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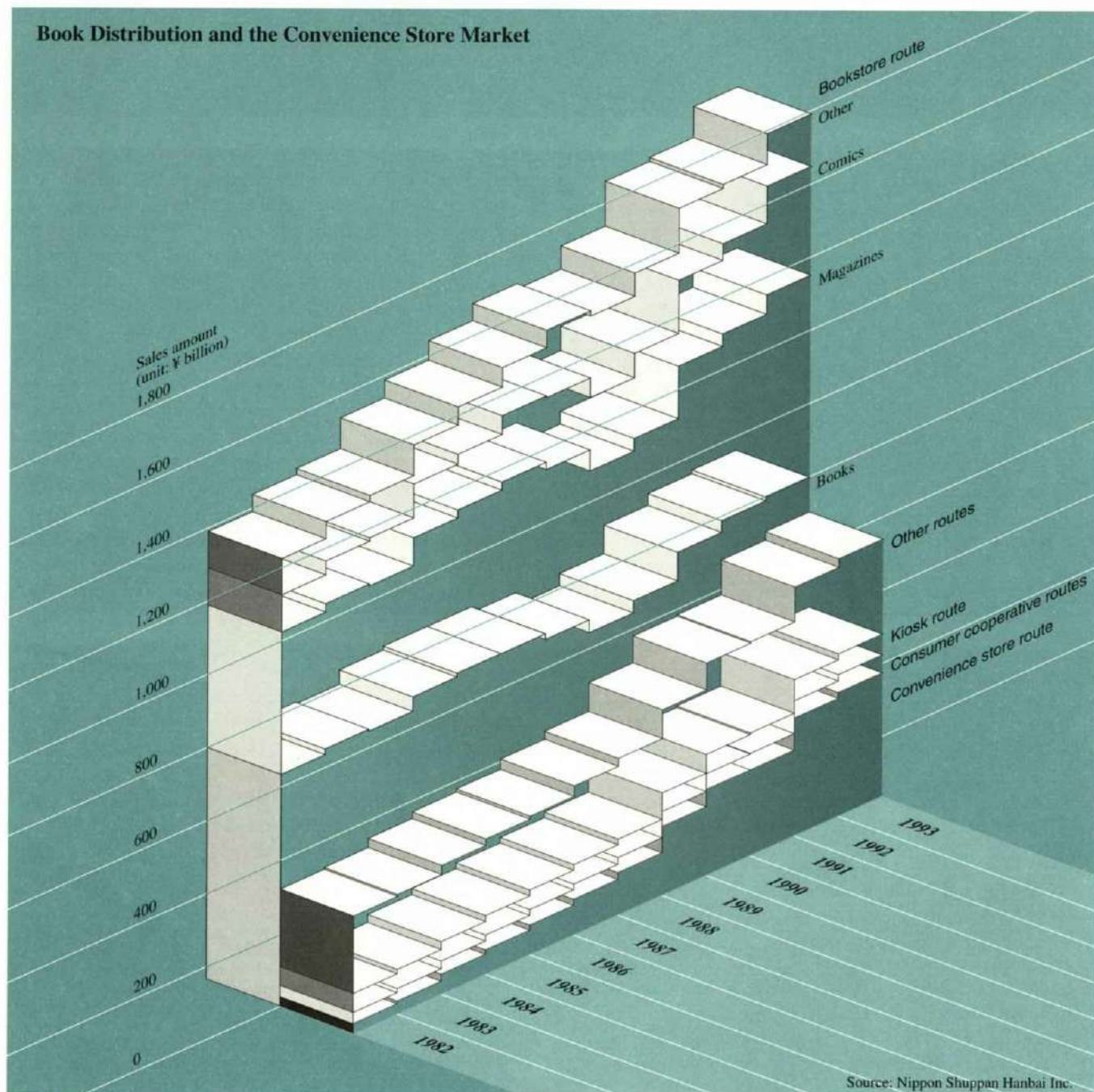
# Japanese Book News

Traditional Japanese Poetry

Insights on the City

Japanese Books in the Netherlands/Belgium

Book Distribution and the Convenience Store Market



Source: Nippon Shuppan Hanbai Inc.



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

Haiku and tanka, the traditional poems capable of expressing a wealth of meaning in highly distilled language that some think of mainly as curiosities or relics of antiquity, represent a broad-based and vigorous genre in Japan today. Poet Akitsu Ei outlines the beginnings of these short forms going back to their origin in imperial court culture and bringing us up to date on the latest trends evolving under the impact of feminism and mass culture. With tens of thousands of lay haiku and tanka connoisseurs both writing poems and reading anthologies, books of and about poetry make up a lively corner of the publishing world.

The powerful earthquake that struck the city of Kobe and the surrounding area on January 17, causing widespread destruction and destroying the homes of more than 220,000 people has forced Japanese to rethink all their old assumptions about what a city is and ought to be. The city's complex character has long been studied and analyzed separately by sociologists, geographers, historians, economists, and scholars in many other sciences. More recently, however, illuminating advances are being made in interdisciplinary research aimed at a more comprehensive, multi-faceted understanding of the city. Associate professor Yoshimi Shun'ya of the University of Tokyo's Institute of Socio-Information and Communication Studies outlines recent trends in writing on the city, not simply as a complex of institutions and functions but as a place with meaning for those who live there.

This issue's look at the reception of Japanese books in the Netherlands/Belgium is by long-time resident of Japan James N. Westerhoven who is a translator of many Japanese books into his native Dutch language.

The back cover features our fifth series of introductions to Japanese publishers, this time presenting three long-established presses known for encyclopedias and other multi-volume works.

Cover: This chart shows the market share for leading sales routes for books and magazines in Japan and sales trends for different types of publications sold through bookstores, which handle the largest share. Convenience stores, where only 1.7 percent of books and magazines were sold in 1982 (¥26 billion), accounted for upward of 13.5 percent (¥336.6 billion) in 1993. So important has this sales route become that publishers now plan book and magazine projects aimed specifically at the convenience store market.

Appearing first in the 1970s, convenience stores are now well established in the urban landscape. Open either around the clock or until very late at night, they cater especially to younger people, who seek immediate satisfaction of consumer needs.



# Traditional Japanese Poetry: Feminized and Massified

Akitsu Ei

The poetic form known today as *tanka* was perfected about 1,300 years ago, at a time when Japan became a unified state ruled by a centralized government under a continuous line of emperors. In order to consolidate its authority, the imperial court actively transplanted the advanced culture and institutions of Tang China, which required the knowledge of Chinese language and literature. Chinese ideographs were introduced to provide the Japanese language with its first systematic orthography, and courtiers enthusiastically composed poems. Stimulated by this cultural ferment, the poet Kakinomoto no Hitomaro developed the indigenous genre of *tanka*, elevating it to the status of fine literature. Known as *Yamato uta*, or “poems of Yamato,” *tanka* expressed a uniquely Japanese spirit distinct from the Chinese poetic idiom. It should be noted, however, that long before Hitomaro brought the genre to prominence, many talented women poets contributed to its evolution, so its fundamental character firmly reflects this female imprint.

During the Heian period, in 905, the first imperial anthology of *tanka* poems was compiled. Called the *Kokinshū*, it became the standard for the Japanese aesthetic sensibility. As a genre, *tanka* had its ups and downs, but was passed on by the imperial court and the nobility through the centuries as an orthodox literary form. During the medieval age, the political power of the aristocracy declined with the ascendancy of the warrior class, and economic development gradually transformed the merchant class into a vital social force. Ossified in its set form, *tanka* was soon eclipsed by new forms of poetry. Its traditional lines of five, seven, five, seven, and seven syllables were broken up, with the first three lines and the last two lines respectively grouped together for use in composing *renga* or linked verse. This separation led to the birth of *haikai*, which were verses featuring parody and humor drawing on references to daily life. *Haikai*, the prototype for modern *haiku*, was part of the subculture of the prosperous merchant class.

Although the emergence of the poet Matsuo Bashō (1644–94) enabled the lowly *haikai* to claim a place as a legitimate literary form, by the Meiji Restoration in 1868, the vitality had gone out of both *tanka* and *haiku*. Still, despite the inundation of Western culture that flooded the country in the latter nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, these traditional forms proved resilient, and revived in new and modern forms that are still popular today.

## History's Legacy

Because of their long history, which I have only briefly outlined here, *tanka* and *haiku* have certain inherent problems not shared by other genres, such as the novel or literary criticism.

To begin with, *tanka* have been closely associated with the Japanese imperial institution, a fact that often gives

rise to controversy. In her book, *Tanka to tennōsei* [*Tanka and the Imperial System*] (Fūbaisha, 1988), Uchino Mitsuko chronicles the censorship and control over freedom of speech exercised by the authorities from before World War II to the present day, and examines how closely modern *tanka* poets have identified themselves with the imperial system, based on a wealth of careful research. In prewar Japan, the *tanka* form was extolled because of its usefulness in heightening the martial spirit of the populace and in indoctrination. The prominent *tanka* poets of the period cooperated in the war effort by composing hymns of praise to the emperor and war poems designed to enhance popular morale. Uchino points out that although thorough soul-searching among *tanka* poets ensued from Japan's defeat, we see today the revival of a similar pattern of relationships with the imperial household that existed before the war.

Another work of note is the *Taiwan Man'yōshū* (Shūeisha, 1994), an anthology of *tanka* poetry compiled by Kohō Banri and written by Taiwanese poets who were educated before or during the war, when Taiwan was a Japanese colony. This work has become something of a cause célèbre among the Japanese. I look with mixed emotions upon the fond attachment Taiwanese poets have developed for the *Man'yōshū*, an eighth century collection of poetry people of the colonies were forced to learn to fan their martial spirit and promote ideological uniformity. The fact that Taiwanese poets of the prewar generation are studying the *tanka* form for their own self-expression is a bit unsettling.

One characteristic shared by *tanka* and *haiku* is their brevity. They can be composed with relatively little effort by virtually anyone, and very often those who read the poems also write them. Rather than being a solitary literary pursuit, *tanka* and *haiku* have a competitive, playful aspect to them, in that poets often gather in a place where they produce their verses and comment on each other's work. Because of this, verses can easily be left empty of a deeper poetic spirit and become over-crafted or excessively clever. Of course, it is also possible to interpret the brevity and gregariousness of *tanka* and *haiku* not as a drawback, but as a quality that could help writers break through the dead end that currently confronts modern literature.

In his book, *Haiku to iu asobi—kukai no kūkan* [The Game Called *Haiku*] (Iwanami Shinsho, 1991), Kobayashi Kyōji gives a detailed description of the atmosphere surrounding a gathering of eight eminent *haiku* poets, diverse in age and background. Readers are not only given insights into the game-like aspects of *haiku*, but also a chance to enjoy a thorough introduction to the creative process of *haiku*, which differs entirely from the concepts of modern Western literature. Despite minor differences, poetry meetings held by *tanka* writers operate in essentially the same way.



Today, countless people read and/or compose tanka and haiku poetry through a variety of media. They appear in special columns in newspapers and magazines; are taught through correspondence courses, community college classes; and exchanged through poetry society journals. It is estimated that about 10 million people enjoy haiku as a pastime, while perhaps a fifth that number compose tanka. Of these, a small number of professionals approach their work as literature, and, as accredited members of the haiku or tanka world, they provide guidance to their followers.

Tanka and haiku poets are quite elderly, and perhaps 70 to 80 percent of them are women. The tremendous popularity of haiku and tanka and the preponderance of female poets, however, are phenomena that have grown pronounced only in the past ten to twenty years.

Previously, it was the intellectual class (predominantly male and trained in Western academic disciplines) who bore the banner of modern Japanese haiku and tanka. Today, these poetic forms are primarily supported by women, who are increasingly contributing as professional poets, as well. This trend is particularly evident for tanka, but the same applies to haiku.

Even when men dominated the modern tanka field, excellent women poets would emerge from time to time. However, they were always treated as a special category by the male poets, while they passively submitted themselves to male criticism of their work. The ground-breaking event that forever changed this stalemate was a symposium led in 1984 by four women in their thirties (Kōno Yūko, Akitsu Ei, Michiura Motoko, and Nagai Yōko), at which future directions for female tanka poetry were debated. Until that time, women had rarely even been invited to sit on discussion panels, and no theoretical views or opinions of any kind were expected of them by the male establishment.

### New Directions

From today's vantage point, it is clear that three basic directions for women's tanka surfaced at that symposium. The first direction is most commonly found among poets a generation older than the symposium participants, and takes as its norm the style of the female poetry of the *Kokinshū* period. Baba Akiko's *Tanka e no shōtai* [An Invitation to Tanka] (Yomiuri Shimbunsha, 1987) is a leading example of this approach. Though essentially a beginner's guide to tanka poetry, it also urges, under the heading "Femininity vs. Masculinity" (the Edo-period National Learning scholar Kamo no Mabuchi described the poetry of the *Kokinshū* as feminine and that of the *Man'yōshū* as masculine), the reinstatement of "feminine poetic language" and an "aesthetic of the ambiguous," two characteristics of *Kokinshū* poetry.

