



**Editor: Sean Curtin**

**Managing Editor: Clare Barclay**

**W**elcome to the second edition of Japan Book Review. In this issue we have some sharply contrasting books, starting off with a look at how the latest developments in risk management are sustaining Japanese capitalism and then turning in the opposite direction to chart the decline of the left in Japanese politics. The next two books span the spectrum of history from the shinkansen, icon of Japanese modernity, to the prehistoric Jomon period. The regular memoirs section features a personal account of life in prewar Shanghai and Tokyo. We also examine a book on the development of a remote Japanese outpost that was eventually swallowed up by an expanding metropolis.

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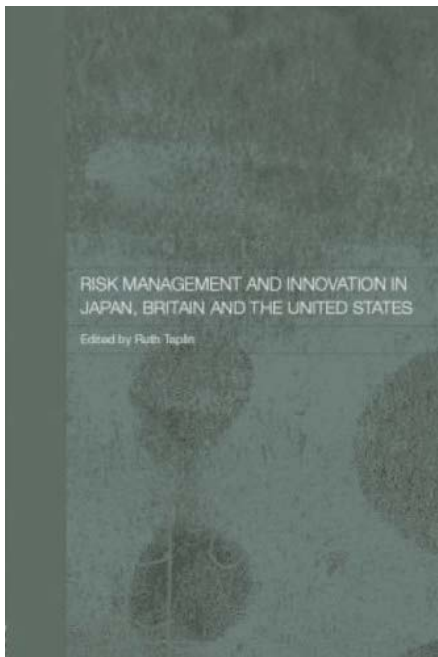
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### Risk Management and Innovation in Japan, Britain and the United States,

Edited by Ruth Taplin

Routledge, 182 pages including index, ISBN 0-415-36806-5

Review by Sean Curtin



This groundbreaking book offers fresh insights and analysis on the distinctive ways business in Japan, the United States and the United Kingdom responds to risk and innovation. Assessing and managing risk is becoming increasingly important to both domestic and international companies, especially in Japan where firms are struggling to keep pace with the fast moving global environment. Several chapters focus on Japan, particularly those by Anthony Trenton, a legal specialist in intellectual property law, and Masatoshi Kuratomi, the Development Bank of Japan's UK representative. This very timely collection of research papers, edited by Professor Ruth Taplin the director of the Centre for Japanese and East Asia Studies, emphasizes the need for a strong cross-cultural and interdisciplinary approach to risk management (RM) in today's rough and tumble global market. She observes, "In a globalized world it is becoming imperative to understand the variations in risk taken at a cultural level, which affect business decisions profoundly."

Until recently, Japan was classified as a prime example of a society which was highly risk adverse, a trait strongly reflected in the agonizingly slow decision making processes of both its domestic and international enterprises. By European, and most definitely American, standards, the typical Japanese boardroom takes far too long to make management decisions. However, emerging risks, the relentless tempo of the global market and the rising economic might of China are all forcing a radical rethink on a reluctant Japan.

Professor Taplin argues that to survive companies, "must innovate at a previously unparalleled rate and in the context of greater uncertainty." To thrive firms have to make their products and services more competitive and add value. A business must understand how to both manage and protect risk, innovation and intellectual property (IP). As the percentage of a company's assets represented by intangibles is constantly rising, essential innovation and the corresponding exposure to risk are becoming inextricably linked to IP related issues.

The typical Japanese firm is also finding its assets becoming less and less tangible, while the breakneck velocity of global information technology is making a cautious and prolonged decision-making approach obsolete.

Japanese business is facing a simple choice: markedly elevate the importance of risk management (RM) or face extinction. Where domestic models cannot be modified to meet this challenge, innovative non-Japanese constructs are rapidly being adopted. This process is significantly reshaping business strategies. A similarly dramatic transformation has already occurred in the way Japanese companies handle intellectual property rights (see *Exploiting Patent Rights and a New Climate for Innovation in Japan, 2003*, also edited by Ruth Taplin) and it appears RM is now following a similar trajectory path.

The Development Bank of Japan's (DBJ) Masatoshi Kuratomi describes some of the emerging strategies Tokyo is adopting to tackle the new RM challenges. He details how the state is using government institutes like the DBJ to cope with the RM transition phase. For example, private financial institutions and the DBJ are assisting small and medium size enterprises to deal with the risks of re-starting bankrupt businesses by utilizing their IP for bridging loans and leverage purposes.

