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In this issue we focus on contemporary Japanese themes with reviews examining the current state of gender equality, politics, social issues, foreign policy and modern architecture. We also have a retrospective report on the exhibition of prehistoric Japanese miniature clay figurines held at the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts in Norwich during the summer of 2010. Our first review explores *The New Paradox for Japanese Women: Greater Choice, Greater Inequality*, a thought provoking book analyzing the social inequality experienced by women in today's Japan. The position of Japanese women is compared with that of men, producing a not especially positive set of results. Despite the 1985 Equal Employment Opportunity Law women still significantly lag behind men in all major areas, especially political representation, while working women still do most domestic chores and child care. Next we delve into an impressive study, *Koizumi and Japanese Politics: Reform Strategies and Leadership Style*, which meticulously dissects the highly successful administration of Junichiro Koizumi (April 2001 to September 2006). Since his departure, no Japanese prime minister has lasted longer than a year. Why was Koizumi able to deliver strong leadership and make significant reforms? Koizumi's policies, institutional reforms and flamboyant political style are all scrutinized in depth. Fumiko Halloran looks at *Rapid Changes in Diplomacy* (外交激変), a Japanese language book looking at the dynamics of foreign policy from ministry insider Shunji Yanai's perspective. He is a former Ambassador to the United States who during his 41 year-long career found himself at the centre of many key diplomatic moments including (to name a few) the negotiations on the return of Okinawa, the first Gulf War, Japan's participation in the United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (PKO), Tokyo's failure to attain a permanent seat on the UN Security Council and the Iraqi invasion. Sir Hugh Cortazzi gives his verdict on *Living Japan, Essays on Everyday Life in Contemporary Society*, a work comprising seventy short essays which explore various aspects of the everyday life of ordinary Japanese people. Its vivid firsthand accounts from a Japanese viewpoint provide some fascinating insights into Japan and its people. Susan Meehan shares her thoughts on the highly popular 'Unearthed' exhibition which was held at the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts in Norwich during summer 2010. At its heart was a collection of over 100 prehistoric miniature clay figurines including many hailing from Japan called 'dogū' (土偶) meaning clay spirits, which were mainly from the Jōmon (縄文時代) era (about 14,000 to 300BC). Our final review, *New Architecture in Japan*, takes us back to the present day. This work is an introductory survey of new architecture in Japan featuring buildings by well known Japanese architects such as Tadao Ando as well as projects by new young architects and by international practices. Using some excellent photography, it looks at new architectural ideas and themes in Japan covering a wide variety of public and private buildings

Sean Curtin

New reviews

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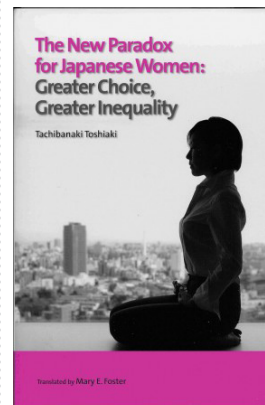
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We are grateful to our regular reviewers:

Sir Hugh Cortazzi	Mikihiro Maeda
William Farr	Susan Meehan
Fumiko Halloran	Ian Nish
Adam House	Ben-Ami Shillony

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## The New Paradox for Japanese Women: Greater Choice, Greater Inequality

Toshiaki Tachibanaki  
(橋本 俊詔)

translated by Mary E. Foster

House Press, Tokyo, 2010, 290 pages including index, references and tables

ISBN 978-4-903452-18-0

Review by Sir Hugh Cortazzi

"Japan suffers today from a high inequality in income distribution and a lack of equal opportunity. Simply put, Japan is a class society." These are the thought-provoking first words of this sociological study by Professor Tachibanaki of Doshisha University in Kyoto. He has studied widely both in North America and Europe and is a recognized authority on economic issues.

Professor Tachibanaki points out that "Japan has long been considered a society where all people are middle class" but "Japan has become a society of increasing social inequality. This is evidenced by the widening gap between rich and poor and the development of rigid social classes."

The main theme of this book is the increasing social inequality among women in Japan. But especially in his first chapter entitled "The Gender Gap," he also compares the position of Japanese women with that of Japanese men. The Equal Employment Opportunity Law was introduced in 1985 "to ban discrimination against women and has been strengthened since." However, as Professor Tachibanaki notes, in Japan "laws may be strict, but the actual observance and enforcement is lax (page 26)." There are few Japanese women in managerial posts and fewer women than men go on to higher education. Moreover Japanese women who do go on to university tend to take shorter courses and generally study humanities and arts subjects. In this context he affirms that "there is no basis for the belief that boys are innately better at mathematics and science than girls (page 74)." He notes on page 83 that "Discrimination against women is an indisputable fact of life in many areas of Japanese society." He declares (page 85) that "Discrimination against women exists in hiring and

promotion in every field” but it is particularly severe when it comes to appointing top executives at major corporations. The proportion of Japanese women of all ages in full time employment never reaches more than 75% whereas the rate for men “hovers around 95%.” The vast majority of professional/technical workers and manager/officials in Japan are men although the number of women in such posts has been increasing. It is noteworthy that women make up 70-80% of temporary workers in Japan who receive inferior treatment to that accorded to permanent staff.

