

lar to those experienced in Britain and the U.S. as the Japanese economy matures and becomes more enmeshed in the boom-bust pattern of international business? An increasing number of mergers and acquisitions, particularly of hostile takeovers, in countries with many structural similarities to Japan (Germany and the Netherlands, for example) ought to make those concerned for the future of Japanese corporations sit up and take note.

And what of the new generation of Japanese? Brought up on prosperity, they have not experienced the stresses of the war and the trauma of the postwar period. Unlike the older generation, therefore, the younger generation is driven by consumerism. They are prepared to work only within certain limits, only for as short a time as necessary, and only so as to affect as small a part of their private lives as possible. The drive and ambition are lacking, and the effect this will have on the economy will not be helped by the widely sponsored attempt to shorten the number of working days and weeks, nor by the drive to increase consumerism and pleasure-orientation in Japan.

There is a Western saying in relation to family fortunes: people often go from rags to riches and back again in three generations. This needs to be kept in mind by Japanese people in connection with their country's fortunes: no empire, economic or military, lasts forever.

Matsumoto does not, like Marx, imagine new realities which have not yet come into being. Like Adam Smith, he describes the realities which exist today. The English translation keeps his Japanese turns of phrase, sometimes unnecessarily, but these do help to give readers an insight into the way the Japanese language works. Always careful to define his terms, Matsumoto has produced a scholarly work which is highly readable. If people from the West wish to understand Japan, they will find that his is probably the most important single book which has been written on the subject so far.

Prabhu S. Gupta  
Chairman

Advance: Management Training Ltd.

## Nanki: Current Of Change

Japanese history, culture, even the character of the Japanese people, have been shaped in part by the environment and climate created by the two major ocean currents that flow along either side of the 2,000-kilometer north-south arc of the Japanese archipelago. The warm Kuroshio or Japan Current originating at some point between the Philippines and eastern Taiwan stays close to the underside of the Japanese islands before veering off northeast of Tokyo to flow to the northern Pacific. The cold Oyashio or Okhotsk Current flows southward from the Sea of Okhotsk and the Bering Sea splitting at the Kuril Islands into two streams, one going into the Sea of Japan and the other into the Pacific Ocean.

The two currents have blessed the waters around Japan with an abundance of fish. It is no wonder that seafood is such an important part of the Japanese diet. How important is clearly evident in the great variety of fishing terms, the many different names for the same kind of fish used to distinguish its age, size, the location where it was caught, season and the like, and the colorful vocabulary of words concerning the sea that is an integral part of the Japanese language. As in other cultures, there is little to no waste of this major food source. Just as caribou are for the Alaskan Eskimos, sheep for the nomadic peoples of the Asian continent, or pigs for the Germans, fish for the Japanese are an indispensable part of the national diet and are eaten from head to tail with very little waste. A large fish such as a salmon, for example, can be prepared in nearly 200 different ways.

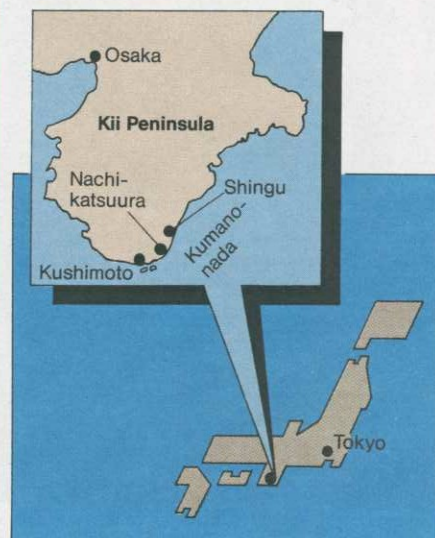
### Vivid legends

More than simply providers of food, the Kuroshio and Oyashio currents have brought to the Japanese islands the people and cultures from the rice-growing regions of the south and the nomadic populations of the north. Vivid legends of the arrival of foreign peoples are still re-

counted in those parts of Japan where the currents come in closest contact. The legend of Xu Fu told in Shingu, now a city on the southeastern coast of the Kii Peninsula, is one example. Legend has it that Xu Fu was ordered by an ancient Chinese emperor in the 3rd century B.C. to seek out the elixir of immortality. Xu Fu's travels eventually brought him to Shingu, where he stayed to teach the natives various farming, fishing, whaling, and even papermaking, techniques. The legend says that people with superior technologies came over from the Asian continent to settle in Japan.