The various chapters of the book convincingly argue that both Japan and Europe must substantially change their approach to RM if companies want to prosper in an increasingly complex global market. The heightened awareness of risk in both Japan and Europe is also creating a greater demand, and lucrative opportunities, for insurance services which match these newly emerging needs. While banking has already undergone a substantive metamorphosis in the last decade, insurance has somewhat lagged behind and is only now adapting to the new realities of the shifting global landscape.

Underling the financial sector's interest in this cutting-edge book, it was launched at Lloyds of London on 1 November 2005 with a keynote speech delivered by Lord Levene, chairman of the UK insurance giant Lloyds. He emphasized the importance of addressing emerging risk and how this was changing the insurance industry. Some of the authors,

including Professor Gerry Dickenson, Vice Secretary General of the Geneva Association, and editor Professor Ruth Taplin, also spoke about the importance of developments occurring in Tokyo, Washington and London and their wider implications on international markets.

Globalization is transforming risk management from a once fairly narrowly focused speciality, traditionally anchored in insurance, into an important multi-disciplined field, spanning international law, finance, intellectual property rights, technology, engineering, inter-cultural studies and beyond.

This comprehensive work also examines RM standards, emerging risks, the managing of risks in a variety of sectors (including marketing, banking, venture capital, insurance and patents), and the way RM has evolved within a range of organizations.

The book also reminds us that planet Earth is awash with a vast spectrum of domestic and international risks that can seriously affect business. Local threats encompass everything from a natural disaster like Hurricane Katrina to man-made catastrophes like a Chernobyl meltdown. On the global front there are a host even more potential destructive threats like a pandemic caused by bird flu, HIV/AIDS, global warming, a superweed spawned from GM technology and terrorism, inter alia. The breakneck speed of the global bandwagon is amplifying the potential danger adding another dimension to risk management.

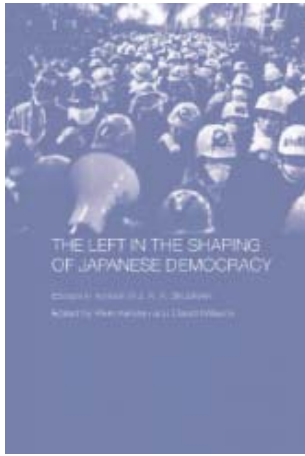
You may have thought that risk management was a dull subject, but reading this thought-provoking collection of essays will probably make you reconsider.

A different version of this review originally appeared in Asia Times Online, <http://www.atimes.com>, and is republished with permission.

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## The Left in the Shaping of Japanese Democracy: Essays in honour of J.A.A. Stockwin,

Edited by Rikki Kersten and David Williams

Routledge, 2006, soft back (ISBN10: 0-415-334345-7) and hardback (ISBN10: 0-415-33434-9)

Review by Sir Hugh Cortazzi

This festschrift was presented to Professor Arthur Stockwin at a reception at Daiwa House in London on 21 February 2006 as a tribute from former graduate students on his retirement as Professor at the Nissan Institute at Oxford. As Rikki Kersten in her tribute at the beginning of this book states Arthur Stockwin has made a singular contribution to the study of modern Japanese politics. He has asserted: "the ongoing importance of understanding Japan in the post-Cold War, unipolar world. The facile dismissal of Japan as a nation of relevance on the basis of economic performance alone is not merely wrong, but as Arthur tells us, it would make us miss one of the most exciting periods in the history of political reform in Japan."

Arthur has covered a wide spectrum in his study of Japanese politics and his books such as *Governing Japan: Divided Politics in a Major Economy* and *The Dictionary of Modern Japanese Politics* will remain invaluable to students for a long time.

Arthur who had not seen the book in advance but knew that it was devoted to the left in Japanese politics gave those present a masterly if inevitably brief expose of the way in which the opposition to the Liberal Democratic Party had developed over the last sixty years. In this he made some interesting comparisons with Britain reminding his audience of the importance for a healthy parliamentary democracy of having a potentially electable opposition party. He noted that the Democratic Party was an amorphous coalition which posed little threat to LDP dominance. In the past the various left wing parties had at least been able to ensure that the LDP did not get its way all the time.

It is perhaps a pity that this festschrift is devoted primarily to the 'left' in Japanese politics but Arthur did ensure in his writings that the opposition parties were not just written off by political scientists as irrelevant. So the choice of theme for the symposium on which this volume is based is understandable.