In Japanese homes most house-work and child care work is performed by women. Professor Tachibanaki does not comment directly on the existence of male chauvinist attitudes in Japan, but the facts which he adduces seem to confirm that this is a not insignificant factor. In Chapter Two which discusses “Women and Social Class” he introduces a table (page 48) which states that among all married couples 85% are male dominated. The percentage is lower in two income families but 74% of such households are still male dominated.

Chapter four on marriage and divorce contains a section on “What are the Japanese looking for in marriage? (page 98 et seq).” Commenting on the economic aspects he stresses the importance of income, educational background and occupation. He notes that the great disparities “between the rich and poor in Japan today have contributed to many young people lacking the funds to get married (page 114).” He records that while 67.7% of married women in their forties condone pre-marital sex the percentage of women in their twenties who approve rises to 87.6% (page 124).

Japan’s low net reproduction rate in an aging society is a matter of concern. To tackle this phenomenon Professor Tachibanaki gives first place to discouraging abortions (page 163) followed by encouraging out-of-wedlock births. In Britain the emphasis is rather on making better provision for childcare and reducing child poverty.

Professor Tachibanaki notes that in Japan as compared with other industrialised countries “a lower proportion of highly educated Japanese women are working (page 189).” One reason for this is that such women trying to return to work after child birth “are unlikely to find a desirable job.”

However the top posts in government ministries and major corporations are no longer monopolised by graduates from the most prestigious universities in Japan and it is becoming recognized that academic credentials do not necessarily confirm an individual’s practical and managerial skills. Major changes are also taking place in Japanese education with more co-education in high schools and universities and some women’s universities are now admitting men.

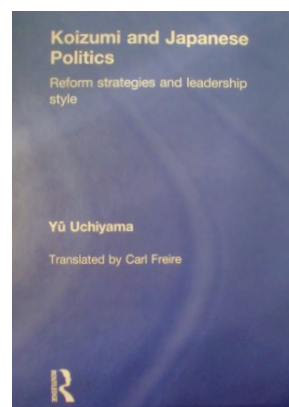
Professor Tachibanaki in his conclusion notes that in Japan “the choices a woman makes will have a major impact on her status and life style” and declares that “Japan faces the urgent task of giving its women equal opportunity and correcting inequalities of result that are not justified.” With

an aging and declining population Japan needs more than ever before to make better use of her women.

The importance of the topics discussed in this book is underlined by the fact that Japan Spotlight for May/June 2010 carried a number of articles on related themes under the general headline “Gender Equality Spurs Economic Growth.”

This is a valuable analysis of the problems facing women in Japan today and should be widely read by anyone interested in the future of Japan and its society. I-House press are to be commended for making this important study available to English readers.

This book was originally published in Japanese as 女女格差 (Jojo kakusa), Toyo Keizai, 2008, 344 pages, ISBN-13: 978-4492222836, ¥3,000



**Koizumi and Japanese Politics: Reform Strategies and Leadership Style**  
By Yu Uchiyama (内山 融)

Translated by Carl Freire

Routledge, 2010 214 pages  
Hardback, £75.00

ISBN: 978-0-415-55688-0

Review by Sean Curtin

In this impressive study Yu Uchiyama meticulously dissects the highly successful and by Japanese standards long lived administration of Junichiro Koizumi (26 April 2001 – 26 September 2006). Since stepping down from office, no Japanese prime minister has lasted longer than a year and none in the last two decades had such a reverberating impact on the Japanese political scene. How did Koizumi break the mould? Why was he able to deliver strong leadership and make significant reforms? Uchiyama, an associate professor at Tokyo University, uses a range of empirical and theoretical methods to clinically analyze and assess both Koizumi’s domestic and foreign policies. He looks in depth at the policy-making processes, how Koizumi created a new modus operandi and the institutional forums which were established to accomplish his objectives. Koizumi’s flamboyant political style is also scrutinized and his premiership’s accomplishments are put in historical context.

In chapter 1, “Koizumi’s Management of Politics,” Uchiyama defines the key features of Koizumi’s colourful political style as Prime Minister, he notes, “He attached greater importance to making his appeals directly to the general public and winning their support than to building up his power base within the LDP (page 6).” While others have attempted this tactic, with the notable exception of Morihiro Hosokawa (August 1993 to April 1994), none have come close to Koizumi’s success. Throughout the book Uchiyama makes a series of comparisons with the charismatic and telegenic

Hosokawa, who in many respects was a prototype Koizumi. Unlike previous LDP leaders, Koizumi tended to ignore the powerful factions within his own party, instead seeking authority by appealing to the public. On this tactic, the author observes, "He was able to gain the upper hand over the party's 'forces of resistance' by casting his approach as a struggle between good and evil and winning the public over to his side (page 16)." Fortunately for Koizumi the authority of the prime minister had been strengthened by reforms carried out by the Hashimoto administration (1996-8) and this combined with his generally high approval ratings gave Koizumi considerable clout. Utilizing the double barrels of enhanced prime-ministerial power and his huge personal popularity, Koizumi was able to direct policy like none of his predecessors or subsequent successors. This twin-edged blade allowed him to cut through the moribund bureaucracy and establish his own forums to create or reshape policy. One such key body was the pivotal Council on Economic and Fiscal Policy (経済財政諮問会議).

