

players. And please don't call him by some private nickname.

### Not a party to the talks

If you follow these do's and don't's, you will be able to rely on your interpreter—and hence to observe common civility and look your audience right in the eye. Even in one-on-one negotiations, remember that you are not negotiating with the interpreter. Don't talk to the interpreter. Talk to the other side, and rely on the interpreter to convey your message while you establish eye contact.

Likewise, it is not the interpreter's job, nor is he competent to make value judgments. Don't talk for half an hour and then turn to the interpreter and say, "We don't have time for the whole thing. Just give a summary." The interpreter should not be expected to do that, nor should he take that responsibility.

Along this same line, please don't try to bring the interpreter into the negotiations. Interpreters are not mediators. Nor are we able to take sides. Our job is to ensure that each side is able to present its position. If this is accurately conveyed, we hope it will lead to understanding. If there is understanding of each other's positions, we hope there will be agree-

ment. But whether or not there is understanding and agreement is, literally, none of our business.

(Ken Yokota, president of Linguabank)

## Bookshelf

### From Bonsai to Levi's

By George Fields

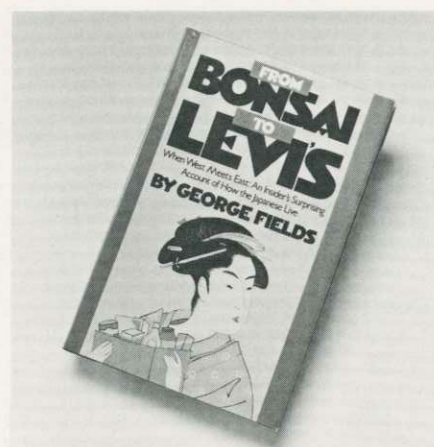
Published by Macmillan Publishing Company

1983, New York

213 pages, US\$14.95

Seen from overseas, the Japanese market looks too big to pass up. Seen up-close, it appears deceptively similar to other industrialized markets. Modern telecommunications, Kentucky Fried Chicken, rush-hour traffic jams... they're all here.

Yet George Fields points out in *From Bonsai to Levi's* that the leap of logic that leads the Western businessman to assume that "these people" should be doing things the same way they are done in Peoria—and its corollary that any failure



to penetrate the Japanese market is part of a deliberate Japanese plot to keep out imports—is dangerous because it blinds the newcomer to the many underlying cultural differences that make Japan a distinctly separate market.

Fields is no newcomer. Born and raised in Japan, fluent in Japanese, and with nearly two decades of marketing experience in Japan, he has seen and learned enough to recognize the need to fit local cultural values.

Yet he also knows not to pontificate. Instead, he shows us around. He takes us

## Taste of Tokyo

### Toritako—specialist in fowl dishes

"Toritako" specializes in fowl. It is a small restaurant located in Asakusa, the colorful plebeian old downtown of Tokyo. It was founded in 1927 by the father of the present proprietor.

It has become extremely difficult nowadays for people living in Tokyo, even Japanese, to experience the nostalgic atmosphere of old Japan. But Toritako is right next to the compounds of Sensoji Temple, popularly known as Asakusa Kannon temple, and Sanja Shrine, where the atmosphere of old Japan still lingers. A person standing at Toritako's entrance and looking at the Kannon Temple and the five-storied pagoda can momentarily forget the hustle and bustle of Tokyo's concrete urban jungle.

A huge paper lantern with the name "Toritako" brush-painted on it hangs at the entrance and is visible from 100 meters away, making the restaurant easy to find. The lantern is reminiscent of the old days when Tokyo was known as Edo.

Another feature of this restaurant is its second-generation proprietor, Mr. T.

Masuda, who is a true *Edokko* (the natives of Tokyo, known for their high-spirited character). During business hours, he keeps the front entrance locked. He looks out the window of the kitchen beside the entrance and opens the door only for those who pass his scrutiny. Drunks and sinister-looking characters are kept out.