Inevitably in a volume which covers themes from the late Meiji to the present day the essays are of varying quality and interest to the non-expert reader. The first part is devoted to "Left-wing thought from the Russian Revolution to the war on terrorism." The essays in this section by Christopher Goto-Jones and Rikki Kersten draw particular attention to the anti-capitalist trends in the pre-war Japanese army and the influence this had on Japanese left-wing thinkers. Rikki

Kersten in her essay "Painting the Emperor red: the Emperor and the socialists in the 1930s" concludes: "The Left were self-deceived, in that they came to believe that the Emperor would, in a fashion, represent their cause. The political utility of Emperor made him a chameleon, and red was only one of the many colours he wore."

Part II "The Metamorphosis of the left in post-war Japan" begins with an interesting essay on "The rise and fall of Nikkyoso" by Robert Aspinall which is a good summary of the activities and attitudes of one of the most political left-wing Japanese unions. He notes the dichotomy in the Ministry of Education which wanted on the one hand to impose nationalistic policies but at the same time was being urged to encourage greater individualism. The other essays in this part by Koichi Nakano and Sarah Hyde and two of the essays in part III by Leonard Schoppa and Junji Banno also provide useful analyses of the development of the opposition in Japanese politics and of the decline of socialism.

The two articles by David Williams, co-editor of this book, seem out of place in a festschrift. He quickly lost me in his first article on "Japanese evasion of sovereignty." The second entitled "After Abu Ghraib: American empire, the left-wing intellectual and Japanese Studies" reads like an anti-American rant, which would be more appropriate for a polemical pamphlet than for a scholarly book. It also reminds us that extreme 'left' and extreme 'right' often have much in common.



## Shinkansen: From Bullet Train to Symbol of Modern Japan,

by Christopher P. Hood

Routledge, 2006, 288 pages, ISBN 0415320526

Review by Sean Curtin

This book comprehensively covers just about every conceivable aspect of the shinkansen, linking its development to social and economic changes in Japan. According to the author, the bullet train is not just an international symbol of modern Japan but the image of its sleek form hurtling passed

Mt. Fuji has become a national icon. Despite this elevated status, the outside world knows relatively little about how the network actually functions or what impact it has on Japanese society. These are the dark areas Dr. Christopher Hood is determined to illuminate with his meticulously researched, fact-packed book, which is constructed to the same high specifications as the phenomenally efficient transportation system it describes.

The book represents about five years of formal research, "many more years of informal study" and appears to be the fulfillment of a boy Hood ambition. The pages radiate an amazing spectrum of data, much of it appearing in English for the first time, and offer some first class insights into the inner workings of the system. The book benefits from the "incredible access to all of the shinkansen-operating companies, as well as other companies in the shinkansen business" which the author penetrated during his years of research.

After an introductory chapter, the journey proper commences with a detailed history of the shinkansen from its genesis during the Pacific War to its birth in 1964. We are treated to a wealth of facts about the various train types and line development, which smoothly propels us on to chapter 3. Here the train's astonishing success is analyzed from a number of perspectives, and the author argues that the shinkansen has evolved from being merely a means of transportation into a potent symbol of Japanese modernity and a significant national icon. He observes: "the shinkansen can and has played an important role in the development of Japan's image domestically and internationally." Elaborating on this theory, he adds: "it is important to stress that the shinkansen is not only involved in the creation of new culture, but is also reflecting the evolution of Japan's society and culture."

The fourth chapter comprehensively analyzes the shinkansen's vital role in national and regional economic development, exploring the fascinating interface between money and politics. The train's powerful supporters are profiled, but for once its largely impotent, and often overlooked, detractors are also examined along with their environmental concerns.

Shinkansen funding and the crucial question of the network's actual financial viability dominate the landscape of the next chapter. It is densely populated with charts, statistics and figures to backup the analysis, but it also contains a number of great shinkansen shots, which skillfully break up the monotony of the monetary data.

Chapter six examines how the system functions, looking at the human element of the equation. The men and women who run the system are the shinkansen's indispensable human "software" without which it could not function. The system's national unity myth takes a battering as the different regional and corporate cultures which make up the shinkansen universe are carefully placed under the microscope, revealing clear regional variations in everything from management to marketing.

The penultimate chapter, entitled "Mirror of Japan," attempts to demonstrate how the shinkansen reflects and influences Japanese society. Dr. Hood argues that in many respects the relationship between society and the bullet train "is not one-way and that the shinkansen may have a role to play in promoting further changes in society or even maintaining the status-quo and traditions of old." Armed with

an intimidating arsenal of facts along with some fascinating examples, he constructs a convincing case. In the process the author covers a very broad range of topics, spanning suicide to bamboo window covers on the 800-series shinkansen. He concludes: "one can see that many different aspects of Japanese society are reflected in the operations of the shinkansen and the passengers who use it. However, the relationship does not appear to be one-way, as the shinkansen also appears to have a role in shaping the society around it."

