referring to the reign of Emperor Hirohito (1901–89), is the symbolic link joining individual histories with the national history. Thus, Shōwa provides the common thread connecting the experience of all-out mobilization during the second world war, participation in postwar reconstruction, and the subsequent years of rapid economic growth. Nakamura writes in a clear, rhythmical style, and he demonstrates an unusual skill in weaving empirical data into the accounts of ordinary people, writers, and other first-hand witnesses to the era, which gives depth and broader meaning to the statistical material. The two-volume work centers on the political and economic history, but the author's methodology and writing style combine to create echoes of the popular mood during each phase of Shōwa.

Nikkan no pararerizumu [Japan-Korea Parallelisms]. Chon Tegyun. Sankōsha, 1993. 195 × 133 mm. 254 pp. ¥1,800. ISBN 4-87919-537-5. Chon is a Korean born in Japan in 1948 and currently teaching at Keimyung University in Korea. This volume is a collection of essays on Japanese-Korean relations in which he makes an interesting foray below the surface to identify corresponding aspects of respective national self-images.

Specifically, he finds a striking parallel between two sets of circumstances: on the one hand, Korea as a Japanese colony from 1910 to 1945 and later when Japan served as a model for Korean modernization; on the other hand, postwar Japan under the American Occupation and subsequently student and protégé of the United States. In both cases the immediate "other" was explicit and unavoidable, generating certain views and feelings in response. In Korea, the predominant reaction was, and to some extent still is, to formulate the self-image of a homogeneous people and to become exclusionist and inward-looking. In Japan a very similar self-image was formed in response to the American presence, and it has powerful echoes even today. Chon Tegyun believes that Koreans who can transcend the pull of clan and country to become more widely involved in the world will be able to overcome standard notions about Japan, and that they will find solid common ground with like-minded Japanese. Such a view is con-

structive, but it threatens notions that still buttress the self-image of both Japanese and Koreans.

Ryūkyū ōoku [The Kingdom of the Ryukyus]. Takara Kurayoshi. Iwanami Shoten, 1993. 174 × 105 mm. 208 pp. ¥580. ISBN 4-00-430261-7.

Many Japanese tend to think of their country as a homogeneous nation, and this work reminds us that this is not so, with its account of the singular history and culture of the Ryukyu Islands, today's Okinawa prefecture. Ryukyu is the ancient name of the kingdom that stretched over the archipelago from Kagoshima to the south. The author is the foremost expert on Ryukyu history. Relying on the scant historical sources available, he provides a well-focused, lucid account of the ancient history of the archipelago, the formation of the unified kingdom of Ryukyu in 1422, and the kingdom under occupation by the feudal domain of Satsuma. It is a welcome improvement over the general histories available to date.



In the early fifteenth century, the kingdom of the Ryukyus was a cosmopolitan state. Ryukyans travelled to China, Japan, Korea and even Southeast Asia, and before the national seclusion policy was adopted, cutting Japan off from most trade contacts, mainland Japanese followed the steps of Ryukyuan traders. The author points out that for Japanese historians, the early history of the Ryukyus is nothing but the history of a foreign country, and in the days before World War II, it was forbidden to speak of the separate, independent history of the Ryukyus. Through their research, the author and other scholars have finally begun to stake out the rightful place of

Ryukyu history within the context of East Asian history.

Taikutsu na meikyū [Uninspiring Enigma: What Was North Korea?]. Sekikawa Natsuo. Shinchōsha, 1993. 191 × 135 mm. 350 pp. ¥1,700. ISBN 4-10-387601-8.

In the term "uninspiring enigma," referring to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the author has summed up his reactions to three visits to North Korea made since 1987. Sekikawa Natsuo, a non-fiction writer, sets down in this volume a documentary record of his travels and his observations. It is based on his field research notes, heavily revised and expanded. The appendix includes a basic chronology of events in the Korean peninsula and related material.



Cover: Kusaka Jun'ichi and Yabuki Nobuhiko

During the author's first trip, North Korea seemed so far removed from the experience of contemporary Japanese and governed by such apparently illogical ideas, that he dubbed it a "maze"—a mystery. By his third trip, however, he found North Korean society structurally simple and shallow, and monotonous as a whole.

Sekikawa believes that just as the current North Korean regime is doomed to collapse, unification of the peninsula is an historical inevitability. The time has come, he argues, to think about "post-North Korea." In this annotated account, North Korea is held up as a mirror to Japan, giving implicit warning against certain tendencies that Sekikawa finds disturbing in his own society. His expression is gentle, but the quiet anger he feels as he reflects on Japan is unmistakable.



Cover: Nakasone Takayoshi

Nihon sonbō no toki [The Fate of Japan]. Kōsaka Masataka. Kōdansha, 1992. 194 × 130 mm. 286 pp. ¥1,600. ISBN 4-06-205497-3.

This is an introductory work on international relations by a political scientist at Kyoto University. Written in a very readable style and based on solid scholarship, it was a bestseller in late 1992.

The author discusses how Japanese can best handle the dramatic changes that have been set in motion as a result of Japan's more influential presence in the international community. By that he means the pressure from outside to "open up" the country.

Kōsaka places the Cold War in historical context of the past one hundred years, and analyzes post-Cold War conditions. He then reviews events in Japan since 1945 to probe not only the causes of the country's phenomenal economic success, but also the failures, their remedies, and how to carry out necessary changes.



Cover: Kawakami Shigeo

He argues that "given Japan's habitual reclusiveness, such changes will not come easily, but it is time for this country to move away from its postwar isolationist stance." Though written mainly from a historical perspective, the book's central theme is the opening of the country and Japan's real and potential contributions to the community of nations.

"Shin no yutakasa" to sekai kōken ["True Affluence" and Japan's Contribution to the World]. Mano Teruhiko. Mita Shuppan Kai, 1992. 194 × 130 mm. 276 pp. ¥1,800. ISBN 4-89583-107-8.

The end of the Cold War has had serious repercussions around the globe; the centripetal forces that once stabilized it lost, conflict and confusion seem to be everywhere. Japan's bewilderment in this time of flux is considerable. This book discusses how Japan—a big power in terms of GNP but weak in natural resources—"can become a responsible partner in the post-Cold War world" while pursuing genuine affluence. The author is a former director of the Bank of Tokyo and specialist in international finance currently serving on the Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry's committee on policy planning and coordination.

A central concern for most Japanese is that while their country may be an economic superpower, they themselves do not individually feel well off. Mano attributes this partly to the industrial structure which is heavily dependent upon external demand. In order to transform this export-led structure, he proposes drastic easing of various political and social regulations, thereby increasing imports, especially those from other Asian nations. At a time when liberalization of the rice and other



Cover: Iijima Ryūsuke

markets seems inevitable, this is an opportune publication that presents a grand design for achieving an open market viewing Japan in a global context.