The second direction involves an active affirmation of such female experiences as giving birth, raising children, and taking care of the home. Poetry of this kind is based on motherhood, and emanated from the primitive and natural depth of a woman's body. Striking examples include Kōno Yūko's poetry collections *Hirugao* [Convolutus] (Tanka Shimbunsha, 1977) and *Sakura mori* [Cherry Forest] (Sōdōsha, 1981).

In contrast, poets following the third direction have

chosen not to rely on distinctively feminine values or characteristics, and rejected the role of women as objects of worship or mystical belief. Instead, they seek a new kind of female poetry that is free from the constraints of gender. This direction is related to the feminist movement that began in the 1960s worldwide. Representative of this type of poetry are my own anthologies, including *Shimokuren made, Fūzetsu* [To the Purple Magnolia, The Tongue of the Wind] (Tanka Kenkyūsha, 1979) and *Ten no ahen* [Opium of Heaven] (Fushiki Shoin, 1984).

Before the fruits of the women's tanka symposium had fully matured, Tawara Machi's *Sarada kinembi* [Our Salad Anniversary] (Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 1987) hit the mass media, becoming a surprise best-seller and a popular phenomenon that transcended the confines of the tanka world. This and similar collections, such as *Sant saido appu* [Sunny-side Up] (Gan Shokan, 1988) by Katō Jirō and *Shinjikēto* [Syndicate] (Chūseikisha, 1990) by Homura Hiroshi reflect the tastes of the younger generation, making use of an ordinary conversational style that is plain, light, and airy.

The meaning of the *Our Salad Anniversary* phenomenon can be interpreted in many ways, but one thing it certainly indicates is that Japan's highly developed capitalism has spawned a consumer society with a clearly defined stratum of people who enjoy consumption for its own sake. In other words, poets have begun to produce work aimed at satisfying a sensibility that finds intrinsic pleasure in consumption. They are consciously working to create tanka that are easy-to-understand, diverting, stylish, and light, and that do not make excessive demands on the reader.

These tendencies have caused confusion regarding the compositional rules for contemporary tanka that had become rigid and ossified over the years. Various taboos that once regulated the creative process have been swept away, and the absence of absolute values has thrown the tanka world into a confused muddle from which it has yet to emerge.

Despite the chaos, many women, particularly those in their thirties and forties, are producing tanka of tremendous vitality, and the number of women writing tanka criticism is on the rise. Although the world of haiku has a support base that is 80 percent female and boasts a growing number of accomplished women poets, it seems to be less blessed with notable work by women than that of tanka. Whereas many anthologies of young female tanka poets have been published, such as *Bessatsu Bungei tokuhon joryū sakka* [Women's Poets (extra number of *Bungei tokuhon*)] (Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 1988), there has been few anthologies of women haiku poets. An issue of greater relevance for haiku is its massification. Poetry circles of complete amateurs, who gather to amuse themselves with word games, are mushrooming.

For the past few years it has often been pointed out that despite its apparent flourishing, haiku is actually becoming formalized, and devoid of substance and vitality, is moving into a dead end, as is tanka. Evidence of this trend is found in *Gendai no haiku* [Modern Haiku] (Kōdansha, 1993), an anthology of modern haiku poetry compiled by Hirai Terutoshi. After reading through this work, I am left with the impression that haiku of the Mei-



ji, Taishō, and Shōwa periods (1868 to 1989), regardless of the poet's gender, is far more substantive and vibrant than the haiku being composed today.

With the framework of modernity collapsing, tanka and haiku are suffering the labor pains, so to speak, of giving birth to new forms. Like many fields of endeavor, neither genre is exempt from the task of reevaluating the last 100 years of modern development. Poets have reached the point where they have no choice but to grope their way forward any way they can. To illustrate this, one can point to attempts to find alternatives to the *saijiki* glossaries of words with seasonal connotations that were long the bibles of serious writers of haiku. In contemporary life, we are losing our sense of the natural seasons, so that new haiku anthologies organized around other types of key words are being tried. Natsuishi Ban'ya's *Gendai haiku kiwado jiten* [Dictionary of Key Words for Contemporary Haiku] (Rippū Shobō, 1990), which contains commentary on various key words, is one example of such efforts.

A retrospective anthology entitled *Tanka haiku senryū 101-nen* [One-Hundred-One Years of Tanka, Haiku, and Senryū] (October extra number of *Shinchō*, 1993) contains selections from the tanka, haiku, and *senryū* (satirical and humorous poetry of 5-7-5 syllable lines like haiku, that does not use seasonal words) genres, from anthologies published between 1892 and 1992. Japanese readers are fond of anthologies because of diversity of writing and writers they offer, following in the long tradition of anthologies of poems by imperial command.

Amid the massification and increasing female presence in the tanka and haiku worlds, I personally harbor great hopes for women poets. One concept that remains stubbornly in force even today is the idea that men are best suited to creating new styles, while women excel at imitating and disseminating those styles. It is my feeling that if women will ever lead the way in creating a new kind of tanka and haiku poetry that embodies a fresh, global perspective, now is the time. (*Akitsu Ei is a tanka poet.*)

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# Insight on the City

Yoshimi Shun'ya

Discussion on the city took an important turn in Japan in the late 1970s. Postwar urban research through the 1960s focused on the city as a functional system to be *engineered*, as a wasteland of human alienation, or as an intensely crowded place in contrast to the depopulated rural communities. From the latter half of the 1970s, however, studies based on a new approach began to appear, treating the city as a text with a complex of meaning for its residents and visitors and drawing on the perspectives of phenomenology, semiotics, and social history. Maeda Ai was a pioneer in this new methodology. In his now-classic work, *Toshi kukan no naka no bungaku* [Literature in the Context of Urban Space] (Chikuma Shobō, 1982), he presented an analysis of Higuchi Ichiyō's *Takekurabe* [Growing Up], set in an old, peripheral section of Tokyo in the early Meiji era (1868–1912), to show how time of two very different qualities—the festivals of local communities and those of the mercantile society—converges in urban children's world of play. He skillfully depicts the topological structure of the city and the transformation of the fields of meaning there through the juvenile realm that unfolds in the time sequences divided between these two types of festivals.

Maeda's works threw light on the rhetoric of space that changed at many levels as the modern city of Tokyo (formerly Edo) took shape during the Meiji period. He demonstrated how the *Edo hanjōki* [Record of Edo's Prosperity] written by Terakado Seiken (1796–1868), a late Tokugawa-period scholar of Chinese studies, and the *Tōkyō shinhanjōki* [New Record of Tokyo's Prosperity] authored by Hattori Bushō (1842–1908) during the early Meiji era differed sharply in the rhetoric of urban space used in the text. He describes the former "showing the insertion into the space of Edo of the dual rhythms of life known as *hare* (the special, festive, extraordinary) and *ke* (the ordinary, routine, mundane), as well as *asobi* (diversion, leisure) and *kurashi* (work and regular activities of living)." The latter, he says, represents the images of display rooms of a store packed with a wide variety of products acting as symbols of so-called civilization and enlightenment. In Hattori's work, Maeda says, "the visual images of items on display there translate themselves into a simple rhetoric of enumerating a series of nouns, the parallelisms in his classical Chinese style of writing serving as a device to articulate the contrastiveness of commodities." This new rhetoric reduces the diverse meanings things have for people simply to symbols of civilization. Such shifts in rhetoric reflected the changing logic underlying Tokyo's townscape.

## Through the Literary Lens

How did that perspective develop after Maeda? One important product of the 1980s in this regard was an analysis of the city in literary contexts by Matsuyama Iwao, *Rampo to Tōkyō* [Edogawa Rampo's Tokyo] (PARCO

Shuppan, 1984). Matsuyama examined from many angles the urban spaces of Tokyo in the 1920s depicted in the works of the renowned mystery writer Edogawa Rampo. He chronicles the ongoing changes in people's sensibilities through analysis of a sampling of Rampo's stories, such as "Yaneura no sanposha" [Attic Stroller], about a man who crawls up into the attic of the newly built rooming house where he lives and peeks through the ceiling on the privacy of the other residents there; "Oshie to tabisuru otoko" [A Man Traveling with Oshie Pictures] which offers glimpses of other worlds through a camera-like lens contraption; "Kagami jigoku" [Mirror Hell], describing a man who is so fascinated by lenses and mirrors that he builds a mirror room in which he ultimately destroys himself; and "Issun bōshi" [One-Inch Boy], which unfolds in the labyrinthine alleyways of Tokyo's old Honjo area with the popular entertainment district of Asakusa in the background. Matsuyama finds that Rampo was an extremely keen observer of the quality of the new senses of space afforded by the modern city.

This new development in urban research, involving analyses of the city from the perspective of literary texts, lost momentum toward the end of the eighties, as truly innovative studies capable of opening up broader horizons failed to appear. Remarkable among the few recent works of this kind is Imahashi Eiko's *Ito dōkei: Nihonjin no Pari* [Japanese Enchantment with Paris] (Kashiwa Shobō, 1993). This work takes up the French capital which is a frequent point of reference for modern Japanese intellectuals in their discussions of the city, and carefully examines the responses of prominent literary figures like Takamura Kōtarō, Shimazaki Tōson, Kaneko Mitsu-haru, and Nagai Kafū to Paris's urban space. The textual analysis approach first defines the city as an arena of experience, and then looks to literary works for photosensitive plates upon which the quality of urban experience is exposed. On the level of experience, at least, the urban spaces of modern Tokyo intersect with those of Paris, New York, and many other metropolises. Imahashi's book demonstrates the possibility of grasping the urban experience of modern Japanese in the context of international comparison.

Correlative to the textual discourse on the city, another trend in recent years has been the focus on centers of commercial and leisure activities, such as entertainment districts (*sakariba*), amusement parks, and department stores, in order to bring into clearer view the modern city as a locus of cultural accumulation. Since the mid-1980s, a number of works have appeared that directed attention at the development of mass culture in the *sakariba*, including my *Toshi no dramaturugi* [The Dramaturgy of the City] (Kōbundō, 1987), Hashizume Shin'ya's *Kurabu to Nihonjin* [Japanese and Clubs] (Gakugei Shuppansha, 1989), and Nagai Yoshikazu's *Shakō dansu to Nihonjin* [Japanese and Ballroom Dancing] (Shōbunsha, 1991).



My own book analyzes the transformations of Tokyo's entertainment quarters and identifies similarities between the shift from Asakusa as the center of popular entertainment to Ginza in the 1920s with the transition from Shinjuku to the Shibuya/Harajuku area in the 1970s, as linked to the mechanisms of urbanization in modern Japan. Hashizume focuses on the development of "clubs" as the major amusement facilities in Meiji Japan and describes how the traditions of urban recreation space were adapted to the ideas on social interaction introduced as part of the tide of Westernization. Nagai, likewise, illustrates how ballroom dancing, experienced by Meiji-era Japanese as an aspect of foreign culture, grew in the 1920s into popular fashion symbolic of urban modernism. All of these studies view the changes in entertainment culture in Japan's modern cities from an interdisciplinary perspective spanning sociology and historical research, and readily illuminate the nature of specific urban spaces.

A more recent development along similar lines is an active interest in research on the "department store culture" that began to flourish in the early twentieth century. Hattuda Tōru dealt with the evolution of the Meiji-era emporiums (*kankōba*) which became the prototype of the modern department store from the viewpoint of architectural space in *Toshi no Meiji* [The Cities of the Meiji Era] (Chikuma Shobō, 1981), but in *Hyakkaten no tanjō* [The Birth of the Japanese Department Store] (Sanseidō, 1993) he presents a comprehensive survey of urban spaces, from the establishment of the early Meiji-era *kankōba*, to the emergence of department stores in the early 1900s and their customer strategies, and the birth of department stores at railway terminals during the Taishō era. He also offers a detailed account of the process by which the facilities now considered indispensable in Japan's department stores—show windows, rest lounges, elevators and escalators, restaurants, rooftop gardens, and the like—helped to make these establishments central fixtures in family consumer culture in the cities after the Russo-Japanese War (1904–05).

Another notable product of department-store research is Kamino Yuki's *Shumi no tanjō* [The Advent of Modern Taste] (Keisō Shobō, 1994). Kamino focuses on the cultural strategy of the leading department store, Mitsukoshi, in her analysis of the promotion of "good taste" (*shumi*) that developed in post-Russo-Japanese War Japan. She notes that the word *shumi* suddenly began to appear everywhere in newspapers, magazines and daily conversation toward the end of the Meiji era. The Mitsukoshi Department Store made this byword the centerpiece of its campaign to orient popular consumer values in a particular direction. The book describes Mitsukoshi's activities during the Taishō era, especially the role played by its promotional magazines, from *Hanagoromo* to *Jikō* to *Mitsukoshi*, and the activities of the salon of scholarly and cultural leaders whose efforts helped to organize the store's various programs and events and disseminate "Mitsukoshi taste."