Just when you thought it was journey's end, we are whisked off to Taiwan for a look at the train in other terrain. The jaunt across the East China Sea is to ponder the shinkansen's exportability and global potential. In this final chapter, Hood replicates his research framework on a smaller scale with impressive results. While it seemed like an unorthodox way to conclude a book, the well-researched Taiwan comparisons prove highly enlightening.

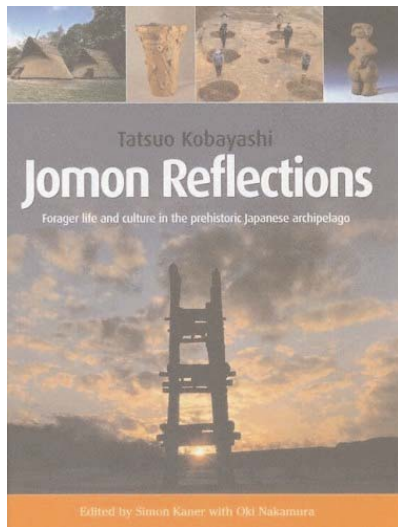
As the book glides to a precision halt, the author sums up his case: "The shinkansen is clearly much more than a means of transportation. It is a symbol that has captured the imagination of the Japanese people." Even if one does not agree with every aspect of his analysis or the premise that the shinkansen is a national icon, taken as a whole it is still extremely difficult to fault this excellently researched and well-argued book.

Dr. Hood appears to have enjoyed his research, confessing to: "some very unforgettable moments, such as taking the famous shot of shinkansen passing Mt Fuji, shinkansen passing through the tea fields in Shizuoka at a very well-known spot amongst Japanese railway enthusiasts, and spending about an hour next to a tunnel on the Sanyo Shinkansen observing the effects of shinkansen entering and exiting tunnels." He likens these snap-taking experiences to: "the thrill that hunters get when shooting their target."

Not surprisingly, the book is packet full of some great shinkansen shots, which are sadly published in black and white. This problem is remedied at the following website, where the images can be viewed in full colour: [www.hood-online.co.uk/shinkansen/](http://www.hood-online.co.uk/shinkansen/)

While the author insists he is purely a researcher and not a train enthusiast, reading this energetic book one cannot help but feel that perhaps somewhere deep inside him there might be a repressed train-spotter bursting to get out. Equally, it could be his genuine zeal for the subject just translates into a passionate dynamism on the page. I mention this not as a criticism, on the contrary, at times his writing style is so engaging that it gives the book a far wider appeal than its academic confines allow and hopefully it will one day appear in a form that can be appreciated by a much wider readership.

In conclusion, this book masterfully illuminates a host of interconnected gray zones that have impeded proper understanding of the shinkansen system and its socio-economic impact. This highly readable book makes a significant contribution not just to Japanese studies but also to the field of transport studies.



## Jomon Reflections: Forager life and culture in the prehistoric Japanese archipelago

by Tatsuo Kobayashi  
Edited by Simon Kaner and Oki Nakamura

*Global Oriental*, 2004, 256 pages, ISBN 1-901903-73-7

*Oxbow Books, Oxford and The David Brown Book Company, Oakville, Connecticut 2004, (published with assistance from The Japan Foundation and The Sainsbury Institute for the Study of Japanese Arts and Cultures), ISBN 1-84217-088-0 (hardback) and 1-85217-141-0 (softback), 240 pages including endnotes, bibliography and index.*

Review by Sir Hugh Cortazzi

The Jomon period in the prehistory of Japan lasted from the thirteenth century BC to the end of the first millennium BC. Following the Palaeolithic period it preceded the Neolithic, called in Japan the Yayoi period. The Jomon peoples were basically hunter-gatherers but developed village communities and learnt how to make pottery for cooking, food storage and ceremonial purposes. This made them similar to Neolithic and Bronze Age peoples, although they never developed any form of metal working. Jomon culture was very long lasting covering some 12,000 years, but it naturally changed over the millennia.

Archaeologists have found Jomon sites in many parts of Japan and many pots which have helped them to reconstruct a picture, if somewhat hazy, of the culture which the Jomon peoples developed and which was in many ways more advanced than that of other peoples elsewhere in Asia of that time.