Shin sekai chitsujo o motomete [Toward a New World Order].

Takaya Yoshikazu. Chūō Kōronsha, 1993. 173 × 110 mm. 228 pp. ¥680. ISBN 4-12-101110-4.

As global-scale problems erupt on every continent, the modern world system of sovereign states under the aegis of modern rationalism appears to have reached the limits of its validity toward the end of the twentieth century. The framework of sovereign states as universal regional units is no longer feasible.

The author, a professor at Kyoto University's Center of Southeast Asian Studies, has been involved in fieldwork for many years. He proposes new "world units" composed of cultural-ecological spheres, that is areas occupied by people sharing a common world view, as an alternative to the present nation-state. Ecology determines cultural climate and a number of such cultural climates are linked by specific forces to create new "world units." This book describes only five examples: "the world of maritime Southeast Asia," "the world of Java," "the mountain region world of continental Southeast Asia," "the Thai-Delta world" and "the world of China," but it explores ways for these "world units" to coexist in the twenty-first century which emerge from this historical perspective. It is a book with valuable insights on the future of Japan and Asia.



Tōdai rakujiō [The Student Riots at Tokyo University]. Sassa Atsuyuki. Bungei Shunjū, 1993. 193 × 133 mm. 322 pp. ¥1,400. ISBN 4-16-347140-5. Tokyo University, the educational institution known as the nurturing ground for Japan's ruling elite, was shaken by on-campus revolts that took place in 1968–69. Toward the climax, students organized strikes to protest the decision by university authorities to allow riot police onto the campus to control disturbances. When militant students locked themselves in the main administration building, the riot police were called in once more. They forcibly removed the barricades, dispersed the crowds with tear gas and arrested all the students in Yasuda Hall.

The author (1930–) was a Tokyo Metropolitan police officer directly involved in the Yasuda Hall incident. This book draws heavily from testimony by his colleagues and members of the riot police, the “enemy” to the students. It describes in detail the 72-hour battle that ended in the dismantling of the barricades. Himself a graduate of Tokyo University's law department, the author gives attention to all sides as he recounts the intense negotiations and conflicts among the university authorities, students and riot police. His style makes the incident into a drama reminiscent of ancient Chinese historical novels.



Cover: Sakata Masanori

ECONOMICS

Hankoten no seiji keizaigaku [Anti-classical Political Economy]. 2 vols. Murakami Yasusuke. Chūō Kōronsha, 1992. 196 × 135 mm. 364 pp. and 556 pp. ¥2,400, ¥2,950. ISBN 4-12-002136-X; 4-12-002137-8.

Subtitled the first volume of this work “Twilight of the Progressive View of History,” former University of Tokyo professor Murakami Yasusuke begins by expressing doubts about classical political economy—Marxism and Keynesian and other modern schools of economics—and criticizing them as based on a unitary convergent model that assumes economic progress guides all human-kind to a desirable state.



Cover: Chūō Kōronsha Design Office

Murakami sees no inevitable link between the dynamics of politics and economics. Saying, “At best human beings are the freest creatures on earth; at worst they are the most troublesome,” he proposes a multifaceted economic libertarianism that transcends a single notion of justice or progress along a single track. The argument he unfolds toward that conclusion reaches beyond the field of political economy to touch on history, sociology, and philosophy, marshalling the best of the highly respected economist's thirty years of research.

The second volume, “An Introduction to the Twenty-first Century,” clearly portrays and analyzes the “Japan problem.” His argument offers rich food for thought for

anyone discussing the situation Japan faces now and in the years to come. Many newspaper reviews of *Hankoten no seiji keizaigaku* have urged its translation and publication overseas. Unfortunately, the author passed away in July 1993.

Isatsu Nihon keizai [The Japanese Economy: An Unconventional View]. Nihon Keizai Shimbunsha, ed. Nihon Keizai Shimbunsha, 1992. 193 × 130 mm. 262 pp. ¥1,400. ISBN 4-532-14160-5.

This book is based on interviews with fifteen economists, businessmen, and critics conducted by the *Nihon keizai shimbun*, Japan's largest economic newspaper, who defy widely accepted views on the economy as “superstition” or misleading. As the editors put it, commentaries on economic trends are very diverse, forming “magnetic” fields of their own. Governed as these views are by the laws of social psychology, they will deviate from a correct grasp of reality unless they follow a certain set of criteria for self-adjustment and modification. The main aim of this book is to reestablish objective standards at a time when Japan's phenomenal growth has rendered the need for an in-depth understanding of economic phenomena less urgent than it was a few decades ago. Discussed in this book are various opinions concerning the over-concentration in Tokyo of political and economic functions, exorbitant land prices, and the col-



Cover: Kawakami Shigeo

lapse of the "bubble" economy, among others. The reader can see how the popular economic terms have come to play the role of magic spells in Japanese journalism today.

Nihon keizai no fukai shisū [The Japanese Economy's Discomfort Index]. Moriki Akira. Gakuyō Shobō, 1993. 194 × 131 mm. 244 pp. ¥1,500. ISBN 4-313-83068-5.

Offering short-term forecasts on Japan's economy by an independent economist, this book drew widespread attention in the media and quickly became a bestseller. The author addresses the three major dilemmas of the Japanese economy: (1) the large tax increases necessitated by the national government's now incalculable debt; (2) the dangerous decline in the birth and female fertility rates that is shaking corporate Japan at its foundations; and (3) various political and economic cycles expected to hit bottom in 1995. Moriki warns of the strong possibility that Japan, now the world's No. 1 creditor nation, may turn into a major debtor.



Cover: Kawabata Hiroaki

The author's prescription for escape from these dilemmas is for the nation to become aware of what he calls "debt deflation," in which the economy struggles to adjust to its "debt inventory," a legacy of the bubble economy. The "discomfort index" is a term coined by the author to get a better grasp of this situation.

The book vividly portrays the widespread uneasiness felt by Japanese vis-à-vis their nation's future.

Nihon keizai no mokuhyō [Goals of the Japanese Economy]. Iida Tsuneo. PHP Kenkyūjo, 1993. 196 × 133 mm. 206 pp. ¥1,400. ISBN 4-569-53943-2.

This book is a collection of essays and articles written by a specialist in theoretical economics at the International Research Center for Japanese Studies (Kyoto), published in magazines and newspapers between July 1991 and January 1993, during which time the "bubble" economy burst, plunging Japan into a recession. Despite the title, however, the book does not spell out any specific goals, but pursues the real meaning of affluence.

