

BOOKS

Recent Publications on Japan

CULTURE

ADULT MANGA: CULTURE AND POWER IN CONTEMPORARY JAPANESE SOCIETY

SHARON KINSELLA

Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press, 2000
228 pages. Cloth, £35; paper, £14.90

The author, in a research project, spent nine months working in the editorial offices of a large Tokyo publisher of *manga* comics, interviewing editors, illustrators, critics and publishers. The result is an analysis of the rise and fall of the mammoth manga industry since the 1960s and a study of the changing attitudes about manga. The author points out that manga is an industry first, before it is a cultural fixture. The book traces the brief history of the medium and describes how manga are produced as well as the tone of relationships between editors and artists. Among the controversies in the industry addressed at length is the suggestion that there is a relationship between violence, especially sexual violence, and portrayals of such acts in manga. The author also discusses the assimilation of manga into Japanese culture and points out in the introduction, "The closer we look at the making of manga the more we see that it is not so much 'Japanese culture' as contemporary culture in a modern industrial society."

NEGOTIATING IDENTITY IN CONTEMPORARY JAPAN: THE CASE OF KIKOKUSHIJO

CHING LIN PANG

London and New York: Kegan Paul International, 2000
337 pages. £65 (\$110)

This is a case study of *kikokushijo*, or Japanese returnee children who return to Japan after having spent a significant period of time abroad with expatriate parents, socializing in ways quite unlike those at home. The author points out that in many cases, returnee children are made to undergo a process of having the "foreign-ness" peeled away and having to be made Japanese again. The book thus approaches the subject with emphasis on the role of education and the rationale for putting Japanese children through a Japanese education system to return them to mainstream Japanese society. In describing the process, the author provides several first-person descriptions of how returnees live, think, express themselves and regard themselves when they have come back to Japan.

ECONOMICS

FINANCE, GOVERNANCE, AND COMPETITIVENESS IN JAPAN

EDITED BY MASAHIKO AOKI

AND GARY R. SAXONHOUSE

Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2000
289 pages. £40

Leading economists have assessed Japan's distinctive economic institutions and how they have contributed to the nation's successes and failures to provide a perspective on how the process will shape Japan's economic development in the 21st century. The book examines the evolution of the nation's financial system and the changing character of corporate governance, as well as the changing roles of central government and the legal system in guiding the Japanese economy. The book describes the structure of the nation's main

banks—its money-center banks—and discusses the need to encourage venture-capital lending. It also recalls the nation's banking crisis and discusses how it could have been avoided in the context of describing a system of administrative guidance that is no longer either possible or necessary.

**CAPITAL AND LABOUR IN JAPAN:
THE FUNCTIONS OF TWO FACTOR
MARKETS**

TOSHIAKI TACHIBANAKI
AND ATSUHIRO TAKI

London and New York: Routledge, 2000
240 pages. £60

This book examines the influences of Japan's capital market and labor market on the nation's economic performance, and looks into whether these markets have performed efficiently to enhance the nation's competitive power and what changes can be anticipated. The authors provide comparisons between the way financial institutions work in Japan and in the United States and Europe, and discuss the effects of such Japanese institutions as lifetime employment and seniority-based wage and promotion systems, and the impact of keiretsu corporate relationships, cross-shareholdings and main bank systems on the nation's economy.

**INTERNAL LABOUR MARKETS
IN JAPAN**

KENN ARIGA, GIORGIO BRUNELLO
AND YASUSHI OHKUSA

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,
2000
291 pages. £40

The authors approach the question of what effect the prolonged economic slowdown in Japan will have on the nation's future by looking at the composition of its labor market and the way labor relations have evolved in the past 20 years. To provide perspective, the book examines how the Japanese labor market emerged from

the oil crises of the 1970s. It also looks at the effect of the bursting of the asset-inflated economic bubble in the early 1990s, and the impact of long-term economic sluggishness on the labor market to weigh the extent to which the structure of the nation's labor force might change. The book provides detailed studies of the way labor is organized in large and medium-scale companies and how the process has changed, with examples of how wages and ranking of employees within companies are structured.

EDUCATION

**TRANSNATIONAL COMPETENCE:
RETHINKING THE U.S.-JAPAN
EDUCATIONAL RELATIONSHIP**

EDITED BY JOHN N. HAWKINS
AND WILLIAM K. CUMMINGS

Albany, New York: State University
of New York Press, 2000
205 pages. \$18.95

As Yale University's Richard J. Wood notes in the introduction to this book, the growth of a borderless world economy involves considerations well beyond the way goods and services are distributed. The contributors address several of the other factors involved in examining the relationship between Japan and the United States in an educational context. They address approaches to foreign language education, cultural and educational exchanges, high school, college and technological exchanges and knowledge network, and offer specific recommendations in each area.

ESSAY

**TOTTO-CHAN'S CHILDREN:
A GOODWILL JOURNEY TO
THE CHILDREN OF THE WORLD**

TETSUKO KUROYANAGI

Translated by Dorothy Britton

Tokyo, New York and London: Kodansha
International, 2000
222 pages. ¥2,500