Uchiyama also identifies another core feature of the Koizumi phenomenon, "he would not flinch. Once he had committed to a specific principle or idea he would not budge (page 22)." While in the domestic realm this key trait was generally a good quality, in the realm of foreign affairs it was to prove disastrous. Analysing Koizumi's manner and speech, Uchiyama concludes (page 11) that Koizumi "stressed pathos (emotion, sentiment) over logos (rationality, well-defined language)." This is a theme he follows throughout the book, labelling him the "prime minister of pathos."

On his accomplishments he writes, "Koizumi achieved greater policy transformations than any prime minister before him thanks to his effective use of populist techniques and a string of reforms to the political system and government structure that preceded his term in office (page 9)." Despite this high praise and clinical style throughout the book, one gets the distinct impression that the Uchiyama feels a certain degree of academic disdain for Koizumi's crude methods and in the afterword (page 165) he admits as much, confessing, "I certainly cannot brush off my discomfort over his conduct of politics."

Chapter 2, "Domestic Affairs – The battle over neoliberal reform" is a comprehensive and systematic analysis of how Koizumi reshaped the domestic policy making process, substantially reduced the influence of special interest lawmakers (族議員) and bureaucrats, and greatly strengthened the power of the prime minister. The book provides a highly detailed blueprint of how Koizumi managed to reform the domestic political agenda from the entrenched web of tangled vested interests that existed when he came to office. This chapter covers a huge tract of domestic policy ranging from the functioning of the Council on Economic and Fiscal Policy to the more complex Trinity Reform (三位一体の改革). This section contains some superb reference material, illuminating charts and easy-to-understand tables which explain the various reforms in chronological order.

Heizo Takenaka (竹中平蔵), who served as Koizumi's Minister

of Internal Affairs and Communications as well as Minister of State for Privatization of the Postal Services, is singled out as the key figure behind Koizumi's domestic agenda. This soft spoken academic was the driving intellectual force behind most of Koizumi's ideas, Uchiyama states, "Takenaka involved himself directly and at length in detail work like the actual drafting of bills in the case of important policies such as postal privatization. Although this was unusual for a cabinet minister, he was able in this manner to prevent the 'watering down' of bills by the bureaucracy (page 77)." The author believes that successor administrations failed because they lacked a visionary Takenaka-type figure.

Chapter 2 also contains the ultimate piece of high wire "Koizumi theatre" (小泉劇場), the so called postal election in which Koizumi defied political gravity to win a landslide general election victory. After members of his own party voted down his flagship postal privatization bill in the Upper House, Koizumi dissolved the Lower House calling a snap general election. He expelled those lawmakers in his own party who voted against the law when it narrowly passed in the lower chamber and put up rival candidates in their constituencies. Normally when such a division occurs in a political party, the result is almost certain electoral defeat as a split party fighting itself normally divides its vote. However, despite dire predictions from commentators, Koizumi beat the odds, proving that he understood the mood of the Japanese public better than any political pundit. After achieving such a stunning victory his political authority was supreme, even though he pledged to step down within a year of re-election, during his final 12 months he was no lame duck (also see page 134). Uchiyama clinically analyzes these momentous events, which in some respects are difficult to appreciate without the intense drama element of the time.

While the second chapter highlights some of Koizumi's greatest achievements, the next chapter, "Foreign Relations: Closer to America, Farther from East Asia" charts some of its lows. Uchiyama notes, "In sharp contrast to his strategically pursued economic policies, the strategic coherence of his foreign policy must be described as relatively poor (page 79)." While ties with the US substantially improved, relations with China and South Korea hit rock bottom and foreign policy was at times highly erratic. One of the first major traumas of the Koizumi administration was the chaos caused by the sacking of the colourful Foreign Minister Makiko Tanaka. She had been instrumental in getting Koizumi elected Party President, or as Uchiyama puts it (page 83), "The Koizumi administration took a hit for the dismissal of its 'birth mother.'" Koizumi controversially supported the US invasion of Iraq and sent troops to help with postwar reconstruction, the author comments (page 92), "Bush was extremely grateful for Koizumi's pro-US attitude, and the affectionate relations between the two rose to a new level." Contrastingly, ties with Tokyo's East Asian neighbours rapidly deteriorated during his tenure in office. His annual forays to the war-tainted Yasukuni Shrine generated enormous regional animosity, demonstrations and several riots. In the final year of his administration Koizumi became a Pariah with Chinese and Korean leaders refusing to meet him. His six annual

visits to the controversial shrine along with the escalating tension and fallout they caused are carefully documented by Uchiyama who concludes, "Koizumi's pilgrimages to Yasukuni shrine cast a large shadow on relations with China and South Korea (page 116)." One of the first acts of Koizumi's successor, Shinzo Abe, was to visit Beijing and Seoul to defuse tensions, all five post-Koizumi PMs have sought to improve ties and none has dared visit the contentious shrine. Other aspects of Koizumi foreign policy