### Curiosities and Continuities

Not all the commercial and entertainment spaces of the cities were as clean, modern, and meticulously managed

as those of the department stores. Hashizume Shin'ya's *Meiji no meikyū toshi* [Labyrinthine Cities of the Meiji Era] (Heibonsha, 1990) took up the various spaces for curiosity shows in Japan's modern cities, but there are more recent works of interest. One is *Bijutsu to iu misemono* [Curiosity Shows Called Art] (Heibonsha, 1993) by Kinoshita Naoyuki. Going back to the life-size dolls (*ikiningyō*) and panorama scenes of early Meiji and the *aburay-jaya* (lit., oil painting tea houses) of the late Tokugawa and Restoration period (1850s and 1860s), Kinoshita's book sheds light on the subtle line that lies between sophisticated art and old-fashioned curiosity shows as the modern norms of aesthetics began to take shape in Japan. For example, focusing on the late-Tokugawa-period creator of life-size dolls Matsumoto Kisaburō, he discusses the lack of continuity between curiosity shows in the early-modern entertainment quarters and the realm of sculpture in modern art, as well as the continuity between the old *nishikie* polychrome woodblock prints, on the one hand, and the panoramas of Shimooka Renjō and the oil paintings of Takahashi Yuichi on the other. The venue where this delicate line between the curiosity shows and art began to shift occurred in the Okuyama section of Asakusa, in the exhibition halls of Ueno, and the galleries of Yasukuni Shrine.

Another book of similar theme is *Eisei tenrankai no yokubō* [The Lures of Medical Exhibitions] (Seikyūsha, 1994) by Tanaka Satoshi, who examines the history of hygiene and health-related exhibitions displaying models of the human body, mannequins showing symptoms of sexually-transmitted diseases, and specimens of parasitic worms and internal organs, clarifying the fascination with the grotesque that lurks behind modern people's interest in exhibitions.

A very recent publication in another area is Taki Kōji's *Toshi no seijigaku* [The Politics of the City] (Iwanami Shoten, 1994), which touches on the importance of examining commercial and entertainment-industry spaces in discussing the nature of the contemporary city. Taki believes that the main element that shapes cities is power, whether it is capital from outside, or the internal strength deriving from people's response to that external force. These various forces are all coordinated in the city and become incorporated into its game of symbols. The place where this process takes place is the city, and in the modern city, especially in its commercial and entertainment-industry spaces. The perspective of urban studies today is thus very broad, encompassing everything from curiosity show tents to department stores, in the attempt to clarify the workings of the powers that form the fabric of our contemporary cities.

One observation that may be made from this overview is that there is a need to further develop the perspectives gained in recent research on department stores and the insights drawn from study of the exhibitions of curious and foreign things going back to medieval times, while linking them with the textual analyses of the city.

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*The Netherlands/Belgium***Beyond Siebold and Sushi**

James N. Westerhoven

The vaunted longtime relationship between Japan and the Netherlands is a curious one. To the Dutch, Japan was not much more than a distant trading partner, one of many, while from 1640 to 1853 Holland was Japan's only officially sanctioned contact with Western civilization. But familiarity and knowledge are two different things. The best-known "Dutchman" in Japan is still the German-born Japanologist and physician Philipp Franz von Siebold (1796–1866), who in Holland is remembered only by the Japan specialist. And what do the Dutch know about Japan? It would go too far to say that their interest in Japan is mainly economic, but the image of Japan in the Low Countries is decidedly fuzzy. By now, most people realize that geisha and cherry blossoms are as important to the Japanese as wooden shoes and windmills to the Dutch, but these clichés have been replaced with pictures of harried children hurrying from rabbit hutches to cram schools. What the Japanese feel and think is still by and large a closed book.

This is a pity, for it is by books that such blanks are filled in, and Japanese literature is just not very popular in Holland. If pushed, many people may recall the names of Mishima Yukio or Kawabata Yasunari, and, as of this year, Ōe Kenzaburō, but chances are they will not have read them. Yet there is by now a sizable body of modern Japanese literature available in Dutch translation, and there is also sufficient interest in Japan to ensure that more translations will follow. The problem is that there simply are not enough translators to ensure that the flow will ever expand beyond a trickle.

**Translation Dilemmas**

Many of us have come to translation through the back door, so to speak. I myself began translating Japanese works into Dutch only a few years ago, having first dabbled with translation into English. Fortunately, my work has received favorable reviews and, although originally an English instructor by profession, I now find myself in the astonishing position of having become one of the most prominent translators of Japanese literature into Dutch. If this seems flattering, it is in fact rather sad, for at this moment there are literally no more than a handful (if that many) of Japanese-Dutch translators who publish with any regularity, so all of us are "prominent."

In the Netherlands and Dutch-speaking Belgium, a linguistic territory of more than 20 million people, there are only two universities where Japanese is taught as a scholarly discipline, one in Holland (Leiden) and the other in Belgium (Louvain). Most of those who graduate with a degree in Japanese literature end up working for major companies or as commercial translators—a career choice for which they can hardly be blamed—for in Holland, as in most European countries, literary translating is simply not a profession at which it is possible to make a decent living. Dutch translators from any language usually der-

ive their main income from other activities and only the most dedicated venture into the field of literature. A French colleague once remarked that Japanese literary translation can only be done well by persons who need not worry about time and income—like college professors and housewives. Although she was referring to the situation in France, it also applies to Europe in general and certainly to Holland.

Because it takes considerably more time to produce a good literary translation from Japanese than from a more familiar European language, and because publishers naturally wish to issue books at a fairly rapid pace, this scarcity of translators necessarily results in cutting corners: books are often translated not from the original, but via an easier, more accessible language, usually English. Needless to say, this path is fraught with peril. Mistakes in the English version are unwittingly perpetuated in such secondhand translations, which are sometimes produced by people who know little or nothing about Japan and may therefore overlook even the most obvious misprints, let alone mistakes. On one occasion, I even felt it necessary to warn a Dutch publishing company not to trust an English text because the translator's previous work had proved that he was not reliable, but because no Japanese-Dutch translator could be found, the publisher had no choice.

Ideally, all existing retranslations ought to be re-issued only after having been checked against the original. But what publisher is willing to afford the expense, and what translator will sacrifice his already meager income? For, of course, such checking does not pay as well as "real" translation. Moreover, for every translator engaged in checking, one novel/play/poem will go untranslated—not a luxury Japanese literature can afford, at least not in the Low Countries. At any rate, it would be a formidable task, for all of the works of Endō Shūsaku, many by Mishima (including his final tetralogy), some of Tanizaki's most important novels, not to mention any number of incidental works, have been rendered from versions in English. The only major author who has been served well is Kawabata: except for *Izu no odoriko* [The Izu Dancer], all his works were translated directly.

The problems of retranslation are not confined to the Dutch language territory, to be sure, but given the particular scarcity of translators in Holland and Belgium, it causes considerable problems, not only to the conscientious publisher who wishes to produce quality work, but most of all to the author, who more often than not is faced with the choice between a retranslation, with all the risks it entails, and no translation at all. Indeed, the very conscientiousness of most Dutch publishers has proved a bottleneck, for in their desire to avoid retranslations, they publish less Japanese literature than they otherwise could.

Publication of Japanese literature in Holland did not really get off the ground until the mid-1960s with, not surprisingly, novels by Mishima and Kawabata. Dutch-language publishers tend to err on the side of cautiousness and prefer works that have already appeared in another language. This not only enables them to take a look at the contents of a book, it also allows them to



judge its commercial potential. Also, until very recently it was common policy not to translate just one work by an author, but as many as possible, on the assumption that a reader who got hooked on, say, Ōe, would want to read more by him. This explains the fairly comprehensive list of works by Kawabata, Mishima, Tanizaki, and Ōe, which were all published by the same company (Meulenhoff). However, in recent years Dutch readers seem to have changed their behavior, so publishers increasingly commission incidental works. A good example is Ibuse Masuji's *Kuroi ame* [Black Rain], which appeared in retranslation a few years ago. Although Ibuse was an acknowledged master of Japanese prose who was often mentioned as a likely candidate for the Nobel Prize, there are at present no plans to publish any of his other work.

It is perhaps not that surprising. To publish Japanese literature in Holland and Belgium, you need not only be conscientious but also idealistic, for Japanese literature seldom sells well. Dutch publishers limit their first printings of Japanese novels to 2,500–3,000 copies and count themselves lucky if they are left with 500 copies unsold. The most successful Japanese title is probably Kawabata's *Yukiguni* [Snow Country], which has been through five printings (22,000 copies) since it first appeared in 1979. By comparison, Tanizaki's *Tade kuu mushi* [Some Prefer Nettles], which was published in 1968, was never reprinted at all. Surprisingly, lack of popularity is not necessarily caused by literary difficulty. Take Murakami Haruki's *Hitsuji o meguru bōken* (A Wild Sheep Chase) for example, surely one of the most accessible novels produced by a contemporary Japanese writer, besides being a serious commentary on modern Japanese society. This book, which sold more than 20,000 copies in English, flopped spectacularly in Dutch translation: after an initial run of some 900 copies in 1991, exactly two copies were sold in 1992. Problems with the publisher's marketing procedures may have been partly to blame, but it is true that Japanese writers enjoy very little name recognition in Holland and that it requires a major commitment on the publisher's part to commission a direct translation from the Japanese, let alone introduce an unknown author.

At the moment there are only five or six Dutch publishing houses that carry Japanese titles and only one with a substantial backlist. Given the lack of interest in Japanese literature, publishers have tended to be conservative in their choice of authors. The "big three"—Kawabata, Mishima and Tanizaki—occupy by far the most space in the canon of Dutch translations, although I am happy to say that they are given a close run for their money by Ōe, no less than six of whose works have appeared in Dutch, the first one as early as 1970, long before he was widely known in other countries. This is not to say that Ōe is popular—he is not even all that popular in Japan, not being a writer of mass-sellers to begin with—but it does indicate that his publisher recognized an important new voice and was willing to provide him with an audience, and it is gratifying to note that even in absolute terms, more Ōe novels were sold in Holland and Belgium than by American and British publishers combined.

## New Directions

I would be sorry, though, if I have given the impression that Japanese literature in Dutch is stuck in a rut, for that is not true. Internationally acclaimed younger writers like Tsushima Yūko, Tawara Machi and Yoshimoto Banana are being (re)translated and one publisher is finally making an effort to introduce Dazai Osamu to Dutch readers. But now that we have the major works of the "big three" and many of Ōe's, the question is: What next? There remain a sizable number of older writers, like Natsume Sōseki or Shimazaki Tōson, whose works have never appeared in Dutch, but although older literature is certainly worth translating in its own right, given the political and economic importance of modern Japan on the world stage there appears to be a greater need for works by representative younger authors.

I do not believe the solution lies in simply translating authors or works that happen to be known internationally. To be quite honest, contemporary Japanese literature strikes me as too narrowly provincial and also not quite profound enough to generate wide appeal among Dutch readers. Though I would not go so far as to subscribe entirely to Miyoshi Misao's recent characterization of Murakami Haruki and Yoshimoto Banana as "vacuous manufacturers of disposable entertainment" (at least not in Murakami's case), the point is well taken. While there are sufficient similarities between Murakami's uprooted yuppies and their Western equivalents to warrant a certain amount of interest outside Japan, I frankly fail to see how Western readers benefit from comic-strip type fiction à la *Kitchen* or *Monkey Brain Sushi*. The West itself produces more than enough of it. Maruya Sai'ichi is an incomparably better novelist than either Murakami or Yoshimoto, but *Tatta hitori no hanran* (A Singular Rebellion), when all is said and done, is too much about the Japanese student riots of the late sixties to function credibly as the "great contemporary Japanese novel." Kita Morio's *Nire-ke no hitobito* (The House of Nire), a work I admire tremendously, is too backward looking to suffice either. And so on. Yet I am convinced that somewhere in Japan, at this very moment, there is an author at work who will not only turn out to be the representative voice of the generation that is now in its early thirties, but will also prove to be a worthy successor to the tradition that stretches from Ōe all the way back to Sōseki. The trick is how to spot him or her early, and the search is still on.

(James Westerhoven has taught English language and American literature at Hirosaki University (Aomori Prefecture) since 1975. He has published translations of Dazai Osamu and Nitta Jirō in English, and of Mishima, Tanizaki and Murakami Haruki in Dutch. His latest Dutch translation, Tanizaki's *Sasame yuki*, was published in 1994 with support from the Japan Foundation.)





## New Titles

### PHILOSOPHY

**Jikan to sonzai [Time and Being].**

Ōmori Shōzō. Seidosha, 1994. 194 × 133 mm. 270 pp. ¥2,200. ISBN 4-7917-5305-4.

Ōmori Shōzō (b. 1921), one of Japan's leading philosophers, started out as a student of physics but switched to philosophy under the influence of the later works of Ludwig Wittgenstein. Over the years he has been developing his own philosophical system, one which critically assimilates the latest achievements of science while echoing the animistic world view.



Cover design: Kikuchi Nobuyoshi

The present work is a collection of ten papers published over the past two years which synthesize and elaborate on his thinking about language and mind through the consideration of time and being. Modern science, he says, added a new concept of time that has become a compelling norm not only in science but in everyday life. While reviewing the evolution of the analytic view of time taken for granted in modern science, he searches for a way to break free from various temporal phenomena that hold people today under their spell.

### HISTORY

**Inou mononoke roku emaki [Scrolls of Inou Ghosts].** Tanigawa Ken'ichi, ed. Shōgakusan, 1994. 260 × 216 mm. 110 pp. ¥3,800. ISBN 4-09-626107-6.