The proprietor prepares only ten servings of each dish a day. He keeps a well trained cat which goes out when the first customer of the day walks in. After the restaurant closes at 9 o'clock, the master whistles the theme song from "Headlight" and the cat comes home.

The proprietor describes himself as one of the three "original characters" of Asakusa. Who would doubt it?

The restaurant is so small that the tables and counter can accommodate only two dozen customers. The specialties of the house include fried skin of *aigamo*, a crossbreed of wild and domesticated ducks, garnished with grated radish and chopped green onion, *aigamo* cooked in an iron pan *sukiyaki* style, two or three skewers a day of *yakitori* of the salted skin of locally-raised chickens (not broilers), *sake*-steamed chicken liver which goes so well with French bread that some regular European customers bring their own bread with them, and *tatakinabe*, or minced fowl cooked in an iron pot.

The bill usually comes to around ¥5,000

per person including drinks. The taste is No. 1 in Tokyo; the atmosphere is No. 1 in Tokyo; and the idiosyncracies of the proprietor are No. 1 in Tokyo. It is well worth asking a Japanese friend to take you to Toritako.

(Yoshimichi Hori, editor-in-chief)



Business hours: 18:00-21:00  
Closed on Mondays. Reservation necessary.

Address: 2-32, Asakusa 2-chome, Taito-ku, Tokyo  
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shopping with the Japanese housewife, and explains the concerns that govern her purchases. He talks about "image" and brand loyalty, and makes it understandable. He explains market segmentation, and how each product appeals to the customers in its segment and every consumer is clearly aware of what segment he is in.

Then he looks at specific products which have succeeded here, and there are many. Even more important, he examines the failures—again there are many—to see where they went wrong.

Cake mixes, for example, fell flat in Japan even though General Mills created a special mix for the Japanese market. Fields explains why. He also explains why Johnnie Walker Red-label failed to sell well, and even dragged the Black-label premium Scotch down with it, when it was priced closer to the mass-market brands.

Far from being illogically resistant to all outsiders, Japan has its own logic which the outsider is advised to understand if he ever hopes to become an insider. There are layers upon layers of Japanese socio-cultural tradition, and a new product coming into Japan can only hope to scratch the surface. Deeper values will not change in a few years or even decades. This is obvious when Fields explains it, yet it is all too often ignored by people who look at the differences and cry non-tariff barrier.

From *Bonsai to Levi's* is a welcome antidote to the too-pat explanations and emotionalism which pervade so much of today's commentary on the Japanese market and Japanese business practices.

(Fred Uleman)

## Japan's Postwar Economy

— *An Insider's View of its History and its Future* —

By Tatsuro Uchino

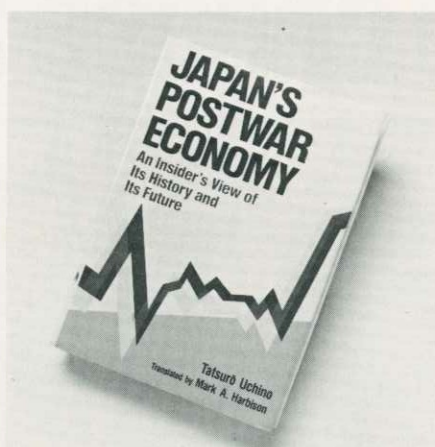
Published by Kodansha International Ltd.

1983, Tokyo

286 pages; US\$17.95 (¥3,500)

Japanese economic history is a barren patch for the English reader. Despite a plethora of facile essays on "how to" or more recently "how not to" learn from Japan, factual accounts of the Japanese economy are hard to find in readable form.

*Japan's Postwar Economy — An Insider's View of its History and its Future* — attempts to plug that gap. First published in 1978 and now released in English, the book covers in painstaking detail the twists and turns of Japan's postwar economic problems and government measures to deal with them. It should really be called "an insider's ac-



count of the Economic Planning Agency," for it was in the EPA that the author, Tatsuro Uchino, spent most of his career before assuming his current post as professor of economics at Tokyo's Sophia University.