The charismatic and telegenic PM Morihiro Hosokawa

are examined including various territorial disputes, relations with North Korea, and Free Trade Agreements, inter alia. Takeshi is generally positive towards Aso, describing him as a man who "announces his own ideas in simple words to Japanese citizens" (page 50), ironically a quality he was criticized for when prime minister. The AFP initiative stressed the importance of "value-oriented diplomacy."

Chapter 4, "The Koizumi Administration in Historical and Theoretical Perspective" has some great analysis of postwar administrations and how the political system Koizumi encountered upon taking office had evolved. The role and power of the prime minister is also examined along with changes in the electoral system which enhanced the PM's stature. The Hosokawa (1993-4) and Hashimoto (1996-8) administrations are both seen in some respects as reformist neoliberal forerunners of Koizumi, but both had limited impact due to their short tenures. Hashimoto is given credit for his administrative reforms which enhanced the power of the PM while the long term impact of the electoral changes initiated under Hosokawa are assessed. Koizumi successfully tapped into the Japanese public's deep hunger for change, "Koizumi flew the banner of neoliberal reform and proclaimed that he would tear down the existing political structure (page 125)." His outsider status, populist style, telegenic persona, poker-player political tactics combined with the enhanced power of his office allowed him to outflank his enemies and maintain high approval rating which sustained his administration. Uchiyama summarizes, "Koizumi had two sources of authority to draw upon, one being such institutional resources as the legal authority invested in his office and the other being his personal qualities (page 136)."

In the final chapter, "Legacies of the Koizumi Administration," Uchiyama assessed Koizumi's lasting impact on Japanese politics, noting "he overturned the established image of the Japanese prime minister" and "replaced a policy-making system that had been bogged down by vested interests with

top-down decision-making (page 137)." He also highlights his significant achievements, "Koizumi accomplished policy changes that far exceeded anything thought possible until then" and "the Koizumi administration pursued policies that favoured the interests of the average citizen over sectional interests (page 138)." The negative aspects are also examined, Uchiyama sees the two most serious failings as increased social inequality and strained ties with Tokyo's neighbours.

Uchiyama's original 2007 Japanese language book on Koizumi (小泉政権 — 「パトスの首相」は何を変えたのか) ended here, but this English language version has been slightly revised and expanded with an additional chapter added, "Postscript: The Koizumi and Abe Administrations," looking at the successor administration of Shinzo Abe. After five 'thrilling' years of Koizumi the public wanted another 'popular' and 'strong' leader which was a key factor in the selection of the relatively youthful Abe as Prime Minister. However, Koizumi was an exceptionally hard act to follow and living up to the public's expectations proved impossible for the hapless Abe. He lacked Koizumi's style and charisma, so once his poll ratings began to slip the knives were out. Despite his attempts to cling on after a disastrous Upper House election defeat in July 2007, he was forced to resign after just a year in office. Uchiyama's verdict (page 157), "Abe could not fill the shoes of a 'strong prime minister.'" The author concludes the book by observing, "The Koizumi administration constituted an epochal break in postwar political history, and its influence lingers strongly even today (page 164)."

Abe's successor, Yasuo Fukuda, was the antithesis of the Koizumi approach, signalling the LDP wanted to end the Koizumi experiment. However, the Fukuda administration only chalked up a year as did that of following prime minister Taro Aso. He was defeated in a general election by Yukio Hatoyama, who could only manage eight months at the helm, while his replacement Prime Minister Naoto Kan was lucky to survive a serious challenge to his leadership after just three months in office. All of this has made Koizumi's five years and five months seem like an eternity and the analysis in this superb book helps explain how he achieved such longevity.

Before ending this review, the excellent translation work of Carl Freire must be commended, he has done a first-rate translation and made this important publication accessible to a far greater global audience. He has also packed the book full of extremely useful Japanese language political terms, making it a handy reference source on this important period in politics. The book is a must-read for anyone interested in Japanese politics and in understanding the extraordinary Koizumi years.