Iida argues that the United States, especially the economic policies of the Reagan era, is mainly responsible for the U.S.-Japan trade frictions. Reaganomics was also indirectly responsible for the overheating of Japan's economy, he says, because Washington placed the blame for the failure of its macro-economic management in that period on Japan, and then pressed Tokyo to expand its domestic demand. When the Japanese government lowered the official discount rates to stimulate demand in acquiescence to American pressure, it went a bit too far, triggering the explosive boom in stock and land speculation.



Cover: Kaminaga Fumio

Although there is some question as to whether the author's arguments would be internationally acceptable, the book represents a sample of what opinion leaders were saying for domestic consumption in the Japanese media.

Yutakasa no kodoku [Lonely Affluence]. Nakamura Tatsuya. Iwanami Shoten, 1992. 187 × 131 mm. 220 pp. ¥220. ISBN 4-00-002339-X.

The spending sprees that gripped Japan in the 1980s have abated, and now the byword is "simple living," much to the distress of retailers and wholesalers. Chūō University economist Nakamura Tatsuya examines the consumption society of the past decade, focusing on its economic foundation, and convincingly demonstrates how affluence aggravated dissatisfaction among consumers. Excessive emphasis was placed on product differentiation and diversification of consumer wants, but manufacturers' efforts to provide goods tailored to individual needs led to the loss of a focus, resulting in a fragmentation and blurring of consumer desires. The first half of *Lonely Affluence* analyzes this situation in detail, and in the latter half discusses how real affluence might be attained, by regaining time that is truly fulfilled. The calm, restrained tone of the book is well suited to today's new "after-the-banquet" era.



Cover: Iwanami Shoten

SOCIETY AND CULTURE

Kokka to maronie [The Individual Spirit and the State]. Noda Masaaki. Shinchōsha, 1993. 191 × 133 mm. 244 pp. ¥1,600. ISBN 4-10-3901010-2.

A collection of eighteen previously published articles by psychiatrist and comparative culture specialist Noda Masaaki (b. 1944) dealing with the psychology of contemporary Japanese. Japanese have finally attained considerable material abundance, yet still do not feel their lives are spiritually fulfilled; at the root of this widespread feeling, the author hypothesizes, is the fact that awareness of the individual is undeveloped and people tend easily to conform to the mood of those around them. The mental illness of individuals, he argues, is indicative of the malaise of the society or culture to which they belong, and corroborates his hypotheses through clinical studies of his patients and extensive research on contemporary cultural phenomena, including the increase in death from overwork and the uniformity of the mass media reporting at the time of the death of Emperor Shōwa (1989). The "maronnier" (horse chestnut tree) of the title symbolizes the spirit of the individual. Subtitled "Japanese Groupism and the Individual Psyche," this book probes the social and cultural structures that inhibit Japanese individuals from addressing even such rudimentary questions as "Why am I alive?"



Cover: Taga Shin



Cover: Heibonsha Sensho Editorial Department.

Nihonjin dekasegi imin [Japanese Emigrant Labor]. Suzuki Jōji. Heibonsha, 1992. 194 × 130 mm. 292 pp. ¥2,500. ISBN 4-582-84145-7. Japan is now a country that attracts foreign laborers, but until several decades ago Japanese themselves were seeking work in Brazil and other parts of the world. Japanese emigrant labor was stimulated by extreme overpopulation and poverty in rural Japan beginning in the Meiji period (1868–1912), and the government encouraged it as a means of relieving demographic crisis. This book draws on extensive source materials to illuminate the history of now-forgotten Japanese emigrant workers. The author is a trading company employee and part-time university lecturer. From 1868 to 1941, a total of about 800,000 Japanese emigrated, and most of them departed with the intention of returning home. Large numbers found jobs in southern Californian farms, pineapple and sugar-cane plantations in Hawaii, and coffee plantations in Brazil. Their dreams of accumulating great wealth and returning "in brocade robes" to the poor villages they had left were largely dashed, as labor exploitation, economic difficulties, and the outbreak of war forced many to remain expatriates.

The author argues that this experience in Japan's not-so-distant past should make Japanese more sympathetic to the needs and circumstances of the estimated 300,000 or more illegal foreign laborers,

chiefly from developing countries, in Japan today. In 1990 the central government revised immigration laws partially to enable Latin American people of Japanese ancestry to work legally, but other unskilled foreign workers are subject to strict regulations and penalties.

Shin'ya tokkyū: Dai-san-bin [Midnight Express: Third Departure]. Sawaki Kōtarō. Shinchōsha, 1992. 196 × 135 mm. 342 pp. ¥1,400. ISBN 4-10-327507-3.

Midnight Express is an account by a well-known documentary journalist of a world trip he took in his twenties, two decades ago. This is the "third departure," or third volume, covering the stretch between Turkey and Europe. A product of the "baby boom" generation whose members struggled especially over their national and personal identities at the height of Japan's rapid economic growth, Sawaki left Japan alone on a round-the-world trip. He travelled first to Southeast Asia and then India, Central Asia, the Middle East, Turkey and finally Europe, with only a knapsack on his back.



Cover: Hirano Kōga

This kind of vagabond journey for a young man is like setting out into a maze; he is assailed repeatedly by hesitancy and doubt, questions asked over and over without ever getting answers, and the moment he thinks he's finally found the way, the worst possible adventure begins. Sawaki encountered dangerous situations and suffered psychological crises. Both this and the previous two volumes have been very popular

for their vivid portrayal of foreign lands and people as seen by a young man in the seventies.

Tokyo: Sekai no toshi no monogatari 12 [Tokyo: Stories of World Cities, No. 12], Jinnai Hidenobu. Bungei Shunjū, 1992. 194 × 134 mm. 358 pp. ¥2,000. ISBN 4-16-509640-7.

"What does a city mean for the people who live there?" is a question that fascinates many Japanese today. A specialist in the history of European architecture and cities, the author deciphers, from the viewpoint of a resident, the symbols and phenomena that fill the city of Tokyo. Unconcerned with those who dismiss Tokyo as a hopeless metropolis crowded with skyscrapers and contaminated by exhaust fumes, he asserts that if you actually walk through its streets and observe a city with imagination and an open mind, you will find that each of the communities and subcenters that make up Tokyo has its own distinctive qualities and history, belying the uniform image of Tokyo. He praises the city, originally built in the Edo period (1603–1867), as an urban masterpiece that is well harmonized with the natural terrain. With its affectionate descriptions of various parts of the city—the central area around the Imperial Palace and high-rise office buildings, the old communities along the Sumida river, the Tokyo Bay shoreline, the residential areas of Yamanote, and amusement quarters—it can be a helpful guidebook.