The late-Edo period Japanese scholar of National Learning and Western studies, Hirata Atsutane (1776–1843), was fond of ghost stories and wrote several essays on the subject, among them, *Inou mononoke roku* [Records of the Ghosts of the Inou House], which influenced the work of a number of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century fiction writers, including novelist Izumi Kyōka (1873–1939) and poet and folklorist Orikuchi Shinobu (1887–1953).

In the story, a young samurai and his friends gather in a spacious tatami room one summer to play a chilling game: they burn a hundred candles and tell a ghost story for each one. Legend has it that real ghouls appear as the last candle burns out, and sure enough the young samurai is haunted for thirty days by a host of supernatural bogies, among them a corpse that blinks its eyes, an incense burner that floats in midair, an upside-down, freshly severed woman's head, and a horde of babies streaming out of a head split open.

This book, made up of reproductions of the *emaki* picture scrolls upon which Atsutane's study was based, with extended commentary, offers useful clues to understanding the structure of the Japanese collective imagination.



Cover design: Funabashi Kikuo

**Kazoku tanjō [The Birth of a Peerage].** Asami Masao.

Riburopōto, 1994. 193 × 134 mm. 284 pp. ¥1,854. ISBN 4-8457-0930-9. Journalist Asami traces the history of Japan's modern peerage system, established in 1869 and abolished in 1947. Having wrested power from the Tokugawa shogunate in the Meiji Restoration (1868), the leaders of the new government reorganized the Tokugawa aristocracy—142 noble families attached to the Court and 285 daimyo families—into a Western-style peerage. The system established new titles—in descending order of rank) *kōshaku* (prince or duke), *kōshaku* (marquis), *haku-shaku* (count), *shishaku* (viscount) and *danshaku* (baron)—and stirred a fervor among the nation's new leaders for promotion up the hierarchy.

The author introduces the gossip surrounding the bestowal of titles and elucidates the special concerns of the privileged class. He also considers the broader historical significance of the peerage system, highlighting how the nobility remained weak and conciliatory vis-à-vis the militarist regime of the prewar period.



Cover design: Katō Kōtarō





Cover design: Hirabayashi Ikuko

**Kirisuto to Ōkuninushi [Christ and Ōkuninushi].** Nakanishi Susumu. Bungei Shunjū, 1994. 193 × 134 mm. 268 pp. ¥1,600. ISBN 4-16-348530-9.

In this collection of essays, specialist in ancient Japanese culture Nakanishi explores the cultural links between Japan and other countries. The star symbol written in a single stroke, the statues of guardian lions and dogs found at shrine gates and swastika symbols, though used in Japan since ancient times, these and other symbols by no means originated there. The author's concern is not so much with the implications of these external influences as with taking up each topic one at a time, carefully scrutinizing various fragments of culture that catch his interest. The title of the book derives from the similarities the author finds between the Crucifixion and Resurrection, on the one hand, and the death and rebirth of the Japanese mythological figure Ōkuninushi as described in the ancient chronicle *Kojiki*, on the other.

**Nihon no kindai kenchiku [Modern Japanese Architecture].** 2 vols. Fujimori Terunobu. Iwanami Shoten, 1993. 174 × 105 mm. 268 pp., 286 pp. ¥650; ¥620. ISBN 4-00-430308-7; 4-00-430309-5.

In these two volumes, architectural historian Fujimori reviews 130 years of Western-style architecture in Japan.

The first Western-style houses in Japan were built in the foreign settlements around 1853, during the final stages of the Tokugawa period (1603–1867). In the Meiji period (1868–1912), foreign architects hired by the government built a number of authentic Western-style structures, mainly in central Tokyo, and soon Japanese architects were designing their own buildings after those models. During the Taishō period (1912–26), architects developed a new artistic sensibility, vigorously exploring such themes as the essence of architecture, its place in the social context, and the relationship between technology and artistic expression. Absorbing and giving shape to the new style of post-World War I European architecture almost as soon as it appeared, they thus laid the groundwork for the modernist and fascist architecture of the early Shōwa period (1926–1989).

Not confining itself strictly to the realm of architectural history, this book is also a chronicle of intellectual and cultural history traced in the aesthetic sensibilities that came into being with the emergence of modern Japan.

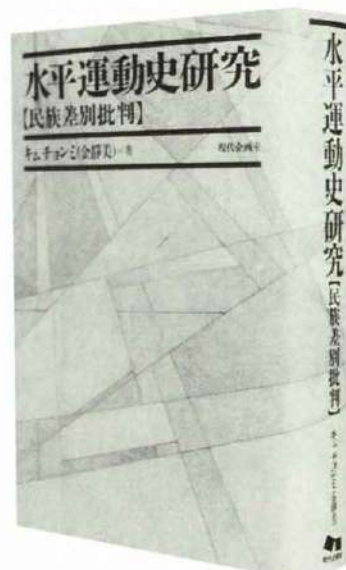


**Suihei undō shi kenkyū—"Minzoku sabetsu hihan" [A Study of the "Levellers" Movement: A Critique of "Ethnic Discrimination"].** Kim Jung-Mi. Gendai Kikakushitsu, 1994. 216 × 150 mm. 772 pp. ¥9,270. ISBN 4-7738-9312-5.

Written by a Korean resident of Japan, this historical study reveals the bigotry lurking in the prewar and postwar movements for liberation of former outcast communities (*buraku*) from discrimination in Japan.

Under the feudal Tokugawa regime's status hierarchy, the buraku residents were a shunned minority whose social identity was fixed through generations of strict rules controlling where they could live, what occupations they could pursue, who they could marry, and even how they could dress. In the twentieth century, the human rights movement that spread across Europe spurred similar efforts in Japan to liberate the buraku from oppression and create an egalitarian society.

Drawing on a wealth of historical materials, the author painstakingly recounts how the buraku liberation movement sanctioned discrimination against Korean residents of Japan both before the second world war, when state controls reached into every corner of daily life, and after, despite the adoption of the democratic postwar constitution. He also carefully examines historical accounts of the movement, highlighting the lack of awareness of its own discrimination.



Cover design: Aruga Tsuyoshi



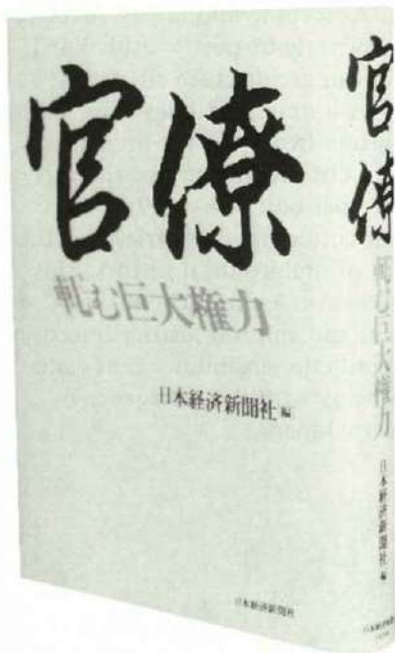
*Atarashii Ajia no dorama* [A Dramatic New Asia]. Kawakatsu Heita, ed. Chikuma Shobō, 1994. 194 × 135 mm. 276 pp. ¥2,600. ISBN 4-480-85658-7.

The papers presented at a symposium held in 1992 in Ōiso, Kanagawa prefecture, on "Japanese Culture and the Asian Economic Sphere," make up this volume. The editor, a specialist in comparative economic history, was one of nineteen scholars who participated in the forum, among them Shiba Yoshinobu, an expert in Chinese economic history, Tsunoyama Sakae (European economic history), and Watanabe Yoshio (development economics). The symposium was aimed at comparing and elucidating the interconnections between Japan and rapidly developing regions of Asia, considering them as part of a single sphere of civilization. In a paper titled "Nichi-Ō no kinsei" [The Early Modern Age in Japan and Europe], editor Kawakatsu takes a theoretical cue from Wallerstein's idea of modern world systems to examine the parallels between Japan and Western Europe in their respective attempts, at opposite ends of the Eurasian continent, to "dissociate from Asia." Here and throughout the book can be seen the emerging new concerns of

many Japanese intellectuals whose basic outlook on the world has been profoundly shaken and who are in the process of reconstructing their worldviews.

*Kanryō: Kishimu kyodai kenryoku* [Bureaucratic Power: The Ailing Giant]. Nihon Keizai Shimbunsha, ed. Nihon Keizai Shimbunsha, 1994. 194 × 134 mm. 452 pp. ¥1,800. ISBN 4-532-14308-X.

Throughout the postwar period, during which the conservative Liberal Democratic Party maintained almost unchallenged one-party rule, policy making in Japan remained firmly in the grip of the central bureaucracy. Today, the authors of the series of essays compiled in this work declare, intellectual decay and lack of vision within the ministries can no longer be concealed, as evidenced by the recent tax reform bills presented by the Ministry of Finance, widely censured for their narrowmindedness and harboring of vested interests.



The individual pieces of the book were originally published in *Nihon Keizai Shimbun*, based on interviews with Japanese politicians, business leaders, and former and current government officials. How many years does the criticism of the bureaucracy have to continue until real efforts are made for reform? A key question the book addresses is why, throughout modern and contemporary times, the Japanese media

repeat the same pattern of uncovering bureaucratic corruption and criticizing it, but to no apparent avail.

*Nihon wa sekai no teki ni naru: ODA no hanzai* [Foreign Aid Crimes: Japan as Global Adversary]. Asano Ken'ichi. San'ichi Shobō, 1994. 194 × 131 mm. 382 pp. ¥2,700. ISBN 4-380-94233-3.

Written by a journalist who was chief of the Kyodo News Service's Jakarta office from 1989 to 1992, this volume explores the links between the Suharto administration and Japan's official development assistance, the hidden driving force behind Indonesia's economic prosperity. To many Japanese, Indonesia is known for little more than its lush landscape, elegant traditions, stable government, and friendly relations with Japan. Behind this peaceful image, the author argues, is the far less appealing face of what he calls "tropical fascism," based on tight military control and suppression of the freedom of thought and expression. Probing further, he explains how the Japanese diplomatic corps and business community in Indonesia are united in their support of the military regime, basing his revelations on a wealth of well researched data.



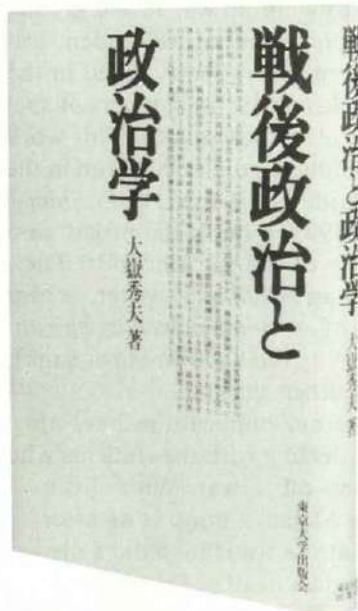
Cover design: Katō Toshiiji



Cover design: Mamura Toshikazu



*Sengo seiji to seijigaku* [Politics and Political Analysis in Postwar Japan]. Ōtake Hideo. Tōkyō Daigaku Shuppankai, 1994. 193 × 133 mm. 224 pp. ¥2,472. ISBN 4-13-030094-6. In the immediate postwar period, the theme that galvanized the interest of Japanese social scientists was what was known as "emperor system fascism." The scholars of the day who grappled with this topic through the dynamic arena of contemporary politics included E.H. Norman, Maruyama Masao, Kawashima Takeyoshi, Ishida Takeshi, Kawashima Jirō, and Ronald Dore.



Cover design: Suzuki Takashi and Takigami Asako

The present work is a history of postwar Japanese political science written by a Kyoto University professor born in 1943. Ōtake retraces the methodologies and analytic processes these scholars employed in their efforts to understand the political phenomena of their time. He confirms both that political scientists were largely oblivious of matters of methodology and that they can still learn a great deal today from the flexible, interdisciplinary approach of these early social scientists. His examination of the work of the older generation of scholars sharply reveals, moreover, that contemporary Japanese political scientists, despite their higher level of theoretical and analytical sophistication, have lost sight of the real issues of their own field of inquiry.

## CULTURE AND SOCIETY

*Chi no gihō* [Academic Skills for the Human Sciences]. Kobayashi Yasuo and Funabiki Takeo, eds. Tōkyō Daigaku Shuppankai, 1994. 210 × 148 mm. 284 pp. ¥1,545. ISBN 4-13-003305-0.

Though originally compiled as a supplementary textbook for use in a compulsory freshman course at the University of Tokyo's Faculty of Liberal Arts, this volume later became a bestselling general interest book. Comprised of contributions from eighteen members of the University's faculty, it gives practical instruction in accepted scholarly methodology, covering such topics as fieldwork methods, handling of historical materials, nitty-gritty translation problems, the possibility of various interpretations of texts, and grasp of statistical material. It also offers a comprehensive guide to expression, including how to write and publish an academic paper, and how to locate source materials and references.



Cover design: Suzuki Takashi and Takigami Asako

The aim of the book is less to explain various scholarly methods than to demonstrate how they are actually put to use in contemporary academic research. The emergence of a book of this kind from a Japanese university is indicative of the broader process of innovation that is taking place in the systems of knowledge in Japan today.