Other related Japan Society Review articles

"Koizumi no Shori, Media no Haiboku" (Victory for Koizumi, Defeat for the Media), by Takashi Uesugi, Japan Society Review Issue 11

"Koizumi Kantei Hiroku" (Confidential Records of the Office of Prime Minister Koizumi), by Isao Iijima, Japan Society Review Issue 12

"Kozo Kaikaku No Shinjitsu: Takenaka Heizo Daijin Nisshi" (Truth of Structural Reforms: Diary of Minister Takenaka Heizo), by Heizo Takenaka, Japan Society Review Issue 12



## Rapid Changes in Diplomacy (外交激変) by Shunji Yanai (柳井俊二)

interviewed by  
**Makoto Iokibe, Motoshige  
Ito and Katsuyuki Yakushiji**

**Asahi Shimbun-sha, 2007,  
278 pages, 1700 yen**

**ISBN-13: 978-4022502650**

**Review by Fumiko Halloran**

As a senior official in the Japanese government Mr. Shunji Yanai is a rare breed. He is candid, does not mince his words, is bold and sometimes controversial, and somehow gets away with things that would most likely cost someone else his career. Despite his traits, he rose through the ranks of the Foreign Ministry (1961–2002) as the Director General of the Treaty Bureau (1978–1981), Consul General in San Francisco (1987–1990), Director General of the Comprehensive Foreign Policy Bureau (1993–1995), Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs (1995–1997), and Ambassador to the United States between 1999 and 2002. Retiring in 2002, Mr. Yanai then took up a post as a professor of law at Chuo University in Tokyo (2002–2007) and is currently a Professor at Waseda University in Tokyo.

Born in 1937 in Tokyo into a diplomatic family, Yanai spent his childhood in pre-war Germany, Switzerland, and Colombia, where his family was held with other Japanese as prisoners of war after Japan attacked Pearl Harbor in December 1941. In exchange for Americans held in Japan, the Yanai family sailed from Colombia through the Panama Canal to New Orleans. They travelled on trains in the U.S. to New Jersey where they boarded a Swedish ship. To avoid the war zone in the Pacific, the ship sailed across the Atlantic to South Africa and docked in Maputo in Mozambique, then a Portuguese colony, where American Ambassador Joseph Grew and other Americans had arrived for an exchange. The Yanai family and other Japanese sailed across the Indian Ocean to Singapore and finally to Yokohama.

The trip took four months, which made a deep impression on the five year old boy. Comparing the wealth and advanced technology embedded in the daily life of the United States even in wartime to the food rationing and charcoal driven cars in Japan, Yanai says that, as a boy, he knew Japan would lose the war, although his father told him not to utter such comments. Yanai's father, once director general of the same Treaty Bureau his son would also head, quit the ministry after the war to practice law, and was a defence lawyer for foreign minister Mamoru Shigemitsu at the Tokyo War Crimes Trials. Young Yanai decided to become a diplomat after he returned to Tokyo from Karuizawa, where he spent the war years. He had witnessed the devastating ruins of Tokyo inflicted by American bombing and thought Japan had to be skilled in diplomacy, not repeating the mistakes that led to the war.

During his long career, he was to find himself at the centre of many key diplomatic moments including the negotiations with the American government on the return of Okinawa, the first Gulf War and its repercussions on Tokyo, the domestic political turmoil generated by Japan's participation in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (PKO), the reorganization of the ministry to establish a foreign policy bureau that cut across regional turf, Japan's failure to attain a permanent seat on the U.N. Security Council, the 9/11 terrorist attacks in New York, and Prime Minister Koizumi's controversial style of diplomacy.

Yanai reveals that since 1958, when UN Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld established a UN observation post in Lebanon after civil war broke out, the foreign ministry had been considering the possibility of dispatching the Self Defence Forces (SDF) to troubled spots; but the debate was an academic one considering the constitutional constraints of the war renouncing Article Nine combined with a strong anti-war sentiment in Japan. When Iraq invaded Kuwait in the summer of 1990, Yanai had just been appointed director general of the Treaty Bureau and was in charge of drafting a new law, the UN Peace Mission Cooperation Law (国連平和協力法案). Within two months, the new law was presented to the Diet, and generated heated opposition. In the end, the law was allowed to die without a vote in the House of Representatives.

An alternative agreement, later to be voted on, supported by the governing Liberal Democratic Party, the Komeito (party) and the Democratic Socialist Party, kept alive the idea of assisting the UN by establishing a separate organization to join UN Peacekeeping Operations (PKO) for humanitarian aid and rescue missions. However, later on the idea of a separate organization was abandoned and the use of SDF was re-evaluated which led to another attempt at legislation. Finally, with the passing of the PKO Cooperation Law (PKO 協力法), the SDF was able to assist in potentially dangerous arenas for the first time in its history and consequently a convoy of mine sweepers was dispatched to the Persian Gulf.

In 1992 the Japanese government dispatched 600 SDF and 75 police officers to Cambodia as the war torn nation went through a peace process and general elections. In 1993, one police officer was killed in an ambush and four wounded. Another Japanese, a civilian observer with the UN staff, was shot to death. Nevertheless, the Japanese government kept its nerve and did not withdraw the SDF or the police.

Yanai says among those opposing the first attempt at PKO legislation, the Cabinet Judicial Bureau was most adamant in opposing the bill. They insisted on a strict interpretation of Article Nine in the Constitution. Although realizing this law would not be approved, Yanai nevertheless vigorously defended it in the National Diet, believing that the next go at drafting a PKO law would be based on the precedent of the one that had failed.