Having helped draft 15 of Japan's economic White Papers, first in the Economic Stabilization Board and then in the EPA, Uchino is well placed to catalog the boom and bust cycles that Japan, in common with other industrialized countries, has experienced in the postwar years, as well as some peculiarly Japanese economic landmarks.

His account of the "bamboo shoot life" amid the devastation at the end of the war, when Japanese shed their precious belongings to buy essentials on the black-market, and the "showa genroku" or "age of peace and prosperity" coined by future Prime Minister Takeo Fukuda to describe the reckless materialism and rapid growth of the period 1965-70 (shades of Harold Macmillan's earlier address to the British of "You've never had it so good") give a fitting perspective to the mind-boggling array of charts and statistics that fill the book.

This wealth of detail on macroeconomic policymaking is unfortunately accompanied by very little in the way of original analysis; at times it appears that Uchino is merely rehashing debates over White Papers and then the finished product. Elsewhere the book offers little insight into a more interesting aspect of Japanese economic policymaking, the working of the EPA's big brother, the Ministry of International Trade and Industry, in directing industry.

In the epilogue to the book, Uchino suddenly casts off his academic's gown and starts preaching like a politician. Here he reveals himself as an outspoken advocate of increasing domestic demand (a view shared by the EPA's current director, Toshio Komoto). In quick-fire burst, Uchino blasts the government for "its excessively laissez-faire land policy" that has helped create a severe land shortage, given ordinary Japanese cramped living

conditions and prevented most from ever hoping to own their own home. Next on the hit list are the long working hours and lack of holidays endured by many Japanese, and then Japan's protectionist agricultural and financial policies. The government also gets a clip around the ears for its meager foreign aid policies.

All this sounds fine, but the lack of background information and argument is disconcerting, and seems unconnected with the meticulous recording of history in the rest of the book. For instance, Uchino agrees that fiscal reform is a pressing issue to help solve the enormous public debt, but he fails to explain how this can be reconciled with government-led deflation.

As Walter Mondale recently quipped of Gary Hart, "Where's the beef?"

(Peter McGill)

## Japan Style Sheet

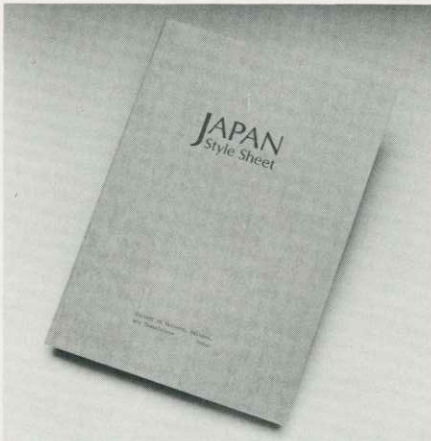
Published by the Society of Writers, Editors, and Translators

1983, Tokyo

54 pages; US\$5.95 (¥1,500)

One of the most interesting "small" (54 pages) publications that I have seen this year is the *Japan Style Sheet*.

Published by the Society of Writers, Editors, and Translators (SWET), the *Japan Style Sheet* answers all of those thorny questions that plague everyone who writes about Japan.



Are macrons generally necessary? Is it "two kimono" or "two kimonos"? Should "kabuki" be capitalized? The authors suggest answers to all of these questions (yes; two kimonos; no) and many more. Where opinion is divided, they give the supporting arguments for each side. There is also a special section on historical and other conversion tables.

Not available in bookstores, this valuable addition to any library can be obtained only from SWET, P.O. Box 8, Komae Yubinkyoku, Komae-shi, Tokyo 201 (¥1,500 postpaid) or The Bookery, 2916 North Beltline Road, Irving, Texas 75062 (\$5.95 postpaid).

(Jim Ross)