Cover design: Michiyoshi Gow

*Nihon kabushikigaisha no onna tachi* [The Women of Japan Inc.]. Takenobu Mieko. Asahi Shimbunsha, 1994. 188 × 128 mm. 204 pp. ¥1,200. ISBN 4-02-256546-2. Japan's Equal Employment Opportunity Law for Men and Women came into effect in April 1986, prohibiting, at least in principle, gender discrimination in the workplace. What effect did the law have upon the way corporate Japan really operates? Women already make up an estimated 40 percent of the country's work force, but the question remains as to whether employment is really giving them freedom after all.

In this book, journalist Takenobu analyzes both the facade and the facts of employment equality in Japan today based on interviews with over eighty working women. Despite largely superficial changes, she finds, discriminatory personnel management and the old notion that employees and even their families "belong" to the company remain deeply rooted in Japan's corporate society. Not surprisingly, then, many working wives experience marital tensions because their husbands are yoked to companies still operating under an outmoded system which assumes they have a devoted, full-time housewife at home. The problem affects many aspects of daily life, including overtime practices, childbirth, and childrearing options, and the care of elderly parents. Takenobu's report is a courageous attempt to open up a path diverging from the old gender-based division of labor.



*Nijūisseiki kazoku e* [Toward the Family of the Twenty-First Century]. Ochiai Emiko. Yūhikaku, 1994. 188 × 128 mm. 244 pp. ¥1,648. ISBN 4-641-18205-1.

An upcoming specialist in family sociology applies the methods of historical demography to analyze the transformation of the Japanese family in the postwar period and construct a picture of what it will be like in the future.

Statistics on female employment and birth rates suggest an important subperiod of the postwar era—between 1955 and 1975—during which the family structure enjoyed great stability. Accordingly, Ochiai divides the period into three parts: the family stability phase and those preceding and following it. She also identifies three distinguishing demographic features of the stable-family decades: The transformation of women into “housewives” (a modern phenomenon that became predominant in Japan only after the war); the rise of “reproductive egalitarianism” (whereby the fall in birth rate was accompanied by the conformist notion that each couple ought to have two or three children); and a fundamental demographic shift (whereby, along with the rise of the nuclear family, the combination of the comparatively high birth rate and low death rate maintained the traditional lineal system in which the family heir lives with his or her parents).

In a determined inquiry into how these and other family conditions change and disappear, the author tries to sketch a positive picture of Japanese family life in the twenty-first century.



Cover design: Nishimura Kenzō

## NONFICTION

*Dokumento: Umi no kokkyōsen* [Documentary: Maritime Boundaries]. Kamata Satoshi. Chikuma Shobō, 1994. 193 × 134 mm. 262 pp. ¥1,800. ISBN 4-480-85665-X. This work reports about life at five extremities on or near Japan's territorial borders: the westernmost islet of Yonakuni in Okinawa Prefecture; the Nemuro peninsula of eastern Hokkaido; Rishiri, off northern Hokkaido; the Ogasawara (Bonin) Islands in the Pacific; and, in Kagoshima Prefecture, the island of Yakushima. Kamata is a freelance journalist and author of many social documentaries, including *Jidōsha zetsubō kōjō* [The Hopeless Auto Factory].

This book is not concerned with the image of “territorial boundary” as a point of potential confrontation between the adjacent countries. Despite increasing reports, for example, of Russian patrol boats firing at Nemuro fishing craft amid lingering bilateral tensions over possession of Russian-held islands in the region, Japanese fishermen themselves show surprisingly little worry about or animosity toward Russia.

Lying at opposite extremes of the archipelago, the places discussed differ greatly in climate and topography, but the people who live there display a common open-mindedness and curiosity about the outside, belying the stereotype of frontier community sentiment as narrow-minded. This book makes the reader wonder what the modern nation-state is all about, as it is



Cover design: Mōri Kazuo

artificially demarcated by national boundaries.

*Gakuto shutsujin gojū nen* [Fifty Years Since the Student Draft]. Matsui Kakushin. Asahi Sonorama, 1994. 193 × 131 mm. 254 pp. ¥1,500. ISBN 4-257-03392-4.

Toward the end of the Pacific War, the Japanese government ordered the dispatch of students in the humanities and social sciences at non-technical universities and higher technical schools, who until then had been exempted from the draft, to the front lines. It then widely propagandized the glory of the student draft in efforts to whip up war fervor among the people. Many of the student-soldiers were subsequently killed in the battlefields, some as members of special suicide attack squads. This work was compiled from a series run in the nationwide newspaper *Asahi Shimbun* in 1993 to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the student draft. The author, an *Asahi* staff writer, is also author of *Awa-maru wa naze shizunda ka* [Why the SS Awa-maru Sank], among other works.

Numerous publications have appeared dealing with the students who were sent off to war. What distinguishes Matsui's book is its assertion that the student-soldiers died meaningless deaths. From that premise, the author explores “the meaning of meaningless death.” Placing both the war and the postwar periods in a comparative perspective, he questions if Japanese, on either the collective or the individual level, have truly tried to come to terms with this important chapter in the nation's history.



Cover design: Hasegawa Tōru; Illustration: Yorimitsu Takashi



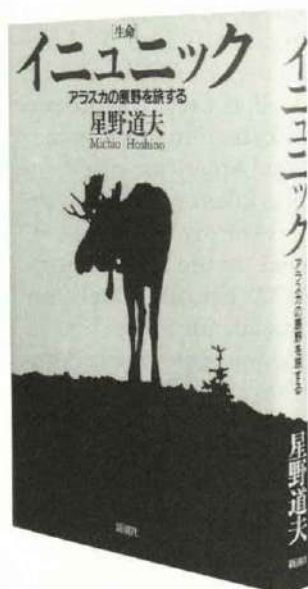


**Gokuchū jūkyū nen [Nineteen Years in Prison].** Suh Sung. Iwanami Shoten, 1994. 174 × 105 mm. 274 pp. ¥650. ISBN 4-00-430345-1. In 1971, shortly after completing a master's degree at Seoul National University, Kyoto-born Korean residing in Japan Suh Sung was arrested on charges of espionage for North Korea and brought before authorities at the South Korean Army's security headquarters in Seoul. He was given a death sentence that was later commuted to life imprisonment with hard labor. This was further reduced, and he was released in 1990.

This volume is Suh's account of his life in prison. His refusal to "confess" to the charges was partly due to the fact that the whole affair smacked of a political stratagem, but most of all it was because he could neither forgive an authority which resorts to violence to twist people's minds nor betray himself and his friends to appease such a system. The price he paid was nearly twenty years in jail. Throughout his ordeal, he was encouraged by support from his family, particularly his mother, rescue efforts launched within Korea, Japan, and elsewhere, and his prison-mates, some of whom had been incarcerated since the Korean War. The respect and affection he conveys for his fellow political prisoners who have died in prison or are still serving time for refusing to compromise their beliefs is especially poignant.

**Inyunikku [Life].** Hoshino Michio. Photograph by Hoshino Michio. Shinchōsha, 1993. 196 × 134 mm. 230 pp. ¥1,300. ISBN 4-10-395601-1. A photographer who spent years capturing the nature and wildlife of Alaska on film, the author built a house for himself three years ago in the

Alaskan woods. This book—the title of which is an Eskimo word (*inuni-qu*) meaning "life"—is an account of the natural environment and the people he encountered there. It reveals his deep love for Alaska, which is seasoned by reverent awe for the harsh arctic environment, for its people and wildlife, and for the special kind of time that envelops and flows through the landscape.



Cover design: Mimura Jun

It is not difficult to see why Hoshino fell captive to the vast state and finally settled there. One major attraction was the kindheartedness of the people. Perhaps people cannot but grow gentle-natured when it is so glaringly obvious that they are only one small part of the immense natural world. The characters who appear in the book are of diverse ethnic background, including local Eskimos, Indians, and other Americans who have migrated from parts of the United States, but all are generous to a fault, except when it comes to anything that threatens the natural environment they feel part of. The book is illustrated with a careful selection of black-and-white photographs.

**LT [Lieutenant].** Katō Takashi. TBS Britannica, 1994. 193 × 134 mm. 264 pp. ¥1,300. ISBN 4-484-94209-7. This book is subtitled "The Youth of a 'Made-in-Japan' American Military Officer." Katō (b. 1957) who holds the rare distinction of being a Japanese national in active service as an officer in the U.S. military, calls the

book an "I-novel," in the semi-autobiographical tradition of modern Japanese literature. It is the frank chronicle of the groundbreaking quest of a young man who did not fit the rigid mold of Japanese society, in which one's career is virtually determined by academic credentials.

The author, now a captain and instructor at the Defense Language Institute, characterizes himself as a "dropout" (*ochikobore*) from Japanese society, too different to be fully accepted. He moved to the United States while still barely conversant in English, though his reading skills were somewhat better. He was fortunate to find good teachers in college, and, while pursuing his studies, passed the severe training required to become an army officer. He later served in the Gulf War.

*LT* provides a vivid story of how he dealt with the weight of his Japanese background that constantly dogged his heels and how he overcame the cultural gaps as he pursued his chosen path as an officer in the American military.



Cover design: Mimura Jun; Photograph: Hoshino Michio

**Mono kuu hitobito [Human Beings and Eating].** Henmi Yō. Kyōdō Tsūshinsha, 1994. 193 × 132 mm. 334 pp. ¥1,500. ISBN 4-7641-0324-9. How can we understand our changing world by looking at what and how people eat? How do the regional conflicts that have broken out in various parts of the world deprive the local population of regular meals and other basic necessities? What insights might we gain if, rather than describe



the world in high-minded concepts, we return to physical basics and view it in terms of the essential act of eating? The author of this work set off on a year-long world tour to explore these questions, finding his task far easier to think about than fulfill. The fruit of his efforts is a unique and profoundly moving travelogue of his investigations around the globe—how he ate leftovers in a Bangladesh slum, prison food in former East Germany, vegetarian food in a Serbian monastery, the luxurious fare enjoyed by PKO troops from various countries in Somalia, and, succumbing to the insistent hospitality of the old woman who offered it soup in Chernobyl containing radiation-contaminated mushrooms.

The repercussions felt at the dining table in regions of strife throw world realities into sharp relief. From this incisive, dinner-plate-level perspective arises a work of importance sensitively and skillfully wrought by an author who won the 1991 Akutagawa Prize for outstanding literature.



Cover design: Kikuchi Nobuyoshi; Illustration: Nishikata Hisashi

**Okinawa: Sensō mararia jiken [Okinawa: The Wartime Malaria Incident].** Mainichi Shimbun Tokubetsu Hōdōbu Shuzaihan (Mainichi Shimbun Special Investigative Reporting Team). Tōhō Shuppan, 1994. 210 × 148 mm. 190 pp. ¥1,648. ISBN 4-88591-388-8.

Toward the end of the Second World War, the Japanese Imperial Army forced civilian residents in Okinawa to evacuate to a region known to be infested with malaria. Over 3,600 people died after contracting the dis-

ease. The facts of the incident were uncovered only five years ago by a Ryukyu University professor whose mother and sisters died of malaria when he was four years old. The evacuation, it was found, was not a voluntary move by residents seeking to escape the ravages of the war, but was forced by the Japanese military, which was fully aware of the high risk of malarial infection. Anticipating the imminent U.S. invasion, the authorities apparently hoped to disencumber themselves of the civilian presence as well as avert the possible leakage of information from local residents to the American side should they be taken prisoner. The result was an explosive outbreak of malaria fanned by the severe shortage of food that led, ultimately, to the tremendous death toll.

For this documentary, corroborated by eyewitness accounts, four reporters from the national daily, *Mainichi Shimbun*, pieced together the facts, interviewed a number of residents involved, and exposed the spies from the army intelligence academy Nakano School who led the evacuation as members of a "remote islands clean-up operation" team.



Cover design: Hamazaki Jitsuyuki

**Rōshin o suteraremasu ka [Would You Abandon an Aging Parent?].** Kadono Haruko. Shufu no Tomosha, 1994. 193 × 132 mm. 246 pp. ¥1,300. ISBN 4-07-214089-9.

Leaving her husband in Tokyo, the author tells the true story of how she moved with their children to her father-in-law's house to take care of him after the death of his wife. Being an independent woman of feminist leanings and finding grandfather an

old-fashioned patriarch of the stubbornest kind, however, the scheme was doomed to failure. To escape the intolerable shackles of her traditional duties as the wife of the eldest son, the author divorced her husband and set about finding a way to support herself in Tokyo.

But her ex-father-in-law, who was to have been taken in by his own daughter, appears on her doorstep again. Thinking that it was now her chance to drive the old man out of the house with her own nagging, she starts teaching him to fend for himself, beginning with how to light the kitchen stove. But far from leaving in annoyance, the 83-year-old begins to master the arts of housework, and even appears on television as a model of geriatric self-sufficiency. "Before," writes the author, "I was trapped in the false notion that one must treat the elderly with kid gloves simply because they're old." But now she realizes that "I should have treated the old man's reluctance to take proper care of himself like that of a rebellious adolescent. Rather than kid gloves, it is through a relationship of frank encounter with someone in that condition that you can best nurture his character."

This is an offbeat, piquant memoir by an author who subsequently went on to gain her own kind of independence as a nonfiction writer.