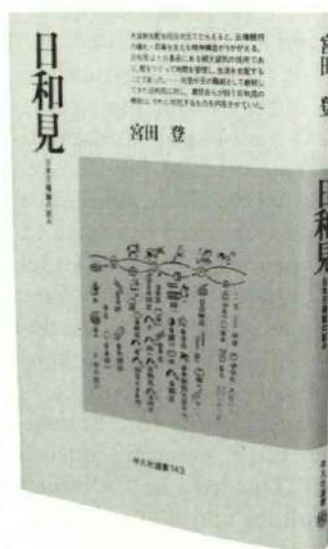


Cover: Anno Mitsumasa

TRADITION

Hiyorimi [The Ancient Art of "Weather Reading"]. Miyata Noboru. Heibonsha, 1992. 194 × 130 mm. 294 pp. ¥2,472. ISBN 4-582-84143-0.

Folklorist Yanagita Kunio (1875–1962) hoped that the study of traditional popular culture would help to break through the nationalism and parochialism that characterized Japanese society since modernization began in the nineteenth century. Miyata Noboru is a specialist in Japanese culture of the Yanagita school.



Cover: Heibonsha Sensho Editorial Department.

Hiyorimi refers in folklore studies to techniques of weather forecasting developed in ancient times to ensure success in farming and fishing (the same word is frequently used today in a negative context to mean an opportunist—"weathercock"—political stance). Persons who possessed knowledge of these techniques were central figures in their communities who determined life rhythms and communal norms and controlled time by creating calendars and observing rituals. The author examines the tense relations that arose over the social status of the *hiyorimi* between the rulers and ruled through study of ancient documents and oral traditions. It is a book that offers clues for understanding the emperor system of ancient times as well as the inner workings of Japanese society today.

Mori no barokku [Forest Baroque]. Nakazawa Shin'ichi. Serika Shobō, 1993. 194 × 131 mm. 530 pp. ¥3,399. ISBN 4-7967-0171-0.

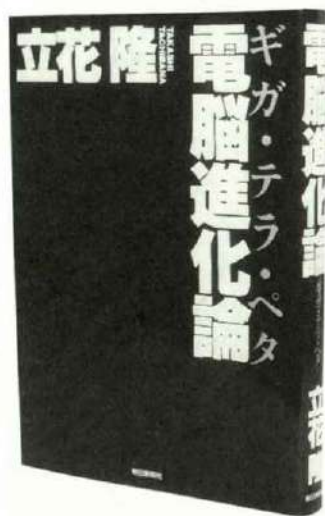
Nakazawa Shin'ichi (1950–) is one of the most dynamic and prolific thinkers in Japan today. Starting with the belief that Japanese thinking has been distorted by state-led modernization, Nakazawa has published many works inspired by his encounter with French post-modernism, his experiential understanding of Buddhism, and his insatiable fascination with contemporary cultural phenomena. *Mori no barokku*, which took ten years to write, is a well-documented commentary on the life and works of Minakata Kumakusu (1867–1941), an important independent scholar whose work spanned both natural history and philosophy. Minakata had a unique style and technique of interpreting things in nature and society in accordance with his inner life rhythms, as distinct from the mainstream of modern Japanese intellectuals who relied on an external system of values for their ideas. This book provides fresh food for thought regarding how to transmit Minakata's style and techniques to people today.



Cover: Okumura Yukimasa

Dennō shinkaron [A Study of Computer Evolution]. Tachibana Takashi. Asahi Shimbunsha, 1993. 217 × 151 mm. 239 pp. ¥2,000. ISBN 4-02-256602-7.

Author Tachibana Takashi, known for a 1974 book on the money politics of Tanaka Kakuei that prompted Japan's most influential politician to resign from the post of prime minister, has turned his attention to high technology and science, and breaks fresh ground in the world of nonfiction with this most recent book on the state of research and development of supercomputers in Japan. Most of us have a vague sense of admiration and awe for these mammoth electronic brain centers but know little about their actual use or potential. *A Study of Computer Evolution* is written in layman's language, and the text is supported with numerous photos and illustrations, making it accessible to readers with an interest in computers. The first half of the book reports how supercomputers are used at the forefront of technology in such industries as automobile manufacture, nuclear power generation, medicine, and architecture. The latter half brings us up-to-date on Japanese research on the next and future generations of supercomputers.



Cover: Kusaka Mitsunori

Tachibana deplors the noncommittal, haphazard nature of government policy toward these devices that are "the brains of industry," as well as the general lack of public under-

standing. He urges that people learn the ABCs of computers, acquiring at least as much knowledge as they possess about the physiology of the brain, and this book is a very useful tool in that endeavor.

Denshi rikkoku Nihon o sodateta otoko [A Man Who Made Japan's Electronics Industry]. Matsuo Hiroshi. Bungei Shunjū, 1993. 194 × 134 mm. 478 pp. ¥2,200. ISBN 4-16-346940-0.

This is a fiction-style biography of Yagi Hidetsugu (1886–1976), a physicist whose activities spread from the academic to the political and industrial realms, by a freelance journalist. Known mainly for his engineering achievements, especially for the invention of the basic configuration of the home-use outdoor antennas found all over the world, Yagi was also an important behind-the-scenes supporter of pioneering research activities. For example, he enthusiastically backed the research on meson theory by Yukawa Hideki (1907–81; Japan's first Nobel Prize winner). In an academic milieu that prized the faithful digestion of newly imported theories, a scholar like Yagi fascinated by the role of creativity in scientific research tended to be isolated. This led him to branch out into politics and industry, but these did not result in lasting achievements. An especially interesting feature of the book is the description of power struggles among researchers and of relations between scientists and the Japanese state during World War II.



Cover: Sakata Masanori

Funin to yureru onnatachi [A Woman's Agony: Infertility] Ochanomizu Joshi Daigaku Seimei Rinri Kenkyūkai. Gakuyō Shobō, 1992. 194 × 131 mm. 290 pp. ¥1,900. ISBN 4-313-84055-9.

Seven female specialists in life ethics discuss the problems faced by barren women and the options available to those who want children. These include insufficient information on scientific and medical advances (such as artificial insemination and in vitro fertilization), a medical care system without adequate communication between doctors and patients, and lack of adequate understanding among the public of the diverse views of womanhood, motherhood, and children. Until these problems are overcome, say the editors, the options open to sterile women will remain very limited. Rapid strides have been made in reproduction technology, but without taking into consideration the concerns of women themselves, which would appear to render invalid such questions as "What is life all about?" or "Do I really want a child?" At the same time, there is a danger that science-oriented reproduction technology would encourage the prejudiced view that a family without children is unhappy, says the book. While placing too much emphasis on generalized discussion and the complex situations of individual women, the book is a useful and indispensable source on reproductive problems in Japan today.