This book sets out the results of archaeological research on this lengthy period in Japan. It is copiously illustrated in colour and the text includes explanatory diagrams. The book emphasises that Jomon was "a time of considerable cultural creativity, established on stable ecological and social foundations" (page 2).

The invention of pottery, which began in the earliest stages,

was a highly significant development of human technology for the prehistoric inhabitants of the Japanese archipelago and implied a change from a nomadic to a sedentary existence. According to radiocarbon dating pottery fragments found in Japanese sites are the oldest dated pottery in the world. This does not necessarily mean that pottery was invented in Japan although this seems possible.

From the outset pottery in Japan was used for cooking and storage of food and liquids. It "enabled a dramatic increase in the range and quantity of food that could be prepared and consumed" (page 22). One example is shellfish which could be opened after cooking. Meat could also be boiled in pots rather than roasted over heated stones.

A particular characteristic of Jomon pottery is that much of it is decorated with cord markings. These were so prominent that the period was called after them. Archaeologists concluded that the cord-marks were made as a result "of rolling/rotating the cord and pressing it on to the surface of the pot."

In chapter three the various stages in the development of Jomon pottery are outlined although the forms and designs were never static. Some of the early vessels made already showed considerable elegance and artistry as for instance a deep vase with a rim of four pointed and outward-splayed wings (page 38, figure 3.13). The full potential of Jomon pottery was achieved in the middle to final periods.

In the middle period pots began to be used for burial urns and lamps suggesting more ritual and ceremonial uses. Archaeologists have termed this "the application stage." Fine examples of this stage are those illustrated on page 44 (a deep pot with "dagger" motifs) and two on page 46 (one a deep pot with "dancers" and another in "arabesque style").

In the following chapter "The lands of Jomon Japan" a description is given of the different areas in Japan where some seventy major styles developed. One of the most striking was that of the so-called "Flame" pots which were produced in an extensive area along the Japan Sea coast. Fine examples of such pots are illustrated on pages 61 and 67. The period in which this style of pots was created was relatively short. In late Jomon period pots with lids began to be made.

In chapter five the types of foods and drink consumed by the Jomon people are described. It seems clear that while agriculture was not practiced nut bearing trees were cultivated. Acorns, which are not edible unless the tannic acid which they contain is removed, were an important source of nourishment in the winter months. The process to remove tannic acids is a labour intensive one and shows the extent of the development of Jomon society. Nuts were apparently ground with stones and made into dumplings which were boiled or baked.

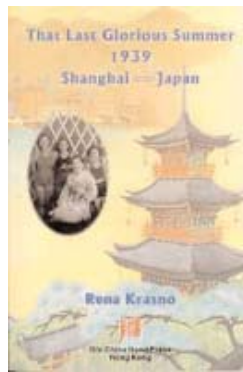
Dogs were some of the first domesticated animals but it also seems, not least from the pottery figurine illustrated on page 87, that boars may also have been domesticated. Other materials used in the late Jomon period included asphalt and lacquer. Sophisticated examples of the latter are illustrated on page 90.

In chapter six on "settlement and society" the book analyses the types of houses, including pit dwellings, and villages used by Jomon people.

The final two chapters discuss what is known about religious practices and attitudes of the various peoples in the different settlements. Dependence on nature is reflected in the number of phallic shaped stones. The first clay figurines were made without faces (see for instance the standing figurine illustrated on page 147). Some later figurines such as those illustrated on page 152 had goggle eyes and more sophisticated shapes. The exact role of the figurines in Jomon culture is the subject of much speculation among archaeologists.

Three and five seem to have been important numbers for the Jomon peoples; interestingly three, five and seven are still important for Japanese today.

The seasons were naturally very important in early societies and the solstices seem to have had a special place in the calendar. A photograph at the bottom of page 187 shows the bases of six wooden posts for a large Jomon building which were found at a site in Northern Japan. Kobayashi Tatsuo, the Japanese archaeologist and author of this study shows in the upper photograph on this page how the midwinter sun sets between the two lines of posts. This photograph provides a fitting image for the cover of this interesting and informative book.



## That Last Glorious Summer 1939: Shanghai - Japan

by Rena Krasno

*Old China Hand Press, 2001, 177 pages, ISBN: 962-7872-17-2*

Review by Tomohiko Taniguchi

The author's unusual talent brings the readers back to Setonaikai (Seto Inland Sea) and Karatsu (in Saga Prefecture), in the short summer of 1939, letting them see what she saw, smell what she smelled, and feel the way that she felt toward a handsome young Japanese student she spent time with on the beach. Readers will find themselves seeing pre-war Japan through the eyes of a 16-year old Jewish girl. If traversing history is part of the joy of reading, then this small book is a shining jewel.