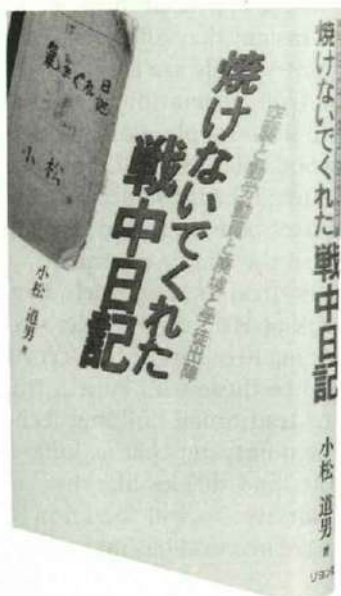
Cover design: Nakajima Kaoru

**Yakenaidekureta senchū nikki [A Wartime Diary that Survived].** Komatsu Michio. Ryon Sha, 1994. 194 × 132 mm. 348 pp. ¥1,800. ISBN 4-576-94110-0.

This diary was written between September 1943 and October 1945. In



1943, as the tide of the war turned increasingly against Japan, the government revoked the right of liberal arts students to defer their conscription into the armed forces. A student at Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, Komatsu vividly records his mental struggle as the day his draft notice is due to arrive approaches: "Suddenly," one entry reads, "it is necessary to think about things like writing a will." In another he writes: "Even if I have to be a soldier, I have no intention of ever volunteering for the suicide corps. Even if to others I appear willing, it is merely because military orders are absolute, or perhaps out of sheer bravado, despair, unwillingness to look like a quitter, and the kind of protest that one can only express by dying 'as they tell me to.'"



Cover design: Mitsumoto Jun

According to the author, the chronicle records things "just as I saw and felt them, like an artist sketching his subject." The war ended during his first year of service, and after graduation he took up employment at a publishing company. Originally titled *Kimagure nikki* [The Capricious Diary], the memoir luckily escaped the fires of the war, and its publication now comes on the eve of the fiftieth anniversary of the war's end. The book includes vivid, sometimes humorous descriptions of civilian life on the home front during the war, making it a valuable historical reference as well.

## SCIENCE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

**Kisai isai no kagakusha tachi** [Eccentrics and Geniuses of Science]. Fukami Teruaki. NTT Shuppan, 1994. 194 × 130 mm. 246 pp. ¥1,700. ISBN 4-87188-184-9.

It is often claimed that Japanese technology lacks the originality required for groundbreaking innovation, with various theories being advanced to explain it. Some clue to the reasons may be found in Fukami's examination of fifteen Japanese scientists working and, in their own way, achieving significant results in fields ignored by their fellows. The author is a journalist who specializes in topics relating to medicine and science.



Cover design: Mamura Toshikazu

Working outside the mainstream of Japanese science, all of the individuals featured are engaged in research on such unlikely themes as how to alchemize mercury into gold and how to give form to the fourth dimension. None of them benefit from a favorable environment for creative research, most being based at provincial universities and research institutes with scant financial resources and facilities. Their work attracts more interest from abroad than from within their own country. Even more damning to the Japanese education system, few hail from the University of Tokyo, supposedly the target of Japan's gifted young—though this was not, according to the author, an intentional criterion of his selection.

**Mizu no kankyō senryaku** [Strategies for Water Management]. Nakanishi Junko. Iwanami Shoten, 1994. 174 × 105 mm. 226 pp. ¥620. ISBN 4-00-430324-9.

In Japan, with its abundant rainfall and numerous waterways, the expression "to use like water" (*yumizu no gotoku tsukau*) has always meant to treat something as if it were in inexhaustible supply. Usually it is used in the negative to caution against wastefulness, but if the recent severe water shortages suffered throughout the country are any indication, it is no longer a resource that can be thus taken for granted.

Professor at the University of Tokyo's Environmental Security Center and author of numerous works, including *Toshi no saisei to gesuidō* [The Sewage System and Regeneration of Cities], Nakanishi has been warning readers of the danger of water-related environmental problems for a long time. She confronts the troubling issue: Given the current state of the world, can we hope for completely safe water always in adequate supply, or does that hope itself represent a potential threat to both the environment and our own safety? In answering this question she points to "risk management," the finding of ways to ensure both social security and environmental protection by permitting certain calculated risks. In Japan's case, however, this does not mean tolerating the current state of public water management, in which lurks, she believes, the dangers of bureaucratic opportunism and secrecy. Based on firsthand research, her inquiry is thorough and convincing.





*Hayashi Nozomu ga Nō o yomu* [Hayashi Nozomu on Noh]. Hayashi Nozomu. Photograph by Morita Toshirō. Seidosha, 1994. 195 × 134 mm. 320 pp. ¥2,400. ISBN 4-7917-5316-X.

The Noh theater is difficult to understand, even for most Japanese, and understandably so. A highly stylized dramatic form performed in the language of medieval Japan, it has been passed down virtually unchanged for centuries. It is therefore not an art that can be grasped, much less enjoyed, by a passive viewer, and contemporary Japanese find it necessary to carefully study its special code if they hope to appreciate what it has to offer.



Cover design: Mizuki Sō; Illustration: Gotō Kaoru

This volume provides concise keys to that code through an instructive review of eighty-five Noh plays, from well-known favorites still widely performed to more obscure pieces rarely seen on the stage today. Each is short but packed with insight and information. The author, a bibliographer and author of *Igirisu wa yukaida* [How Wonderful to Be in Britain] (see JBN, No. 1, p. 17), says Noh is a dramatic bridge spanning the "other" world of ghosts and spirits and the real, mundane world, but it is also a spiritual bridge linking present-day Japanese with their ancestors of the medieval and earlier times. This is an excellent introduction to Noh appreciation.



Cover design: Nakajima Kaoru

*Ima hitotabi no sengo Nihon eiga* [Another Look at Postwar Japanese Cinema]. Kawamoto Saburō. Iwanami Shoten, 1994. 193 × 131 mm. 294 pp. ¥2,400. ISBN 4-00-000142-6. The golden age of Japanese cinema, the two decades after the war, was the time of the masterpieces by directors whose names will go down in film-making history: Ozu Yasujiro, Mizoguchi Kenji, Kurosawa Akira. But why was it that such memorable works of cinema should have been produced at a time when the landscape had been reduced to ashes by war and the people were suffering from poverty and confusion in the wake of defeat?

Film and literary critic Kawamoto examines Japanese films from this heyday period against the broader, less felicitous background of the age. Though he belongs to the generation of Japanese too young to have experienced the war, his evocation of the period is deeply moving, especially to older Japanese who knew the war only too well. In the case of *Godzilla*, for instance—which he regards as a fundamentally dark film—he sees the collective memory of the Tokyo air raids, and in the monster itself a symbol of all the war victims who died essentially meaningless deaths. The book is a stimulating and well-written work of social criticism.

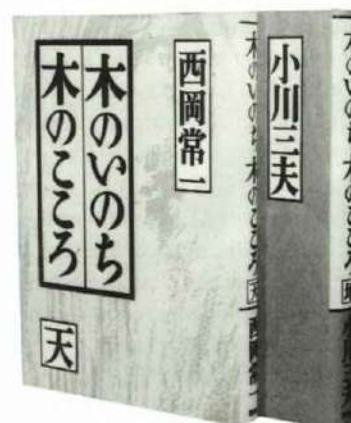
*Ki no inochi ki no kokoro (ten)* [The Life of Wood, the Spirit of Wood (Heaven)]. Nishioka Tsunekazu. *Ki no inochi ki no kokoro (chi)* [The Life of Wood, the Spirit of Wood (Earth)]. Ogawa Mitsuo. Sōshisha, 1993. 193 × 134 mm. 167 pp.; 207

pp. ¥1,400; ¥1,500. ISBN 4-7942-0532-5; 4-7942-0533-3.

These two volumes contain the teachings passed down from master carpenter Nishioka Tsunekazu to his chief apprentice, Ogawa Mitsuo. Nishioka carried on the woodworking tradition of a family that for generations served as carpenters under exclusive assignment to conduct repairs for the ancient Hōryūji Temple in Nara, the world's oldest extant wooden building. Since he became the head of the family, Nishioka led dismantling and repair projects for Hōryūji and the rebuilding of the main hall and west pagoda of Yakushiji Temple, also in Nara. Ogawa, meanwhile, was inspired to learn the craft of traditional building when he saw the Hōryūji's five-storied pagoda while on a high school excursion.

Much of the appeal of these books lies in the insight they afford into the way carpentry skills are actually passed on from generation to generation. Both authors place absolute faith in wood itself. Nishioka successfully countered the insistence of scholars that steel be used in the Hōryūji repairs with the simple comment: "Timber is stronger than steel. Just take a look at Hōryūji Temple; it's been standing here for thirteen centuries." And to those who lament the passing of traditional building techniques, he points out that as long as old temples and shrines like the Hōryūji survive, so will the know-how that created and has maintained them.

Today, Nishioka has retired and Ogawa, now working independently, is in turn passing on the techniques learned from his own master to a new generation of artisans.



Cover design: Tamura Yoshiya



*Tezuka Osamu wa doko ni iru*  
[Where Is Tezuka Osamu?].

Natsume Fusanosuke. Chikuma Shobō, 1992. 188 × 130 mm. 210 pp. ¥1,250. ISBN 4-480-05175-9. Manga comics and animation films are one of Japan's principal cultural exports, leading the world both in quality and quantity. The path to this worldwide success was laid first by master cartoonist Tezuka Osamu, who passed away in 1989. Many of his works, including the favorites "Tetsuwan Atomu" (known in English-speaking countries as "Astro Boy") and "Janguru Taitei" (known as "Kimba, the White Lion"), have become classics of the genre, and virtually every Japanese manga artist today is indebted to his influence in some way or other.



Cover design: Watanabe Chihiro and Kintarō-gumi

Natsume Fusanosuke is among these post-Tezuka cartoonists, but has also gained a reputation as an eloquent and witty essayist. (He also happens to be the grandson of the great Meiji period novelist Natsume Sōseki.) In this work, he describes what for him is the essence of Tezuka manga, regarding it as "a part of my subconscious." He identifies the essential quality of Tezuka manga in the form of lines and the composition of the frames. In an analysis only a fellow artist could have made with such depth of insight, Natsume composes a lucid picture of the inner workings of Tezuka's art by tracing the development of the master's line-drawing style. This volume convinces the reader that Tezuka was indeed among the great individuals who embody postwar Japan, its ethos and aspirations.

## LITERATURE AND CRITICISM

*Gekijin Mishima Yukio* [Mishima Yukio as Dramatist]. Dōmoto Masaki. Geki Shobō, 1994. 193 × 132 mm. 450 pp. ¥3,800. ISBN 4-87574-559-1.

Though prolific in many genres, Mishima Yukio (1925–1970) is known primarily as a novelist who also happened to write several plays. But far from being a sort of hobby he dabbled in only after achieving literary fame, play-writing was a vocation he had pursued while still an upcoming writer in his early twenties.



Cover design: Tsuchihara Hiroshi

The author of the present volume first met his subject when he was sixteen and Mishima was twenty-four. He remained in close contact with him and later became a theater producer. In his days as a rising new figure on the literary scene, Mishima produced his own plays, which were modeled on classical French drama. At the time, however, few actors took him seriously as a playwright. Undeterred, he went on to turn setback into success with his masterpiece *Kindai Nōgaku shū* [Five Modern Noh Plays]. In his analysis of the writer's life and dramatic works, Dōmoto draws on knowledge only a fellow theater professional and companion to Mishima himself could, such as that Mishima always began writing his plays backward, from the final curtain.

A powerfully written critical study, the book vividly portrays the artist as a consummate dramatist who closed his own impressive per-

formance in the "role" of Mishima Yukio with the tragically heroic exit of ritual suicide.

*Gofun-go no sekai* [The World Five Minutes from Now]. Murakami Ryū. Gentōsha, 1994. 195 × 132 mm. 256 pp. ¥1,500. ISBN 4-87728-004-9.

The premise of this science-fiction fantasy is the intriguing question: What might Japan have been like today if it had not, in 1945, accepted the Potsdam Declaration demanding its unconditional surrender? The central character, a man named Odagiri, collapses while jogging. He awakens to find himself marching in a line of people guarded by soldiers wearing gas masks. The procession leads not to some divine court of postmortem judgment but rather to a strange, vast underground world. Still mystified by what is going on, Odagiri learns he has been interned in some kind of "correctional" institution. And for some reason, his watch is five minutes slow.

In the fictional world of this novel, Japan continues to fight the war. By 1946, the entire country has become a burnt-out wasteland divided into four territories governed, respectively, by the Soviet Union, the United States, Britain and China. But the remnants of the Imperial Army have gone underground, literally, establishing a network of tunnels and a subterranean headquarters from which they conduct a guerrilla war against United Nations forces. Caught in middle of it all, Odagiri is dragged into the fighting to save his own life.



Cover design: Yokoo Tadanori



**Kagayaku mizu no jidai** [The Era of Glittering Waters]. Tsushima Yūko. Shinchōsha, 1994. 197 × 136 mm. 250 pp. ¥1,400. ISBN 4-10-351004-8. This volume contains four distinct but closely connected short stories: "Subete no shisha no hi" [The Day of All the Dead], "Ishi, furu" [Stones, Falling], "Hi no hajimari" [The Beginning of Fire] and the title story.