Cover: Harada Heikichi

"Nōshi" to zōki ishoku [Brain Death and Organ Transplants]. Umehara Takeshi, ed. Asahi Shimbunsha, 1992. 194 × 133 mm. 383 pp. ¥1,800. ISBN 4-02-256390-7.



Cover: Tada Susumu

Contributing to the national debate in Japan over brain death and organ transplants, this book consists of essays by specialists in the fields of medicine, law, philosophy, and religion, either opposed to or cautious about the judgment that brain death means the end of life. The editor, Umehara Takeshi, is a well-known philosopher who has dealt with problems relating to religion and Japanese culture in unique perspectives.

Affairs related to death are deeply rooted in culture. The Chinese government recently established a law prohibiting burial and making cremation the rule, only to trigger a rash of suicides prior to the law's enactment by elderly persons who feared their souls would perish during cremation. Umehara says that equating brain death with death of the body and permitting organ transplants shows a lack of "awe toward life" and means the human body is regarded merely as a machine. The issue, he argues, demonstrates the dilemma posed by the dualism of Cartesian rationalism. *Brain Death and Organ Transplants* presents the authors' views on related problems such as potential unfairness in access to organs arising from inequities in economic resources, and growing distrust in the medical profession, showing that the brain death issue will not be easy to settle.

Shinanai karada [Immortal Body]. Nomura Susumu. Bungei Shunjū, 1993. 193 × 133 mm. 311 pp. ¥1,600. ISBN 4-16-34723-4.

One of humanity's unending dreams is of a body that does not age or die, and this book, by an active young freelance journalist, examines the directions the search for immortality has led modern medicine. It consists of six studies based on interviews with patients and doctors as well as documentary research on developments at the forefront of medical science. The themes dealt with are somewhat controversial and on the fringes of orthodox medicine: sex change surgery; anorexia and hyperphagia; cosmetic surgery among young men; Alzheimer's disease in the country with the world's highest longevity rate; and freezing of fertilized eggs and microfertilization. This book provides in-depth discussion based on careful research and interviews of topics that are ordinarily discussed out of superficial curiosity in the media. Filled with skillful portrayals of human character and affairs in the medical profession, it attempts to identify new Japanese views on life and death, at a time when both are very much under the control of high technology and no longer a visible part of daily life.



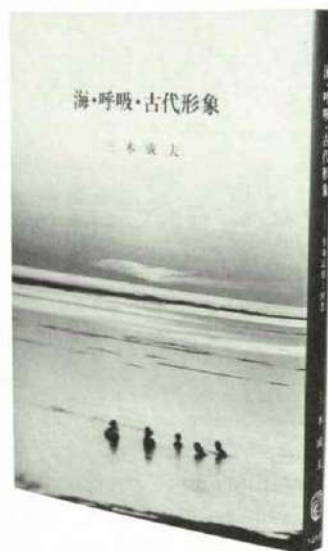
Cover: Sakata Masanori

Umi, kokyū, kodai keishō [The Sea, Breathing, and Ancient Images].

Miki Shigeo. Ubusuna Shoin, 1992. 216 × 151 mm. 236 pp. ¥2,500. ISBN 4-900470-06-6.

This is a truly eye-opening book about the human body and its legacy of antiquity. The author was a specialist in anatomy and human morphological development who passed away in 1987. *The Sea, Breathing, and Ancient Images* is a collection of published articles, lectures, and other writings. It traces the flow of time as inscribed in the human anatomy, including even the development of the spirit or mind. Each part of the book reflects the author's profound insight and original thinking, and the style is readable and erudite, offering the pleasures of fine expository prose.

Author Miki apparently could not disguise his skepticism about the so-called empirical science of modern times, and expresses sympathy with Goethe, who hypothesized the prototype of all plant life, as is only natural for a scholar who emphasizes speculation and the intuition deriving from it.



Cover: Ubusuna Shoin Editorial Department

LITERATURE AND LANGUAGE

Bungaku toshite no haiku [Haiku as Literature]. Aeba Takao. Ozawa Shoten, 1993. 195 × 133 mm. 262 pp. ¥2,060.

Haiku, Japan's traditional poetic form consisting of 17 syllables in verses of 5-7-5, appears to be very simple even for beginners, and it is, in fact, a literary genre with a very broad popular following in Japan. The typical pattern of haiku appreciation centers around privately organized societies which hold haiku parties where poems are composed and read and critiques exchanged among members. Literary critic Aeba points out that haiku composed in such a sheltered environment (exchange between groups is rare) are usually subject to no more than the mutual compliments of group members, and criticism, usually limited to problems of technical execution, never reaches the rigorous standards of fiction or other genres with a broader public audience.



Cover: Ozawa Shoten Editorial Department

Conscious that haiku represent very highly concentrated literary qualities, the author presents the works of twenty-three haiku masters and explicates them by author, ignoring their individual affiliations within the formal haiku world. Haiku present the essence of human life in such condensed form that they are comparable to short novels or essays. The author unravels the profundities of life and human nature embedded in the seventeen-syllable verses, which can be described as the heartland of the Japanese mentality.

Noda Hideki no hikokugo [Noda Hideki's Non-"National Language"].

Noda Hideki. Madara Shoten, 1993. 188 × 116 mm. 102 pp. ¥980.

For Japanese students, the formal study of Japanese, called *kokugo* ("the national language") begins as soon as they enter elementary school and continues throughout junior and senior high school, and the way it is taught leaves many with a sense of stiff formality towards their own language that pursues them throughout their lives. In this work playwright, stage director, and actor Noda Hideki delivers a searing attack on present-day Japanese language education, which he says gives students only a superficial sense of the language and offers no hope of access to its inner beauties. Words communicate much more than formal linguistic meaning, but school education is aimed solely at this formal meaning, ignoring the multifaceted nature of language and tending to view the web of semantic variation as impurity that must be forcefully removed for the sake of "proper" education. The author exposes the deceptive nature of language by dividing words into two categories; "words that communicate directly and straightforwardly," and "words whose ring indirectly stimulates the human psyche." Based on a series of lectures presented on television, the book showcases the author's talent for free and imaginative use of the language. The work is also a form of criticism—in terms of the language—of Japan's modernization process since the Meiji period.