Before and during the war, Shanghai was the place of last resort for "stateless refugees" escaping from tyranny in Bolshevik Russia and from pogroms prevalent in Nazi Germany. Nowhere else but Shanghai accepted Jews with no passport, as it was a place no territorial sovereignty reigned. A

rare period of history, it was the time when a large Jewish community of more than 30,000 population existed a short distance outside Nagasaki.

In the summer of 1939, the passenger ship Asahi-maru brought Rena Krasno with her mother and younger sister to this port town of Nagasaki, to spend what would turn out to be their last glorious summer holiday. Remember that on the first of September that year Hitler started invading Poland, igniting WWII.

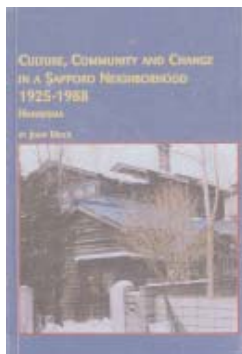
By keeping a journal every day, apparently the bright teenage girl remembered almost everything. It is her gift of recollecting the past that makes this book a superb page-turner. In the early part of the book, to take an example, she speaks of a Frenchman whom she and her family met on a boat in Setonaikai. His mother runs a Maison de Couture in Tokyo, whose customers include Alice Grew, the wife of the well known US Ambassador, Joseph C. Grew. She then tells us what she heard on the boat from the Frenchman: Alice Grew was a granddaughter of Commodore Perry.

The fault line drawn by the defeat of the war is so wide and deep that many things that were part of the shared knowledge for the contemporaries in pre-war Japan would, after the war, completely evaporate from the collective memories of the Japanese. The anecdote above on Mrs. Grew is one of those lost memories. But what Rena, the sensitive teenage girl remembered most, and what Ms. Krasno the author wanted to remind the readers 69 years later, was about the people: how they smiled, how they tried to communicate with her by smiling, and that at dusk on the beach, the young boy Yorifumi looked gentle, smart, and handsome, so much so that Rena....

In an e-mail sent to this reviewer, the author, who is 80 years old and living in California, described her motive as follows: "My feeling is that the young people in Japan today somehow miss some of the beauty and innocence of pre-war Japan. What I wanted to share is the ambience of the country (and about) the good simple people carried away by events." In the year 1939, not everything in Japan was painted black, gloomy, or oppressive, whatever the conventional post-war wisdom may have held to the contrary. "The good simple people" lived their happy humble lives knowing nothing about what would occur to them within the next six years. The places she visited may have been filled with uniformed soldiers about to be sent abroad, but they were also full of cheerful laughter, reserved smiles and extremely cordial people. Wherever Rena went, she would find everything kept clean and tidy, as if to evince that the Japanese very much liked the way they lived, itself a stark contrast to life in Shanghai. In sum, whilst in Japan, she felt happy, refreshed, and was almost in love with the handsome Japanese boy. This book has succeeded in mending one of the lost links, however small that may be, in the chain that is Japan's modern history.

Again, in her e-mail cited above, Rena Krasno also stated that "My love for your country has remained. I lived again in Japan later with my husband and children from 1953-1961." She authored an award winning children's book, *Floating Lanterns and Golden Shrines: Celebrating Japanese Festivals* (Pacific View Press, Berkeley, USA 2000). With the reviewed book as a prequel, she also wrote *Strangers Always: A Jewish Family in Wartime Shanghai* (Pacific View Press 1992).

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## Culture, Community and Change in a Sapporo Neighborhood, 1925-1988: Hanayama

by John Mock

*The Edwin Mellen Press, 1999, ISBN 0-7734-7974-0, 232 pages*

Review by Sean Curtin

Less than half a century ago, a powerful sense of local identity was an integral part of Japanese life. Today, the basic composition of most communities has been significantly altered by seismic population shifts, relentless urban expansion and vastly improved transportation networks. By blending contemporary ethnography with accounts of local history, John Mock's new book attempts to convey some of the massive social changes which occurred in local Japanese living patterns over a period of six decades. The mighty northern island of Hokkaido forms the dramatic backdrop for Mock's research.

Hokkaido already boasts an excellent body of English language material on its indigenous Ainu people, who shaped the island's landscape and history long before the arrival of Japanese colonists. However, until the last decade, there has been a definite deficit of research written in English on the lives of the territory's non-Ainu, 'ordinary' citizens. One of Mock's declared aims is to help redress this imbalance by presenting the ethnographic history of Hanayama, a small district of Hokkaido's bustling capital city, Sapporo.

