



Editor: Sean Curtin

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It seems that in Japan changing prime minister every September is rapidly becoming a seasonal fixture, a trend no doubt Gordon Brown is hoping doesn't spread to the UK. To mark the beginning of Taro Aso's premiership we are reviewing his recent book (*Totetsu Mo Nai Nippon*) along with those of four of his rivals and potential future prime ministers. These books represent a recent trend for would-be pretenders to the political throne of publishing a book before they stake their claim to the crown. With the average life-span of recent prime ministers at just one year, it certainly pays to be prepared. We reviewed former PM Abe's book (*Utsukushii Kuni E*) in August 2007 (Issue 10, Vol. 2 No.4), just a month before his September resignation. Some of the many fascinating facts to come out of this current batch of books are the unexpected links which bind some of the candidates in this September's race for the premiership. For example both Kaoru Yosano and Yuriko Koike were students in Cairo while both Aso and Yosano are Catholics. Japanese politicians are certainly becoming more diverse and the fact that Yuriko Koike became the first woman to stand in the contest to become PM is also a significant milestone. Away from Japanese politics Mikihiro Maeda reviews a popular new Japanese book on Burma while Sir Hugh Cortazzi looks at a work on the diplomat, scholar and Japanologist Ernest Satow. We also preview a new publication on the 1858 Treaty of Yedo, which established diplomatic ties between the United Kingdom and Japan. This book also forms part of the celebrations to mark the 150th year of Anglo-Japanese diplomatic ties.

Sean Curtin



Aso finally wins the premiership

Yasuo Fukuda's unexpected resignation on 1st September 2008 triggered a lively leadership election in which all of the five politicians featured in this review were potential prime-ministerial candidates. Four of them actually stood in the contest with Taro Aso finally succeeding in gaining the prize he has so long coveted.

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Sir Hugh Cortazzi
 Fumiko Halloran
 Takahiro Miyao
 Ben-Ami Shillony
 Mikihiro Maeda
 Ian Nish
 Sean Curtin
 Anna Davis
 Susan Meehan
 William Farr
 Tomohiko Taniguchi



Kokuryoku Kaigi
 (Conference on National Power: Group Discussion with Kaoru Yosano, Takeo Hiranuma, Taro Aso & Shigeru Ishiba)

by Kazuyuki Hamada

Shodensha, May 2008

240 pages

Hardback ¥ 1600

ISBN-13: 978-4396613075



Reviews By Fumiko Halloran

This book, along with the other five individual books in this review, reflects a recent trend in

which Japanese political leaders have expressed their visions and policy proposals on Internet homepages and television talk shows and by authoring books. Traditional political games are still played behind the scenes but in this age of instant communication, savvy politicians have sought to appeal directly to their constituents, potential voters, and citizens at large.

In this review group, they range in age from the youngest, Ishiba, 51, to Yosano, 70, in schooling from Tokyo University, Keio, Gakushuin, and Cairo University in Egypt, in professional background from business and banking to television. They also differ in religion from Yosano and Aso who are Catholic, to Ishiba a Protestant, while Hiranuma and Koike do not state their religious background, and in avocation from Ishiba who collects miniature jet fighters and tanks, to Yosano who holds a seventh degree in Igo, a chess-like game, to Aso who was an Olympic skeet shooter in the Montreal games.

In Kokuryoku Kaigi, as well as in their own individual books, each emphasizes their belief that Japan could contribute much to the peace and prosperity of the international community but they differ on domestic issues such as taxes and privatizing postal service and health care. Some assert that Japan need not kowtow to the United States on every issue while others discuss pending issues with the US. The Japanese inferiority complex that dominated relations with westerners after World War II seems to be gone. Although they vary from pessimistic to optimistic on the present status of Japan, they all believe Japan can survive and contend they are ready to lead.

In foreign policy all assert that close relations with the United States are vital to Japan's security. Even so, they have much to say about the nature of those relations and are sometimes critical of the way American officials deal with issues.

These politicians do not consider their conservatism to be right wing or nationalistic. Rather, they assert that true conservatism is to preserve good traditions inherent in Japanese culture but at the same time they recognize the need for change. They are clearly opposed to communism and socialism and committed to democracy; at the same time they support the imperial institution, and embrace a free market economy. On health care, pensions, elderly care, and protection of the poor, they believe the government should extend assistance and differ only on specific measures.