Jutting out from the main Honshu island, Kii is the largest peninsula in Japan. A part of the Kuroshio current called the Kumano-nada flows along its southeastern coast. The Kumano-nada is an abundant source of yellowtail, tuna and bonito, but many a ship has gone down in its rough waters. The Kii Peninsula itself is almost equally treacherous, most of it heavily forested mountain terrain. In the southern half of the peninsula, known as Nanki, some 500-meter-high hills march down to the sea to form a rugged ria coastline. The Kuroshio current keeps the end of the peninsula relatively warm, annual temperatures averaging 15 degrees Celsius, and there is a lot of subtropical foliage.

For centuries, small coastal craft provided the only access to the towns and



talents who is said to have excelled not only in painting but also in martial arts, horseback riding and swimming. He was an avid traveler.

To the modern eye, Rosetsu's work surpasses that of his master in many ways. He is more skillful, has greater artistic sensibility, and a better sense of construction. The sweeping tiger and dragon motifs each covering six *fusuma* in the Muryoji collection, are sophisticated yet vigorous in execution and full of vitality and humor. The tiger panels made a big hit at the Japanese art exhibition of the Edo period, sponsored by the Royal

Academy of Arts, held in London for six months in 1981-82.

The tiger *fusuma* are back at Muryoji now and can be seen in all their glory without any intervening glass shield. That will not be for long, however, according to Mrs. Hirano, the kindly old woman who maintains vigil at the gallery entrance, who tells me that all of the works in the collection will soon be encased in glass to protect them from further erosion and damage.

I asked Mrs. Hirano about the population of Kushimoto. "The town is shrinking, without a doubt. There are only around

18,000 where there used to be 20,000. The young ones leave because there's no work for them here." Like so many farming and fishing villages and mountain hamlets, Kushimoto is feeling the effects of a decline in resources and industrial reconstruction. Once the focus of the local whaling industry, Kushimoto today is rapidly depopulating.

Taiji, another famous whaling town not far from Kushimoto, will be the focus of this column in the next issue.

Ritsuko Misu  
Editorial Manager

Journal of Japanese Trade & Industry

## Table Talk

### Le Lys dans la Vallée

This June I had an opportunity to attend the Second "Europe-Japan" Aspen Conference, held in Les Baux de Provence in Southern France by the Japan Economic Foundation and the Institut Aspen France.

On a plateau branching out of the Alpilles range there are the crumbling remains of the castle fortress and mansion of the Les Baux family, which ruled the province for 500 years. The tableland, a sheet of bare rock extending nearly a kilometer at an elevation of 100 meters, commands a panoramic view of Les Baux de Provence lying at its feet. It was wonderful beyond description. The village spreading out in all directions from the rock citadel is a living record of the rise and fall of the Les Baux family. It is well worth visiting.

But before I say anything more, I must mention the food served at the local restaurant Baumannière, praised by a gourmet friend as "the best not only in France but in the world." I returned to Japan with the quintessence of French cuisine still lingering on my tongue.

Though it is not widely known, an excellent French restaurant opened here in February this year. Le Lys dans la Vallée is located in the town of Nishikata in Bunkyo Ward, a quiet section of Tokyo which still retains the ambience of a tranquil upper-class neighborhood. This restaurant, its name taken from a famous novel by Honoré de Balzac, was remodeled from a Japanese-style wooden house with a beautiful garden dating back to the turn-of-the-century Meiji period.

Enveloped in this natural blend of serenity and elegance, I was in bliss even before I sampled the dinner. Modestly appointed, the interior is a refined reflection of the personality of the graceful woman owner with her flair for artistic beauty. The cuisine itself was in no way inferior to that of food served at a top-class restaurant in Paris.

Prices are moderate, with lunchtime courses starting from ¥6,000, and dinner courses ranging between ¥12,000 and ¥20,000. The restaurant has 6,000 bottles of more than 200 varieties of wine on the racks of a wine cellar created by remodeling a traditional white-washed *dozo* storage-house. Its impressive stock includes Calvados 1929 and 1950 and Armagnac 1935 which I urge any reader to try at least once.

Just to whet your appetite, I reprint a portion of the menu: Soupe de pêche (¥2,500); Gelée d'aubergine (¥2,200); Poisson grillé au beurre blanc (¥5,200);

Pigeon farcie au foie gras (¥7,200); Canard au *nori* (¥6,200); Ris de veau et langue de bœuf sauté (¥4,500); and Côte d'agneau rôti (¥5,800)

(Yoshimichi Hori, editor-in-chief)

Address: 2-7-15 Nishikata, Bunkyo-ku  
Tel: (03) 5684-0770

Hours: noon to 2 p.m. for lunch and 6 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. for dinner. Closed on Sundays and national holidays. Reservations required. There is no conspicuous sign. Call ahead, and somebody will come up to guide you.