Cover: Amano Yūkichi

FICTION

Jiyū o warera ni [Give Us Freedom]. Inoue Mitsuharu. Kōdansha, 1992.

194 × 135 mm. 358 pp. ¥2,500. ISBN 4-06-203788-2.

This is a posthumously published work by Inoue, who passed away in May 1992. He was an author whose gaze was consistently directed at people on the lower rungs of society struggling under oppression and discrimination, and whose fiction invariably dealt with social issues. The novel is set in the year 2001, at the Seihō Open Penitentiary where 400 prisoners are interned; it is a prison established in 1996 on the island of Seihō, modeled after a facility in Scandinavia. Incorporating a wide variety of writing styles, including memoirs and interviews, poems, letters, and wills, the author depicts the lives of a group of people who have committed crimes in quest of freedom: the star of a theater troupe who stabs his wife's adulterer to death on stage, a writer who murders the corrupt board chairman of a hospital.



Cover: Tamura Yoshiya

Saddled with complicated tangles of dark and troubling themes like anti-authoritarianism and anarchism, crime, aging homosexuality, prejudice, leader-follower relationships in new religions, each prisoner struggles to hold his own against the prison as a machine of oppression.

The author intended to further polish this work for publication in book form following its serial publication in a magazine, but fell ill

before that was possible. So the book ends without providing any solutions to the problems of human freedom in the twenty-first century.

Onnazakari [Woman in Her Prime]. Maruya Saiichi. Bungei Shunjū, 1993. 194 × 134 mm. 438 pp. ¥1,700. ISBN 4-16-313680-0.

This is a new work by an author of several daring novels of social critique, including *Tatta hitori no hanran* [A Revolution of One] and *Uragoe de utae Kimigayo* [Sing the Japanese National Anthem in Falsetto]. Popular since it first went on sale, it has remained among the bestsellers. The story is about a high-powered woman reporter who becomes an editorial writer for a major newspaper and uses her wits and connections as weapons to fight against the political pressures brought to bear on her as the result of one of her editorials. The choice of such a protagonist alone promises absorbing reading, since the Japanese newspaper industry, known as one of the last bastions of male chauvinism, is notoriously passive about creating a positive environment for the women working in its ranks. The obvious status of the title aside, an editorial writer is perceived as the spokesperson of a newspaper, so a talented woman who has made it this far obviously faces considerable pressures both large and small. What the author wants to discuss, however, is the structure in Japanese society based on the sending and receiving of gifts of various kinds. The leitmotif that pervades the whole work is the "magic" power of gift giving that moves the society and politics. It is a clever book that examines core



Cover: Wada Makoto

themes of Japanese society through the lens of the latest trends in popular manners.

Sannin kankei [Three-cornered Relationship]. Tawada Yōko. Kōdansha, 1992. 194 × 130 mm. 188 pp. ¥1,200. ISBN 4-06-205789-1.

Author Tawada won this spring's Akutagawa Prize for her novel "Inumuko-iri" [The Dog Bridegroom] which is reminiscent of the folktales of marriages outside the species. This book contains the author's first work, "Kakato o nakushite" [Lost Heels], and the title novel.



Cover: Motoyama Yoshiharu

"Lost Heels," written in the first person, is the story of a woman who marries "outside" her kind and goes to visit her husband's country. The "I" duly take up a curious newlywed life with this husband whose real nature she doesn't know in a town in a strange country, but in this town, she is continually ogled as a stranger by those around her. Her husband, having also married "outside," seems to be in the next room, but, as if refusing to be seen, his presence only makes itself known to the protagonist at night in her sleep, and even then, it is impossible to distinguish dream from reality. The town, too, is an alien world like the sea, in which the "I" is an anomalous entity, as was the fisherman who rescued a beached sea turtle and was invited in return to live in the palace of the king of the deep in the well-known Japanese folktale.

"Three-cornered Relationship" is another novel full of bizarre situations. Tawada depicts the insecurity of an existence that drifts above reality in prose that is both delicate and evocative; she is an author we will hear more of.

Shiotsubo no saji [Spoon in the Salt Cellar]. Kurumatani Chōkitsu. Shinchōsha, 1993. 197 × 137 mm. 268 pp. ¥2,000. ISBN 4-10-388401-0.

Spoon in the Salt Cellar belongs to the *shishōsetsu*, or "I novel" genre of Japanese literature in which the author relates thoughts and feelings against the backdrop of the personal experiences from which they arise.



Cover: Kurumatani Chōkitsu

Kurumatani is a new writer publishing his first collection, but the six stories included represent the labor of two decades of the author's life between the ages of twenty-seven and forty-seven. While his output has not been prolific, he has a small but close following. The author seemingly lived the last twenty years as if expressly to produce these six works, writing that "I decided to dig a dry well within myself using twenty-six thousand sheets of manuscript paper." Indeed, the collection seems to literally exude the blood of the soul-searching required to wring them from the over ten million characters of Kurumatani's drafts.

In the title work, the author delves into his roots in the town of his birthplace, his kin and immediate family using as a backdrop an uncle's suicide. His style is heavy and penetrating, expressed with piercing intensity in language refined and polished many times over, that confronts the reader with the almost terrifying gloom of human existence. The postscript stipulates: "This is to be published as a posthumous work before my death." Its stage is set in a rural village in premodern times, the primal landscape of all Japanese in the not-so-distant past.

Events and Trends

Seven-Eleven Becomes Largest Book Retailer

The 24-hour convenience store Seven-Eleven is about to become Japan's largest book retailer, as the chain's total sales of paperbacks and magazines in FY1992 topped 100 billion yen. Book sales at other convenience store chains is also growing steadily: at Lawson an estimated ¥67 billion, at Family Mart ¥35 billion, and at Sunkus ¥14 billion. By comparison, sales at Kinokuniya, the country's largest bookstore, stood at ¥93 billion.

Printed matter sales at convenience stores have been growing by more than ten percent annually for the past ten years. In 1982, they accounted for only 2.8 percent of the total, but in 1991 had risen to 16.0 percent, indicating that Japanese have formed the new habit of buying magazines, newspapers, and the occasional book in convenience stores along with prepared lunches and sundry goods.

The secret of the convenience stores' success is the POS (point-of-sales) system that records sales data for all stores whenever a sale is made. This allows the stores to market only those books and magazines that sell well. Out-of-date magazines are removed from the racks even before the next issue appears. Seven-Eleven's strategy stresses quick response to consumer needs.

As convenience stores become a strong channel for bookselling, publishers are designing magazine covers and book jackets to stand out on store racks and keeping prices low to appeal to the impulse buyers who account for a large proportion of convenience store customers.