The protagonist of the stories is Misako, who is divorced and who accidentally caused the death of her child. Hoping that moving away from Japan will make life easier to bear, she moves to France. There she meets her cousin Asako, a second-generation Japanese-American who lives alone and teaches piano. Wherever she goes, however, Misako's deep sense of loss conjures up a sense of what she calls "the breath of the dead" around her.



Cover design: Shinchōsha

Water is the stories' unifying motif. Misako learns about a stagnant canal beneath Paris going back to Roman times, and it seems to her to be full of the spirits of the dead. Later, while accompanying Asako on a trip to the United States, she visits Niagara Falls. There, under the brilliant light of summer, she sees "water as an enormous, glittering living thing." Its overwhelming presence becomes a solace, soothing her inescapable sense of loss and emboldening her to resume her life in Tokyo.

Told in a polished and tranquil style, the four stories are a finely written portrait of a woman's spiritual rebirth.



Cover design: Suzuki Takashi and Yamamoto Maō

**Kitamura Tōkoku** [Kitamura Tōkoku]. Irokawa Daikichi. Tōkyō Daigaku Shuppankai, 1994. 193 × 133 mm. 320 pp. ¥2,472. ISBN 4-13-013017-X.

Born in the year of the Meiji Restoration and raised amid the burgeoning movement for freedom and popular rights of the day, critic, philosopher and dramatic poet Kitamura Tōkoku (1868–94) wrote a number of pioneering works of incisive social and literary critique during Japan's formative years as a modern nation. But poverty, loneliness and overwork took a heavy psychological toll, and he hung himself at the age of twenty-five.

In this volume, historian Irokawa examines the geographic and social setting of Tōkoku's pro-democracy activism during what has hitherto been considered a lacuna in his personal history. Using newly discovered records, he reveals how Tōkoku acquired the "grassroots perspective behind his scathing social criticism" as well as the "experiential basis for his revolutionary eschatology." He faithfully retraces the path of Tōkoku's participation in and later disillusionment with the popular rights movement, skillfully juxtaposing the writer's many facets to form a complete portrait of a young man whose numerous talents—particularly as an anguished and prescient dramatic poet, and notably as one of Japan's first practicing advocates of free love—flashed only momentarily before his premature death.

A long-incubated project finally completed thirty-six years after being contracted for publication, this study appropriately marks the centennial anniversary of Tōkoku's death.

**Ninshin shōsetsu** [The "Pregnancy Novel"]. Saitō Minako. Chikuma Shobō, 1994. 193 × 134 mm. 256 pp. ¥1,800. ISBN 4-480-82312-3. According to this author, novels about an unwanted pregnancy belong to the "pregnancy novel" (*ninshin shōsetsu*) genre, which she ranks, along with the "sickness novel" and the "poverty novel," as among the most prominent in modern and contemporary Japanese literature. She finds, however, that works in these genres are stigmatized as pulpy love stories or light juvenile romances, and so have yet to receive the critical attention they deserve.



Cover design: Sofue Makoto

She identifies three boom periods for the pregnancy novel: the 1910s, the late 1950s, and the late 1970s, each beginning around three years after changes in laws relating to unwanted pregnancies. She distinguishes between pregnancy novels written by men and those by women, and in her analysis deftly divides these into even smaller categories; pregnancy novels by men, for instance, include "stories of suffering in youth," "stories of the worn-out playboy," "stories of disappointment in love," and "stories of misgivings about abortion."

Though tending to be flippant here and there, this is a highly original debut publication from a promising young literary critic.



**Odorudeku** ["Dancing Puppet"]. Muroi Mitsuhiro. Kōdansha, 1994. 194 × 130 mm. 188 pp. ¥1,500. ISBN 4-06-207174-6.

The second collection of fiction from this author, this volume contains the title story, which won the Akutagawa Prize in 1994, and another entitled "Ōaza Aiya" [Aiya Village].

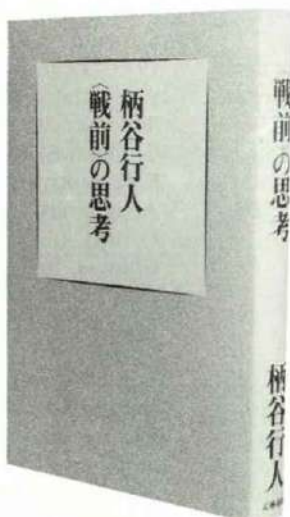
In the title story, the first-person narrator finds in the barn of his family home an old diary. Like the *Roma-ji nikki* [Romanized Diary] of Meiji-period poet Ishikawa Takuboku (1885–1912), the diary is in Japanese disguised in Russian script. While transliterating it into ordinary Japanese, the narrator discovers the fourteen-year-old memoir deals partly with his own youth and includes repeated use of the strange word *odorudeku*. Perplexed by the word, the narrator considers various possible but dubious interpretations, including the "odorudeku" that appears in a short story by Franz Kafka, and the Japanese *odoru deku*, meaning "dancing puppet."



Cover design: Kikuchi Nobuyoshi

Words seem to drift further and further from any true meaning they may have had, coinciding with various transient nuances according to their sound. From the new semantic horizon thus achieved rise up the pasts of the people mentioned in the diary. The pieces of the fragmented plot, patched together through the close study of letters and characters, fall neatly into place just as the whole seems about to crumble, leaving an impressive work that points to new possibilities in fiction writing.

**"Senzen" no shikō** ["Prewar" Thinking]. Karatani Kōjin. Bungei Shunjū, 1994. 194 × 135 mm. 244 pp. ¥1,600. ISBN 4-16-348400-0. This volume is a collection of nine lectures the author delivered between November 1990 and September 1993, covering a wide range of topics in literature. He suggests that the recent Japanese preoccupation with "endings"—the end of the Cold War, the end of the political structure established in 1955, etc.—arises from an intuitive sense that something new is about to begin. He also argues that one could place oneself in a "prewar" situation, regardless of whether or not there would actually be a war, and that for in-depth thinking one must begin with an extreme case. This experimental thinking leads to such conclusions as that, when considering either the formation of Japan as a modern state in the late nineteenth century or the wartime attempt to overcome Western modernity, it is necessary also to delve into the realm of literature and art. The Meiji Restoration of 1868 brought about a unified state, but not a nation-state. The nation came into being when the colloquial language became the vernacular. In other words, the movement to integrate written and spoken expression clearly linked inner consciousness with language, which in turn fostered the rise of nationalism. Karatani insists that writers, of all people, ought to be aware of this fact. He presents a thought-provoking argument packed with valuable suggestions and intriguing foresight.



Cover design: Miyagawa Ichirō

**Watashitachi wa hanshoku shiteiru** [We're Reproducing]. Uchida Shungiku. Bunkasha, 1994. 210 × 149 mm. 177 pp. ¥980. ISBN 4-8211-9398-1.

This is a manga comic book based on the experiences of the author, a professional manga artist, with pregnancy, childbirth, and parenthood. As the common sight of thirty-something commuters nonchalantly flipping through pulpy manga testifies, Japan is a comic book paradise. Recently, even history and economics texts have appeared in manga form, and the trend is spreading to the pregnancy and childcare shelves.

*Watashitachi wa hanshoku shiteiru*, however, is no mere instruction manual like as those found in childcare magazines or "ladies comics." The author, an unabashed nonconformist, first published it in an adult humor magazine. The *ninshin* ("pregnancy") of which the author speaks is not the joyful state of expectation that society celebrates, but the condition of the unwed, often abandoned mother. Though fictionalized, much of the story is based on the author's own background: For appearances' sake, a pregnant woman suggests to the child's father that they get married, but he turns her down; she starts raising the child with her boyfriend of ten years. Offering a calm, courageous, and humorous view of what happens when human beings "breed," Uchida is saying that even if things don't go according to the manuals, what counts most is that a child be made healthy and happy.



Cover design: Tachibana Hajime



## Events and Trends

### "100 Japanese Books"

Founded in August 1992 in order to facilitate translation and publishing of Japanese books by arranging funding from Japanese companies or individuals, the Association for 100 Japanese Books has found its task extremely difficult in the post-"bubble" era. The Association's membership now includes 16 corporations and other organizations and 37 individuals. Some ¥20 million has been raised in book support and 17 titles have been published or are in the process of coming out as a result.

Among the titles already out are: *Pitoresk Nederland/The Picturesque Netherlands* (editions in Dutch and English) by Anno Mitsumasa, *Der verbrannte Stadtplan*, a German translation of Abe Kōbō's *Moetsukita chizu* [The Ruined Map], and *Xia tian Qu*, the Chinese translation of Kaga Otohiko's *Kaerazaru natsu* [Summer of No Return]. Although the response from corporations is not as generous as anticipated at the time of the founding, the Association is committed to continued efforts.

### Asia Books Gather Readers

A decade ago, the books about Asia in Japanese bookstores were mainly travel guides or dry works of political/economic analysis, and reader-

ship was limited for both genres. Now interest in Asia is booming in a wide range of publishing fields including cooking, music, and culture. Where previously the number of Asia-related titles published per month averaged about 60, the figure has now passed 100. In 1994, ten publishers specializing in books on Asia formed a group through which book fairs and other events are organized.

Surveys show that the proportion of women interested in Asia has substantially increased. Bookstores specializing in Asia-related books in Tokyo say their female clientele has risen from 10 to 30 percent over the past ten years. Frequent travel within Asia has apparently enhanced familiarity with the region. The legacy of political tensions and strains relating to the war years once colored

## Translations of the Works of Ōe Kenzaburō

The following is a list of works currently available in or in the process of being translated into other languages as of January 1995. Works published in periodicals are, as a rule, not included.

*Aimaina Nihon no watashi* (1994): *Japan, the Dubious, and Myself* (in English, forthcoming, Pennsylvania State University); *Japan the Ambiguous and Myself, Nobel Prize Speech and Other Lectures* (in English, Kodansha International, 1995).

*Atama no ii "Ame no ki"* (1980): [The Clever Rain Tree]; *Der Kluge Regenbaum* (in German, Verlag Volk und Welt GmbH, 1994); (in French, forthcoming, Le Serpent a Plumes).

*Chiryōtō* (1990): [Tower of Curing]; (in German, forthcoming, Edition Q Verlags).

*Fui no oshi* (1958): [Unexpected Muteness]; *Und Plötzlich Stumm [Träume Aus Zehn Nächten]* (in German, Aufbau Verlag, 1975, 1994); see also *Shiiku* . . .

*Hiroshima nōto* (1965): [Hiroshima Notes]; (in English, forthcoming, Marion Boyars Publishers).

*Jinsei no shinseki* (1989): [Family for Life]; *Verwandte des Lebens* (in German, Edition Q Verlags, 1994); (in Korean, Woojin Publishing, 1995); (in German, forthcoming, Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag); (in English, forthcoming, Kodansha International).

*Kaba ni kamareru* (1985): [Bitten by a Hippopotamus]; *Der Kluge Regenbaum* (in German, Verlag Volk und Welt GmbH, 1994).

*Kakō seikatsusha* (1960): see *Shiiku* . . .

*Keirō shūkan* (1966): [Life in Decline]; (in German, forthcoming, Insel Verlag).

*Kimyō na shigoto* (1957): [An Odd Job], see *Shiiku* . . .

*Kojin teki na taiken* (1964): *A Personal Matter* (in English, Grove Press, Weidenfeld, Tuttle, 1968); *Mardrommen* (in Swedish, Norstedt & Soener, 1994); *Un Asunto Personal* (in Spanish, Losada, Argentina, 1971); *Una Cuestión Personal* (in Spanish, Anagrama, 1989); *Une Affaire Personnelle* (in

French, Stock, 1971); *Eine Persönliche Erfahrung* (in German, Suhrkamp, 1972); *Sprawa Osobista* (in Polish, Panstwowy, 1974); *Het Eigen Lot* (in Dutch, Meulenhoff, 1994); *Min Egen Sak* (in Norwegian, Gyldendal Norsk Forlag, 1994); *Eine Persönliche Erfahrung* (in Czech, State Publishing House); *En privatsag* (in Danish, Samlerrens Forlag, 1979); (in Portuguese, Livraria Civilização); (in Greek, forthcoming, Kastaniotis Editions); (in Chinese, forthcoming, Taiwan Tohan); (in Chinese, forthcoming, Kwang Fu Book Enterprise); (in Italian, forthcoming, Garzanti Editore).

*Kojinteki na taiken, Man'en gannen no futtobōru, Seiteki nin'gen, Shisha no ogori, Hiroshima nōto*: (in Chinese, forthcoming, Guangmian Ri Bao Publishers).

*Kōzui wa waga tamashii ni oyobi* (1973): [The Flood Reaches to My Soul] Ob'yali menya vody do dushi moei (in Russian, 1978).