Ten years later, after the 9/11 attacks, the Diet speedily passed the Special Legislation on Counter Terrorism Law (テロ対策特別措置法) based on the original UN Peace Mission Cooperation Law. The counter terrorism law allowed the Maritime Self Defence Force to help refuel vessels in the Indian Ocean to

support the international coalition war in Afghanistan. In 2003, another law, the Iraq Mission Law (イラク特別措置法), was passed in the Diet, allowing the Ground Self Defence Forces (GSDF) to be engaged in non-combatant operations in Iraq. As a result more than 5,000 GSDF personnel participated in a successful reconstruction mission in Iraq with an additional 500 GSDF support staff and 3,200 Air Self Defence Forces providing backup. This was the first time since WWII that Japanese forces had served in an active combat zone.

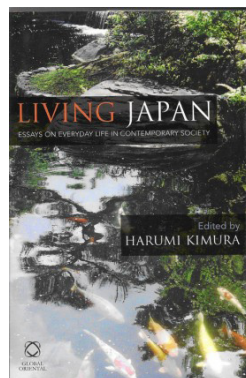
Yanai cites the Gulf War in 1990 as a pivotal turning point in Japanese public opinion, which shifted away from a rejection of anything to do with military force to a more active support for an increasing global Japanese presence, including the dispatch of the SDF to troubled areas. He says that during the Cold War, the environment for diplomacy was predictable because of the Article Nine constraints, although tension was high between the United States and the Soviet Union. Therefore Japan did not have to face up to international crises until the Cold War ended. After the Gulf War began, the Japanese public confused when pressed to take action. Despite raising \$13 billion for war expenditures, international opinion towards Japan was less than favourable which the public saw as a form of "Japan bashing." The ultimate insult was that despite Tokyo's massive monetary contribution Kuwait did not even bother to thank Japan, something the public found humiliating. That experience changed public opinion about PKO, Yanai thinks.

Yanai has a phenomenal memory for details of legal interpretation and political negotiations that affected U.S.-Japan security arrangements, Japan's gradual involvement in international conflicts, and the debate within the foreign ministry that was sometimes divisive, particularly on the role of the SDF. Yanai admits that there was perhaps a generational gap among foreign ministry officials about the understanding of Article Nine of the Constitution. While the wartime generation adamantly opposed the use of the SDF for any conflict, Yanai's own thinking was that the spirit of Article Nine was to prohibit the use of military force as a means of invading other countries. Therefore, Japan's participation in the UN decisions on collective security was not against the spirit of Article Nine. Since UN-led peacekeeping operation would most certainly use the military forces of member countries, Japan should likewise use the SDF for UN PKO.

This book is an excellent primary source for those who study the history of Japan's diplomacy in the post-war period. It forms part of a series of interviews with Japanese who shaped Japan's postwar direction; the first interview in the series was with Ichiro Ozawa, the second with former PM Kiichi Miyazawa, and Yanai is the third. All the interviews were originally published in the monthly magazine "Ronza." The interviewees were: Makoto Iokibe, president of National Defense University; Motoshige Ito, professor of economics at Tokyo University; Katsuyuki Yakushiji, managing editor of Ronza and visiting professor at Kyoto University.

#### Notes

*This book's full Japanese title is 外交激変 元外務省事務次官柳井俊二 - 90年代の証言*



## Living Japan, Essays on Everyday Life in Contemporary Society

Edited by Harumi Kimura

Global Oriental, 2009, 251 pages including index, £55.00

ISBN 978-1-905246-86-1

Review by Sir Hugh Cortazzi

The seventy short essays in this book deal with aspects of the everyday life of ordinary Japanese people. Even those of us who have lived in Japan for a few years will find in this book some descriptions and accounts of events which will help us to understand the reactions of ordinary Japanese people. They show us that while Japanese culture and ways of life differ in many ways from our own, Japanese have much the same human feelings as we have.

The essays were not written specially for this book but were produced over a number of years by Japanese whose ages range from their forties to their eighties. All the essayists have "taught how to write essays as lecturers at lifelong education classes or have written essays for various media." In selecting the essays to include the editor tried "to introduce as many examples of Japanese traditional culture, events, life-experiences and human relationships as possible." All the essays were originally written in Japanese.

The book is divided into eight parts. The titles of the sections are: "At the Foot of Mount Fuji," "New Year's Cards," "Please Answer in Japanese," "Call me Mummy," "As if I were in Paradise," "Those Days in Britain," "From the Kitchen Window," and "Living Alone Rehearsal." These titles do no more than hint at the contents. The titles of many of the essays give more of the flavour e.g. "The Mountains are Living," "Seasonal Change of Clothing," "What is Taught in Japanese Language Lessons," "What I Regret about Bringing up my Children," "At an Antique Market," "Cleaning Leaf Vegetables," "The Sherlock Holmes Club," "Blue Daisies as a Mother's Day Present," "My Husband is Cooking."