Mock conducted his main research in Sapporo between 1975 and 1976, continuing intermittently up until about 1988. During this period the social fabric of the Hanayama neighbourhood underwent several metamorphoses. Mock has gathered a solid body of oral history on the neighbourhood, but does not give us any precise details about how many interviews were conducted. He claims that as an outsider, his local informants tended to be more open with him than they would be with an insider. This outsider status apparently made him a safe person to confide in. He divides his analysis of Hanayama into three phases, spanning 1925 to 1945, 1945 to 1965 and 1965 to 1988. Each of these forms a separate and lengthy chapter.

To place Hanayama and Sapporo in their correct Japanese context, it is necessary to know something about the history of Hokkaido itself. Mock supplies the background in his first main chapter, concentrating on the period up until 1925. Present day Hokkaido retains its image of a peripheral frontier territory, with many Japanese still regarding it as a somewhat 'backward' and 'underdeveloped' region. Its geographical separation from the rest of Japan enhances the belief that it is somehow outside the orbit of mainstream Japanese life. This physical isolation consolidates Sapporo's stature as the territory's premier city, strengthening its claim to be the true capital of the North. This regional dominance makes it a powerful magnet for rural migrants. Comparisons with other provincial capitals are difficult as Sapporo occupies a unique position amongst major Japanese cities.

In the chapters on Hanayama, Mock gives us an even mix of

history and contemporary ethnography, revealing the enormous amounts of variation and complexity in over half a century of community life. He takes us from Hanayama's genesis as a small farming settlement, through its gradual absorption into the nascent Sapporo. What was once a hardy outpost was slowly transformed into a pleasant neighbourhood of the new city. As the juggernaut of urbanization relentlessly picked up momentum, the social identity of the community continually mutated, creating fresh social networks as newcomers were assimilated.

Due to non-stop population influxes, the absorption process became dysfunctional and the once unique local character was slowly submerged under the ever-increasing weight of migration into the area. Finally, Hanayama lost its cohesion as a social entity. In many respects, Hanayama's own local history reflects some of the broader historical forces that have shaped the rest of Hokkaido and Japan.

If there is one constant in the Hanayama story, it is that of continual population expansion. It started life as part of a sparsely manned five-farm settlement run by early colonial militia. When Mock's account begins in 1925, the little outpost had evolved into a small community comprising about 200 people. This grew to about 550 by 1965, and to 1,100 by 1975. By the end of Mock's research in 1988, the population had increased by another 500. This kind of spectacular growth has been replicated throughout Japan, reminding us of the humble origins of many modern Japanese cities.

Categorizing his subjects by age, gender and occupation, Mock brings more clearly into focus some of the major social changes that have occurred in Hanayama, Sapporo and Hokkaido. This helps the reader to better interpret the complex socio-economic forces that have shaped community development on the island. As a by-product of faithfully recording Hanayama's past, Mock's research can also be used to construct some possible evolutionary trajectories for social life in districts of Hokkaido that currently retain their rural character. Some of Hanayama's extinct social practices, such as the custom of neighbourhood introductions by new arrivals, are still to be found in many rural areas. Hanayama's developmental path indicates that such aspects of village life may not survive the ravages of modernization.

Mock explains Hanayama's decline as a distinctive social entity in terms of continuous migratory waves that eroded the pre-existent social patterns and customs.

Although outside the scope of Mock's thesis, this analysis also offers several enlightening contrasts to the present depopulation trends witnessed in most of Hokkaido's rural towns. The voices of several rural migrants in the chorus of Hanayama's oral history provide crucial insights into their reasoning. Most complain of the socially restrictive life of rural hamlets, which offer few opportunities. The lack of privacy in rural life and the lure of the more impersonal city encourages many to leave their native towns and villages. Ironically, it is the desire of those coming from closely-knit communities to live less socially restrictive lives that eventually leads to the decline of Hanayama's own social cohesiveness. Conversely, many countryside communities have become more socially interdependent as a result of massive population exodus.

The testimony of Hanayama's rural newcomers is extremely useful as studies on rural depopulation generally tend to lack the views of those who have already left.

As a countermeasure designed to staunch the rural people-flow, many of Hokkaido's towns and villages launched aggressive, and occasionally notorious, campaigns to stabilize their populations and attract young women for local bachelors to marry. This effort was also assisted by the national government, which pumped millions of yen into countryside development schemes. The testimony of Hanayama's rural migrants gives us an insight into why such efforts were generally unsuccessful. This book sheds a little light on the complex dynamics that inextricably span the rural-urban divide. Researchers studying contemporary rural Japan will find this an excellent source of comparative material.