*Man'en gannen no futtobōru* (1967): *The Silent Cry* (in English, Kodansha International, 1981); *Le jeu du siècle* (in French, Gallimard, 1985); *Il grido silenzioso* (in Italian, Garzanti, 1987); *Voetballen in 1860* (in Dutch, Meulenhoff, 1988); *O grito silencioso* (in Portuguese, Francisco Alves, Portugal, 1983; Abril, Brazil, 1986); *Tid for fotball* (in Swedish; Bonniers, 1989); *Die Brüder Nedokoro* (in German, S. Fischer, 1980); (in Greek, forthcoming, Kastaniotis Editions); (in Spanish, forthcoming, Editorial Anagrama); (in Norwegian, forthcoming, Cappelen Forlag); (in Polish, forthcoming, Vasco International); (in Chinese, forthcoming, Taiwan Tohan).

*Memushiri ko uchi* (1958): [Nip the Buds, Shoot the Kids]; *De knoppen Breken* (in Dutch, Meulenhoff, 1983); (in French, forthcoming, Gallimard); (in English, forthcoming, Marion Boyars Publishers).

*Mizukara waga namida o nuguitamau hi* (1972): [The Day He Himself Shall Wipe My Tears Away]; *De Dag Dat de Keizer Hoffelijk Mijn Tranen Droogt* (in Dutch, Meulenhoff, 1994); (in German, forthcoming, Suhrkamp Verlag); see also *Sora no kaibutsu agu* . . .



all associations with the rest of Asia, dividing people clearly into those who were interested and those who were not. Younger generations today appear less constrained by wartime memories and more able to develop a fresh, spontaneous interest in neighboring countries.

### Prolific on Childbirth/Childrearing

For young parents facing the childbearing and childrearing years, the spread of the nuclear family has meant that books and magazines are the most immediate source of information for the problems they face without experienced family members close to ask. In 1970, there were 7 childbirth- and childrearing-related periodicals, selling around 2.51 mil-

lion copies annually, but as of December 1993, there were 12 such magazines selling six times as many copies or 14.41 million copies despite the overall drop in the national birthrate.

Several best-selling book titles, too, have appeared, such as manga comic artist Matsui Natsuki's humorous diary *Warau shussan* [Childbirth with a Smile] (Jōhō Sentā Shuppankyoku), at 200,000 copies and Uchida Shungiku's *Watashi-tachi wa hanshoku shiteiru* [We're Reproducing] which sold 100,000 copies in one month.

### Multimedia Publishing

As the advances of the multimedia age catch on in Japan, popular interest in the use of computers

equipped with CD-ROM drives and audio and video capabilities is burgeoning. As word of the opening of Japan's own "information highway" gets out, the publishing industry is bursting with activity in this new field.

Already more than 100 titles have been published with the word "multimedia" in the title, led by best-sellers like Nishigaki Tōru's *Maruchimedia* [Multimedia] (Iwanami Shoten), Sugihara Yoshinori's *Zukai maruchimedia* [An Illustrated Guide to Multimedia] (Chūkei Shuppan), and NTT Mediascope's *Te ni toru yō ni maruchimedia ga wakaru hon* [Easy-access Guide to Multimedia] (Kanki Shuppan).

At least 10 new periodicals have appeared dealing with computers and CD-ROM software.

*Migawari yagi no hangeki* (1980): [The Scapegoat Rebels]; *Der Kluge Regenbaum* (in German, Verlag Volk und Welt GmbH, 1994).

*Moeagaru midori no ki* (1993-95): [A Green Tree in Flames]; (in German, forthcoming, S. Fischer Verlag GmbH).

*M/T to mori no fushigi no monogatari* (1986): [The Tale of M/T in the Mysterious Forest]; *M/T Och Berattelsen Om Skogens Under* (in Swedish, Albert Bonniers Forlag, 1992); *M/T et L'Histoire des Merveilles de La Forêt* (in French, Gallimard, 1989); (in Russian, Vsesvit); (in Danish, forthcoming, Gyldendalske Boghandel, Norskisk Forlag); (in Norwegian, Cappelen Forlag); (in Finnish, Tammi Publishers).

*Natsukashii toshi eno tegami* (1987): *Lettres aux Années de Nostalgie* (in French, Gallimard, 1993); (in Spanish, forthcoming, Editorial Anagrama); (in Italian, forthcoming, Garzanti Editore).

*Nin'gen no hitsuji* (1958): *Sheep* (in English, The Japan Quarterly, 1968); *Menschenschafe* (in German, Sinn und Form, 1994); see also *Shiiku* . . .

*Ōe Kenzaburō chosakushū*: [The Works of Ōe Kenzaburō]; (in English, forthcoming, Grove/Atlantic).

*Ōe Kenzaburō zenshū*: [Collected Works of Ōe Kenzaburō]; (in Korean, forthcoming, Koreaone Press).

*Okuretekita seinen* (1961): [The Young Man Arrived Late]; *Opozdnaya molodezh'* (in Russian, Progress, 1973); *Mladík, Který se Opozdil* (in Czech, Odeon, 1978); (in Bulgarian, forthcoming, Colibri).

*Pinchi rannā chōsho* (1982): *The Pinch Runner Memorandum* (in English, M.E. Sharp, 1994); *Zapiski Pinchrannera* (in Russian, 1983).

*Seiteki nin'gen, Seventin, Kyōdō seikatsu* (1963): (in Chinese, forthcoming, Yuan-shen Press).

*Seventin, Seiteki nin'gen* (1963): (in Dutch, forthcoming, Meulenhoff).

*Shiiku* (1958): *Der Fang* (in German, Erdmann, 1964); *The Catch* (in English, Kodansha International, 1966); *Mint Egy Allatot* (in Hungarian, Europa, 1967); *Zdobycz* (in Polish, Książka i Wiedza, 1972); (in German, forthcoming, Suhrkamp Verlag); see also *Sora no kaibutsu agui* . . .

*Shiiku, [Shisha no ogori, Kakō seikatsusha, Fui no oshi,*

*Kimyō na shigoto, Nin'gen no hitsuji, Warera no kyōki o ikinobiru michi o oshieyo*: (in Portuguese, forthcoming, Centro de Estudos Japoneses da Universidade de São Paulo).

*Shisha no ogori* (1958): *Lavish are the dead* (in English, The Japan Quarterly, 1965); *Der Stolz der Toten* (in German, Fischer, 1969); see also *Shiiku* . . .

*Shisha no ogori, Shiiku* (1958): (in Chinese, forthcoming, Taiwan Tohan).

*Shizukana seikatsu* (1990): (in French, Gallimard, 1974); *Stille Tage* (in German, Insel Verlag, 1994).

*Sora no kaibutsu agui* (1964): *Aghwee, the sky monster* (Evergreen Review) (in English, 1968); *Agui, Cūdoviste s Neba* (in Bulgarian, 1973); *Agwii, Le Monstre des Nuages* (in French, 1981); *Der Kluge Regenbaum* (in German, Verlag Volk und Welt GmbH, 1994).

*Sora no kaibutsu agui, [Mizukara waga namida o nuguitamau hi, Warera no kyōki o ikinobiru michi o oshieyo, shiiku]: Aghwee, the Sky Monster, [The Day He Himself Shall Wipe My Tears Away, Teach Us to Outgrow Our Madness, Prize Stock]* (in English, Grove, 1977); *L R Os At Vokse Fra Vort Vanvid* (in Danish, Nordisic, 1988); *Insegnaci a Superare Lanostra Pazzia* (in Italian, Garzanti, 1992); *Dites-Nous Comment Survivre à Notre Folie* (in French, Gallimard, 1982); (in Spanish, forthcoming, Editorial Anagrama).

*Tampenshū*: [Short Stories]; *De Hoogmoedige Doden* (in Dutch, Meulenhoff, 1989); (in Swedish, forthcoming, Bonniers Forlag).

*Warera no kyōki o ikinobiru michi o oshieyo*: see *Shiiku* and *Sora no kaibutsu agui* . . .

#### Notes

1. This list is based on applications for copyright by Japanese title, so titles of forthcoming translations are not included.

2. The data provided in this list was graciously provided by Orion Press: 1-58 Kanda Jimbo-cho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 101; Tel: 03-3295-1405; Fax: 03-3295-4366. Those desiring further information should contact Orion Press directly.

3. Square brackets denote tentative translations.



## Major Publishers in Tokyo 3

For this issue we have selected three of Tokyo's major publishers known for quality books in literature, including collected works, as well as for dictionaries and encyclopedias.

### Chikuma Shobō

Komuro Bldg.  
2-5-3 Kuramae  
Taito-ku, Tokyo 111  
Tel: 03-5687-2671  
Fax: 03-5687-1585  
Founded: 1940  
Staff: 107

Specializing in Japanese literature and literary criticism from its founding, Chikuma is known for its editions of collected works of literature. It produced a number of best sellers including Dazai Osamu's *Ningen shikkaku* [No Longer Human] in 1948 and Kawabata Yasunari's *Sembazuru* [A Thousand Cranes] in 1952, but ran into financial troubles stemming from poor sales of its monthly magazine *Tembō*. In 1953 it staked its future in the industry on *Gendai Nihon bungaku zenshū*, a collection of contemporary Japanese literature, which was so successful that it continued to 99 volumes. Sets of complete works of individual authors, especially those of Ibuse Masuji (1898–1993) and Akutagawa Ryūnosuke (1892–1927), sold well, making Chikuma a leader in this genre. Its publishing of multi-volume literature collections went on into the latter part of the 1960s, with *Sekai bungaku zenshū* [Collected Works of World Literature] and *Gendai Nihon bungaku taikei* [Library of Contemporary Japanese Literature], but, debts accumulating to ¥6 billion by 1978 forced the company into bankruptcy. The company applied for help under the Corporation Reorganization Law, but the agonies of one of the country's leading publishers of quality books had a profound impact, not only on the publishing industry but Japanese society as a whole.

Chikuma continued to put out books, in the social sciences and many other fields. By 1991 it had achieved complete recovery. Among its current major sellers are *Chikuma bungaku no mori* [Chikuma Literature Library] and the paperback series *Chikuma tetsugaku no mori* [Chikuma Philosophy Library].

### Heibonsha

5-16-19 Himon'ya  
Meguro-ku, Tokyo 152  
Tel: 03-5721-1221  
Fax: 03-5721-1239  
Founded: 1914  
Staff: 94

Successful from before World War II for its encyclopedias and collections of popular literature, Heibonsha became a leader in dictionary publishing in the postwar period with *Sekai rekishi jiten* [Dictionary of World History] and *Jidō hyakka jiten* [Children's Encyclopedia]. Its *Sekai daihyakka jiten* [World Encyclopedia] (32 vols., 1 suppl.) began coming out in 1955, but was an expensive edition that did not sell well, perpetrating a financial crisis. In 1961, a more reasonably priced, mass market edition, the *Kokumin hyakka jiten* [People's Encyclopedia], however, became an immediate hit, placing seventh on the best seller list that year. This set is the best-selling reference work of its kind in Japanese publishing history.

Dictionaries and encyclopedias have continued to be Heibonsha's forte. It also publishes the deluxe format monthly *Taiyō*, started in 1963. Filled with colorful visual material in tasteful layouts and reflecting the know-how gained from dictionary and literature collection publishing, it became a forerunner of the current "mook" (durable, "book-like magazine") boom.

In 1973, the company launched a magazine featuring animals called *Anima* (ceased publication in 1993), but its financial difficulties in 1981 became the stuff of city news. Fearing that Heibonsha's plight reflected a critical time for the publishing industry as a whole, a group of prominent writers and scholars launched a support movement which helped the company surmount the crisis. In 1992, in another bid to keep abreast of the times, Heibonsha put out a CD-ROM edition of its *Sekai daihyakka jiten*, and continues to maintain a solid reputation in the industry.

### Kawade Shobō Shinsha

2-32-2 Sendagaya  
Shibuya-ku, Tokyo 151  
Tel: 03-3404-1201  
Fax: 03-3404-6386  
Founded: 1957  
Staff: 47

Kawade Shobō Shinsha's origins go back to Kawade Shobō, a company founded in 1887 that was well known for its books on literature and the arts. In its early days, the predecessor company produced mostly educational works in agriculture, science and other fields, but from the 1930s onward, broadened its list to include titles in literature, philosophy, and art and was noted for series like *Nihon bungaku zenshū* [Collected Works of Japanese Literature] and *Sekai bijutsu zenshū* [Collected Works of World Art]. Kawade Shobō went bankrupt in 1957, but started over under the name Kawade Shobō Shinsha, and its *Sekai bungaku zenshū* [Collected Works of World Literature] became a fixture in almost every home.

The company actively assisted the discovery and encouragement of upcoming writers with its monthly journal *Bungei*, where many important works like Mishima Yukio's *Sado Kōshaku fujin* [Madame de Sade] and Yoshimoto Ryūmei's *Kyōdō genshōron* [Collective Illusions] were first serialized, and put out many important works of original fiction.

The company experienced its second bankruptcy in 1968 but managed to recover again. The recession of the 1970s brought a new crisis, which it fought with personnel cutbacks, internal restructuring, and a new paperback series. Among its biggest best-sellers are *Nantonaku kurisutaru* [It Seems Like Crystal], a penetrating portrayal of Japanese youth (Tanaka Yasuo, 1981) and the much-discussed tanka poetry collection *Sarada kinenbi* [Our Salad Anniversary] (Tawara Machi, 1987). Kawade is known for its ambitious projects and solid editorial discipline, and has been a training ground for many well-known editors, journalists, and writers.