The essay "Please Answer in Japanese" by Akiko Ohno deals with the irritation caused by responses such as "I don't speak English" when we attempt to address an unknown Japanese in passable Japanese. "The simplest reason" she writes, "is probably because the Japanese wants to speak English with someone from overseas." "Another most likely reason is that Japanese people have a perceived notion that it is impossible for foreigners to speak Japanese well." She notes that in this respect the Japanese are not unique. "The Dutch are also convinced that foreigners cannot speak their language." Even we Brits who admit that we are not good at foreign languages know that these prejudices are unjustified.

This is a book about Japan which does not need to be read from cover to cover, but which contains illuminating thoughts and comments. It would be a good bed-side book to be dipped into from time to time when we are puzzled by Japanese attitudes.



## Unearthed at the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts

University of East Anglia,  
Norwich, 22 June to 29  
August 2010

Review by Susan Meehan

The 'unearthed' exhibition, held at the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts in Norwich during the summer of 2010, elicited far more questions than it answered, making for an extraordinarily thought-provoking and rewarding experience. At its heart was a collection of over 100 prehistoric miniature clay figurines hailing from Japan as well as Albania, Macedonia and Romania permitting the visitor to uncover their similarities and ponder. The Japanese figurines dating from the Jōmon (縄文時代) era (about 14,000 to 300BC) are called 'dogū' (土偶) or clay spirits.

The deftly curated exhibition provided a rare encounter with these forms, most of which were broken and some of which are 5,000 years old, from Japan and the Balkans, whose people were making some of the earliest and most beguiling clay figures in the world.

What urge prompted people in these two unconnected regions to begin making human forms from clay thousands of years ago – between 16,000 and 2,000 years ago in the case of the Japanese Jōmon figurines and between 8,500 and 4,500 years ago in the case of the Balkan figurines? What was the function of these tiny figures, averaging 4-5cm in height? Were they meant as toys, portraits, objects to guarantee fertility or successful harvests? The truth is, as the exhibition shows, that no one can be sure.

The faces of these figurines come in a variety of shapes: heart-shaped, round, long and flint-shaped to name a few and some are more rustic than others. Some of the figurines are voluptuous, while others are ornate, featureless, goggle-eyed, open-mouthed or apelike. They are reminiscent of Anthony Gormley's terracotta figures which formed part of his 'Field for the British Isles' exhibition in 1993 in which 40,000 8-26cm high terracotta figures were specially made.



Many more photos from the exhibition can be found in the online version of this article: <http://www.japansociety.org.uk/16697/unearthed-exhibition-at-the-sainsbury-centre-for-visual-arts>

As Dr Simon Kaner, Deputy Director of the Sainsbury Institute for the Studies of Japanese Arts and Cultures (SISJAC) and co-curator of the exhibition explained to a group of Japanese archaeologists visiting the exhibition on the same day as I did, the idea is to encourage further research and debate. The exhibition's extensive text explanations and quotes from individuals as diverse as a philosopher, author and anthropologist, were an excellent complement and a pleasure to read.

Dr Kaner wondered why the figurines in both the Balkan and Japanese cultures are not all exactly human but still have eyes and mouths to suggest a human form and why such an abundance of feet fragments (these are all displayed in one case)?

The similarities between the Balkan and Japanese figurines are striking. Why were so many of the figurines commonly broken? (Visitors to the exhibition were given a small dogū-like figurine and encouraged to smash it at an allocated box in the gallery to gauge how this feels.) Perhaps they were broken as part of a game or to exorcise bad luck transferred to the figurine. Why are some of the Japanese and Eastern European figurines goggle-eyed and why do some wear masks. Could it be that the goggles represent a form of eyewear used to protect one's eyes from the glare of the snow as has been suggested? At one point the visitor was exhorted not to view the figures as male or female but to regard them as devoid of gender, in order that our understanding be in no way limited.

Theories abound and it is to the exhibition's credit that visitors are encouraged to reflect on prehistoric human behaviour.

The exhibition even included the Grimes Graves Goddess, on loan from the British Museum, making a return to Norfolk for the first time since its discovery in the 1930s. This remarkable rotund figure was unearthed in Norfolk in 1939 by A L Armstrong and regarded as Neolithic until the late 20th century, when an investigation carried out in 1991 by Gillian Varndell from the British Museum, highlighted problems with its authenticity.

The exhibition also featured contemporary responses to the figurines, including images, photographs and film. 'Playing in Time' by Sarah Beare is a playful animation film commissioned especially for the exhibition. A photograph of Frida Kahlo with an Olmeca figurine made me think of the fact that Yasunari Kawabata (川端 康成) kept a dogū on his desk. All of these were a welcome addition, showing our continuing fascination with these pint-sized characters.