The present-day Hanayama is located near the entertainment district of Susukino, which is (in)famous for its lively nightlife scene. This proximity was one of the factors that brought about rapid social change in this once tightly woven community. A large influx of transitory workers involved in the entertainment business accelerated the ongoing destruction of the community's social networks. Because of the neighbourhood's nearness to the Susukino district, Mock also includes some interesting material on the bar hostess residents of Hanayama. This complements some of his earlier work on these women, making Mock somewhat of an authority on such workers.

Mock's account of Hanayama only goes up to the end of the eighties, which was a relatively prosperous time for the territory. Many of the island's chronic social and economic ailments were hidden by the glare of the bubble economy period. This explains why we hear very little of these issues in the testimony presented in this book.

For well over a decade, however, the exceptionally precarious state of the regional economy has been exposed by a string of devastating financial calamities. The most spectacular was the 1997 collapse of Hokkaido Takushoku Bank, which was the prefecture's largest bank. This failure shook the island economy to its core and led to an island-wide chain reaction of bankruptcies from which Hokkaido is still only partially recovered. The 2002 closure of the Taiheiyo Coal Mine in Kushiro also represented a severe setback for the entire region as well as a social disaster for the mining community.

Sapporo has weathered the long economic downturn surprisingly well, retaining the vibrant metropolitan aura described in Mock's book. Today, the city is home to over a third of the island's population. Practically everyone has a relative or two living somewhere within its ever-expanding boundaries. Over the last decade the city's position as the locus of Hokkaido's socio-economic life has been strengthened, making Mock's research even more valuable.

Despite the many good features of this work, there are several areas that need improvement. The most serious weaknesses are the lack of detail about the methodology behind the study and of a comprehensive explanation of the theory underpinning the book's basic structure. Apart from a very brief paragraph at the end of the introduction, Mock reveals almost nothing about his research techniques. This constantly leaves the reader wondering exactly what information-gathering methods were used. Did the author use questionnaires or surveys, for instance? Some of his conclusions would seem to imply he might have, but the reader is just left guessing.

As mentioned, the basic structure of the analysis divides Hanayama into three time phases, spanning 1925 to 1945, 1945 to 1965 and 1965 to 1988. It is not explained at the outset why these parameters are established. Instead, explanations are scattered around the various chapters on each of the separate phases. Explaining coherently the reasoning behind the delineation of each of these time periods would have given the work much better clarity and greatly enhanced the overall analysis.

Data presentation could also have been better. Of the 39 tables in the book, only six have sources and four of these are from an earlier work by another scholar. The layout of some of the tables is poor, making it rather difficult to read the figures correctly. Tables 24 and 25 are good examples of this problem. A few maps to illustrate the development of Hanayama between 1965 and 1988 would also have made it easier to understand how the district grew. None of the oral accounts given by the subjects has the date when it was recorded, which makes it difficult to put the comments into a clear context for historical analysis. This problem could easily have been rectified with footnotes, which are absent from the entire work.

Mock may have felt that footnotes might distract the reader, but a few would certainly have helped. Some of the general information is completely out of date and needs to be revised. For example, Russia is continually referred to as the Soviet Union, which ceased to exist in 1991. Since there are references up to 1996, this oversight should have been rectified. A reference to a shinkansen station in Sapporo (p. 3) is mystifying.

Editing and proofreading are other areas that need more attention. There are inconsistencies in the spelling of Japanese names, for example "Asahikawa" and "Asahigawa" are alternated throughout the book. Better proofreading would have eliminated most of the numerous typos which pepper the text. A few typing errors even sneak into the final paragraph of the conclusion, distracting attention from the author's summation.

Despite these various shortcomings, this book is a welcome contribution to the growing body of non-Ainu-related English language research literature on Japan's most northerly prefecture. It is certainly one of the most comprehensive English language ethnographic studies on Hokkaido to appear in recent years, offering an excellent introduction to the dynamics that have shaped urban living patterns in Sapporo and many other cities.

For those more familiar with Sapporo, Mock also sheds some light on the little known lifestyles of workers in the entertainment district. After reading this book, visiting the city's Susukino area will never feel quite the same. With this work and his earlier research on Sapporo bar hostesses, Mock has additionally made a major contribution to illuminating the lives of women engaged in the murky entertainment world.