Large booksellers have not been overly affected by the convenience store sales boom. The comment of management at Kinokuniya, 90 percent of whose sales consists of books is that "Our customers are readers, not consumers." The new competition is felt most keenly by smaller, individually-owned bookstores,

which rely on magazines for 70 percent of overall sales, and over the past few years, about one thousand small bookshops have gone out of business annually. The success of book sales in convenience stores, where prompt service and efficiency is foremost, is certain to have a strong impact on Japan's publishing culture.

WWII History As Fiction

The topic of war, and in particular World War II, while not taboo in Japanese publishing circles, has always been considered difficult to handle. A number of recently published "simulation novels" set during World War II, however, are enjoying unprecedented popularity. This new genre simulates the outcome of history if better alternatives had been chosen.

Since 1945, Japanese have repeated the "war is evil" and "we are against war" refrains, but tended to avoid looking directly at the mechanisms of war. The success of simulated war tales seems to reflect a change in Japanese attitudes as they grapple with the meaning of internationalization amid the turmoil of the post-Cold War structure. High school and university students are apparently reading these books as an alternative to modern history textbooks.

The medium-sized publisher Tokuma Shoten touched off the boom in December 1991 with Volume 1 of *Konpeki no kantai* [The Azure Fleet]. Nine volumes had been published by March 1993, each with a very large first printing of 200,000 (compared to the usual initial run of 20,000-30,000 for books of this genre). Similar works put out subsequently by major publishers are also recording steady sales of between 60,000 and 90,000 copies.

Konpeki no kantai contains no battle scenes. It describes Japan during World War II and the years leading up to the war (1930 to 1940s) and simulates the outcome if Japan had chosen different options.

Tokuma Shoten reports that the main readers of the series are white-collar workers in their late twenties and early thirties, and people in their late teens or late thirties. Letters to

the publisher from high school and university students say that the book helped them understand far better than through classes at school why Japan plunged into a senseless war.

Changing Values Amid Recession

In Japan of the 1980s, the high consumption decade, "frugality" and "simplicity" were considered virtually passé. Now a recent spate of books describing people of the Edo period (1603-1867) who lived by these values have become best-sellers, a clear manifestation of how attitudes have changed under the sluggish economy and in the wake of a succession of political scandals.

One such title is *Shōsetsu Uesugi Yōzan* [Uesugi Yōzan: A Novel], a fictional biography by Dōmon Fuyuji of the lord of the Yonezawa domain during the mid-Edo period. Yōzan is well known for his simple way of life and success in reviving the flagging fortunes of his domain by promoting frugality and developing industry.

Published in 1983, the book sold only 120,000 copies during its first eight years. Sales suddenly took off in 1992, when 150,000 copies were sold in just one year. A further 150,000 were sold in the first three months of 1993 alone. Sales jumped in particular after a Japanese TV program on John F. Kennedy aired in fall 1992 mentioned that Yōzan was the Japanese Kennedy held in highest esteem. After the bubble of an overheated economy burst, Japanese readers seem to have found a model for survival in Yōzan's life and entrepreneurial methods, and many corporations are incorporating the book in their in-house worker training reading programs.

Another best-seller is *Seihin no shisō* [Philosophies of Deliberate Simplicity] by Nakano Kōji, a collection of essays on the lives of famous Edo period priest Ryōkan, the haiku poets Saigyō and Bashō, and others who reduced living to the bare essentials. This work, warning against the dangers of excessive materialism in a mass consumption society, has sold 330,000 copies since it came out earlier this year. Initially popular mainly among readers in their 50s, it is now attracting younger readers as

well. The publisher reports receiving fifty bulk orders from companies buying the book for employees.

Book Retailers' Margin Boosted

The Japan Federation of Commercial Cooperatives of Bookstores (Nisshoren) began a nationwide movement in spring 1992 to raise bookstores' margin to 25 percent from the current 23 percent for magazines and 20-21 percent for books. In April 1993 a number of major publishers announced in response that they would lower their wholesale prices for the first time in twenty years. Book retailers have long protested these figures in view of the average gross margin of 31.3 percent for all retailers.

The effects of recession, distribution problems, and competition from convenience stores have meant difficult times for small and medium-sized bookstores. Statistics from the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) show that for the first time since 1945, the number of bookstores declined, from 28,216 in 1988 to 27,804 in 1991.

Kōdansha, Japan's largest publisher, was the first to cut wholesale prices in response to pressure from book retailers, dropping its share from around 70 percent of retail prices to 69 percent across the board, for books only. This will add an extra 1 percent to bookstores' margin (book distributors take 8 percent). Kadokawa Shoten has announced that beginning in January 1994 it will lower the wholesale price of magazines 2 percent, and other publishers are expected to make similar moves. It is not yet known whether this cut in wholesale prices is enough to improve bookstores' margins and ensure their survival.

Boom in 3-D Images

At first glance, the pages of a new style of publication appear covered with abstract, nonsensical designs, but held at the appropriate angle, they display stereogram letters and illustrations that look three-dimensional because of the slight variations in images perceived by the left and right eyes.

Collections of such stereograms

are now bestsellers. *Majikku Ai* [Magic Eye], published in November 1992 (Wani Books, ¥1,500) had sold 180,000 copies, and *CG Sutereo-guramu* [CG Stereogram], (Shōgakukan, ¥1,800) 190,000 copies, by January 1993. The books proved so popular that some bookstores ran out of stock temporarily. Books and puzzle collections incorporate 3-D illustrative material, and there are also plans to use them on prepaid telephone cards and stationery items, so book publishers, toy and stationery manufacturers and other industries are gearing up for a full-fledged stereogram boom.



Electronic Book Publishing

The electronic book publishing industry began its real take-off this year. When the first electronic books appeared three years ago, the only device for reading them was a player made by Sony, but in 1992 both Sanyo and Matsushita Electric put models on the market, stimulating acquisition by users. Currently, the hardware is available from nine makers, and many more are developing new models for the market.

The scale of the industry is still small, amounting to only about ¥6 billion combining both hardware and software, but by 1995 is estimated to grow to over ¥120 billion. The development of high performance hardware available at reasonable cost has added real impetus to the electronic book business, and the software now records not only tex-

tual images but visual and audio features as well. This year's models are far superior in function to last year's, and the price of players has fallen sharply from around ¥70,000 to the 40,000 yen bracket.