*The unearthed exhibition ran from 22 June to 29 August 2010 at the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, University of East Anglia. A different version of this review appeared on the Japan Society Website during summer 2010.*



## New Architecture in Japan

by Yuki Sumner

Naomi Pollock with David Littlefield, photography by Edmund Sumner

Merrell, London and New York  
2010, 272 pages, £25.00

ISBN 978-8589-4450

Review by Sir Hugh Cortazzi

This survey of new architecture in Japan was introduced at a launching party at Daiwa House on 24 March 2011 with talks by Yuki and Edmund Sumner. The book features buildings by well known Japanese architects such as Tadao Ando but also projects by new younger architects as well as by international practices including such famous names as Rogers and Foster. It is not and does not claim to be a survey or history of modern architecture in Japan. It is essentially an introduction to new architectural ideas and themes in Japan and covers a wide variety of public and private buildings. The photography is outstanding and makes it possible for the reader to envisage the buildings and their surroundings.

Travelling through Japanese towns and cities and looking at Japanese buildings from trains, buses or cars leaves most visitors appalled by the drab uniformity and ugliness which has been imposed on Japan's natural beauty. The concretisation of the Japanese landscape has seemed to be the aim of Japanese construction companies and the road lobby which was so successful with Liberal Democratic Party governments which built roads and bridges to nowhere as if there was no tomorrow. Preservation of the old buildings is not something to which many Japanese have attached much importance until recently. A visitor to modern Kyoto will at first wonder how such eyesores could be imposed on the ancient capital of Japan. Attitudes are, however, now changing and the preservation of old Kyoto looks more secure, but the tradition, perhaps because Japanese buildings were mainly made of wood, has been to replace buildings after a generation or so has passed. As Naomi Pollock points out in her article on "Architecture in Japan in Context" Japan seems to have an "insatiable appetite for the new."

Perhaps if the architects whose buildings are illustrated in this book are given the chance we shall in the future be able to look at Japanese towns more in keeping with their surroundings. As Yuki Sumner points out in an essay on "The Residue of Japan-ness" young Japanese architects in their "lightness of touch and use of flowing space" which are undeniably Japanese in character "can be traced back to an earlier generation of architects such as Fumihiko Maki and Yoshio Taniguchi." She notes that Arata Isozaki, another famous Japanese architect, identified two kinds of Japan-ness. One was the "earthy, more dynamic or 'populist' aesthetic of the Jomon period and "the more elegant, even aristocratic" or "elitist" aesthetic of the Yayoi period.

For someone living in England where investment in

infrastructure and public buildings has been limited by a shortage of funds and probably also of imagination, this book with its photographs of such public buildings as railway stations, schools and art museums will surely excite some envy, but as Naomi Pollock notes of some of the museums though beautifully designed ended up as under-utilized hako-mono (empty boxes) as the buildings came before the content had been collected.

It is difficult in a short review to do justice to the wide variety of buildings illustrated in this volume. In the first section devoted to "Infrastructure and Public Spaces" I was particularly impressed by such buildings as the Hanamidori Cultural Centre in Tachikawa (pages 38/9), the Meiso no Mori Municipal Funeral Hall in Gifu prefecture (pages 42-45), the Naka Incineration Plant at Hiroshima (pages 46/7) and the Tokyu Toyoko-Line Station at Shibuya (pages 52/3).

In the second section headed "Culture" I thought that the "Design Sight" Minato, Tokyo (page 58), designed by Tadao Ando and associates, fitted well into its surroundings and was an imaginative and striking design.

One of the most impressive of the art galleries illustrated in the volume seemed to me to be that of the Aomori Museum of Art (pages 62/63). A few, however, struck me as too way-out such as Gallery Sora, Chuo, Tokyo (pages 68/9). I thought that the Kanno Museum of Art near Sendai "a pure metal box built to house a collection of metal sculptures" (pages 74/5) was an ugly eyesore. The Nemunoki Museum of Art in Shizuoka prefecture (pages 82/3) on the other hand seems to fit well in an elegant way into the surroundings.

The section devoted to "Sport and Leisure" includes some buildings such as the Fujiya Inn in Yamagata prefecture (pages 102/3) and the House of Light inn Niigata prefecture (pages 104/5) which owe much to Japanese traditional architectural styles. The Takasugi-an (pages 122/3) struck me as inappropriate and 'way-out,' trying to be clever by being different

In the section devoted to "Education" I was particularly impressed by the Gifu Academy of Forest Science and Culture (pages 144/5) and the Rikuryo Alumni Hall in Osaka (pages 162/3). Some of the modern temples in the section devoted to Health and Religion are interesting and impressive e.g. White Chapel in Osaka (pages 182/3).

I was less impressed by the examples in the section devoted to "Houses and Housing." Some designs seemed to have been conceived by a desire to attract attention, although in some cases the designers have made an imaginative use of limited space. The Section on "Offices and Retail" again shows that some Japanese architects put more emphasis on being different than in practicality and fitting into the surrounding buildings. I thought F-Town in Sendai (page 238/9) and Showroom H in Niigata prefecture (pages 260/1) ugly and inappropriate. Others more attuned to the excesses of modern architects may disagree.

Anyone interested in modern architecture in Japan will enjoy this book.

Photos of many of the buildings mentioned in this article can be found in the online version: <http://www.japansociety.org.uk/16781/new-architecture-in-japan>