These advances have spurred the development of software, now beginning to grow both in quantity and content. There are now about 151 titles on disc on the market and the number is expected to rise to over 200 during 1993. The early electronic books were mainly dictionaries, but more recent items deal with health, recreation, cooking, and even fortune-telling, helping to enhance user interest. The best-selling title is Iwanami Shoten's *Kōjien*, Japan's most commonly used household dictionary, of which 40,000 copies on disc have sold of the third and fourth editions. Some of the software exploits the unique features of electronic publishing, such as horse race data for racing fans updated quarterly, an edition of the best-selling *Manga Nihon keizai nyūmon* [Cartoon Introduction to the Japanese Economy] with an English sound track for multi-media use, practical reference works on etiquette and manners, and how to make speeches at parties and wedding receptions, as well as "home clinic" software that tells how you can diagnose your own health. The English language textbooks for junior high schools were also published in electronic book format, appearing on the market in April.

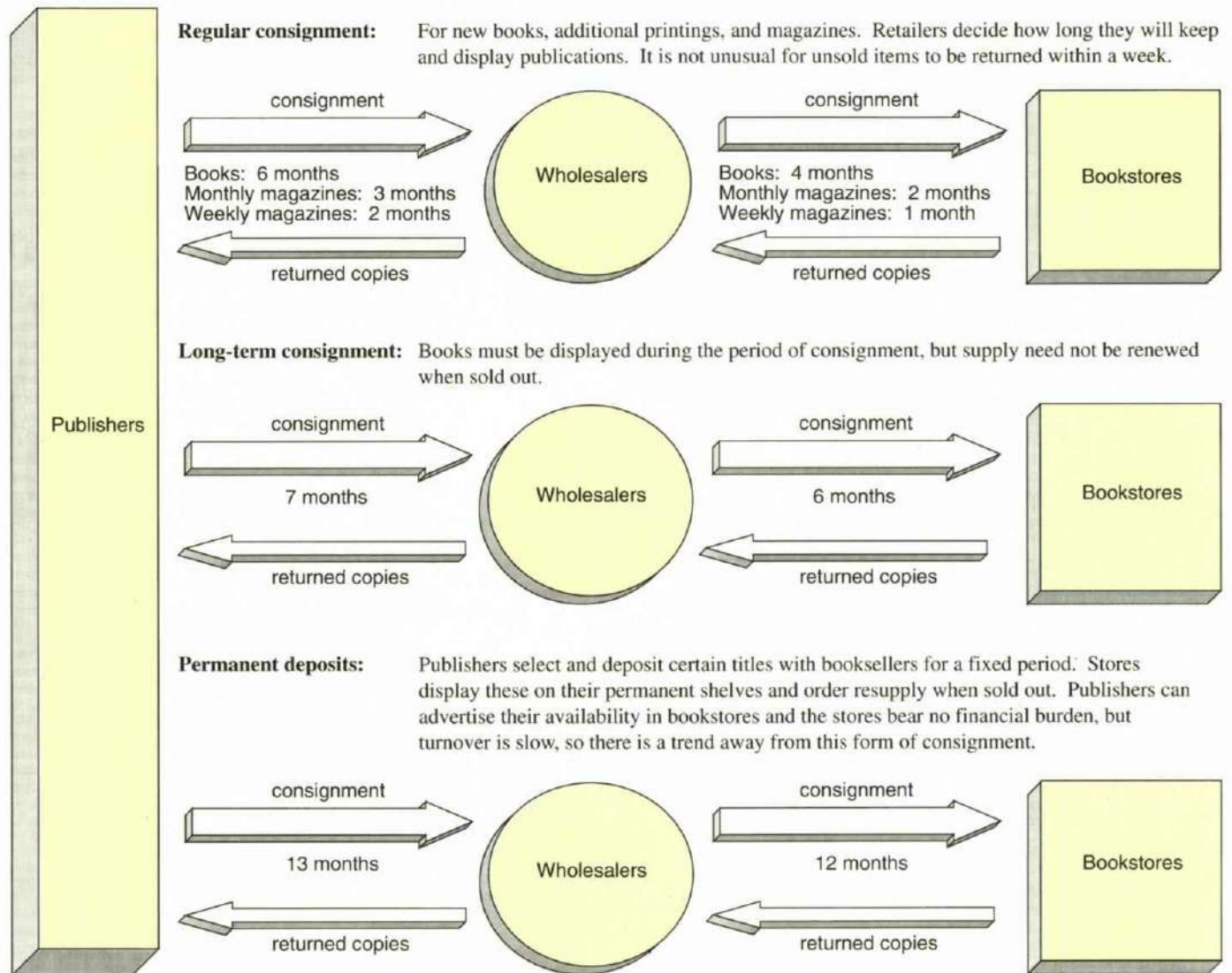
Most electronic books are based on previously published books, and as the cost of creating the software goes down, the interest of publishers themselves in this new genre is increasing. Today's users of electronic books are chiefly men between their thirties and fifties in the world of business, so publishers are certain to stress the development of titles to promote their use among women and young people, and for many more diversified uses.

Publishing Sales System in Japan

(Books are sold through two main systems: consignment and purchase.)

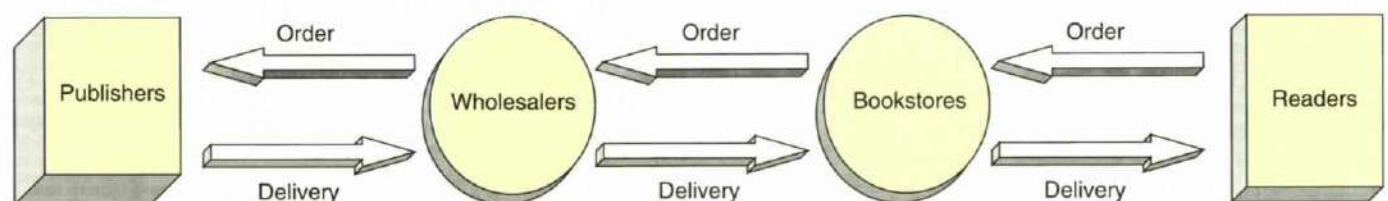
Consignment

Publications are distributed to retailers, sold for a fixed period and the unsold copies returned to the wholesaler. Roughly 99 percent of books and magazines sold through wholesalers are taken on consignment. The return rate for books was 34 percent and for magazines, 20.7 percent (calculated on price basis) in 1990.



Purchase

The wholesaler purchases books or magazines directly from the publisher and the bookstore purchases directly from the wholesaler. For special-order titles and non-returnable items (deluxe editions, medical books, imported books, collected works and series).



Retail Price Maintenance Agreement: Books are exempt from the Fair Trade Act stipulation that producers may not fix the prices of their products, and the retailers generally sell books and magazines at prices fixed by publishers.