Totetsu Mo Nai Nippon (Extraordinary Japan)

by Taro Aso

**Shincho Shinsho, June 2007,
190 pages, ¥ 680
ISBN-13: 978 - 4106102172**

Taro Aso believes Japanese leaders have become more effective in communicating with U.S. officials. He says Japanese should be articulate in describing their understanding of a situation, their intention to solve problems, and should negotiate in a straightforward way with Americans. He argues that the two countries share universal values (普遍的価値) and strategic interests (戦略的利益). It is inevitable, in his view, that Russia and China should try to break up this alliance that dominates the world economy (40% of world GDP) because that would serve their national interests.

Taro Aso comes from a prominent family. His mother was a daughter of Shigeru Yoshida, the four-time prime minister who led Japan's post-war recovery. Several of his disciples were students of the Yoshida school and later became prime ministers. Aso's paternal great grandfather, Takichi Aso, built an industrial empire in Kyushu before World War II in coal mining, railways, navigation, electric power and hospitals. The family fortune dwindled, however, as the coal business collapsed after the war.

Aso, born in 1940, graduated from Gakushuin University, studied at Stanford University and the London School of Economics, and joined his father's company. In 1979, he got elected to the House of Representatives as an LDP candidate from his Fukuoka district. Since then, he has been re-elected nine times and has served as Director General of the Economic Planning Agency, Special Minister of Economic Policy and Foreign Minister, as well as head of the LDP Policy & Research Council. In a cabinet reshuffle in July 2008, Prime Minister Fukuda appointed Aso as LDP Secretary General.

Dodo Taru Seiji, (Politics with Dignity)

by Kaoru Yosano

**Shincho Shinsho, April 2008,
190 pages, ¥ 680**

ISBN-13: 978 - 4106102578

Kaoru Yosano expresses his confidence that American influence in world affairs will not decline but he warns that the rest of the world should not

expect the US to solve every problem. He believes there is a lot in common between the US and Japan in values and ways of thinking.



Kaoru Yosano, born in 1938 to a diplomatic family, lived in Beijing before World War II, returned to Tokyo and was evacuated to Karuizawa during the war, and moved to Egypt with his father in 1953 where he studied at the English School in Cairo.

At the age of 15 from Japan, a defeated nation, and surrounded by students from Europe, the United States, the Middle East and Africa, Yosano promised himself he would help build Japan into a first rate economic and cultural nation.

Graduating from Tokyo University Faculty of Law, in 1963 Yosano joined Nihon Genshiryoku Hatsuden (The Japan Atomic Power Company) on the recommendation of Yasuhiro Nakasone, then a promising young politician. Later Yosano was exposed to politics as Nakasone's aide. He ran for House of Representatives from a Tokyo district in twelve elections, winning nine and losing three. He served as Minister of Culture and Education, Minister of International Trade and Industry, Chairman of the LDP Policy Research Council, and Special Minister of Economic & Financial Policy in the Koizumi cabinet, and as Chief Cabinet Secretary in Prime Minister Shintaro Abe's cabinet. In a cabinet reshuffle in July 2008, Prime Minister Fukuda appointed Yosano as Special Minister of Economic & Fiscal Policy and Regulatory Reform.

Takeo Hiranuma, born in 1939, grew up in a political family. His adoptive grandfather was former Prime Minister Kiichiro Hiranuma during World War II and later President of the Privy Council. On August 15, 1945, the Hiranuma residence was attacked by fanatical soldiers who tried to kill Hiranuma. Unable to find him, they set fire to the house while Hiranuma escaped with the help of a security guard. Young Takeo vividly remembers that ordeal. After Japan's defeat, Kiichiro Hiranuma was imprisoned for life as a Class A war criminal and died in prison at the age of 84.

After having worked as a businessman in the textile industry, Takeo Hiranuma ran twice unsuccessfully for the House of Representatives before getting elected from an Okayama Prefecture district. In his first run, he campaigned on revision of the constitution that he believed was forced on Japan by the Occupation. Traditional campaigns are run on local issues such as jobs and road construction but he stuck with this national theme and got elected on the third try.

He served as Minister of Economy, Trade & Industry under Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi but his opposition to Koizumi's reform, particularly in privatizing the postal system, cost him dearly. He was censured by the LDP, resigned from the party, and formed a faction of independent politicians. Hiranuma suffered a stroke in 2006 but recovered and is active again.

Yosano and Hiranuma have personal memories of the war and their political beliefs derive directly from that experience. Aso, a toddler when the war ended, nevertheless witnessed the hardships of Japanese life then. In contrast, Yuriko Koike and Shigeru Ishiba are truly of the post-war generation, having been born in 1952 and 1957 respectively.



Seiji Bushido (Samurai Ways of Politics)

by Takeo Hiranuma

PHP, June 2007,
240 pages, ¥ 1400

ISBN-13: 978 - 4569693064

Takeo Hiranuma believes the US government had undue influence on Koizumi's reforms of the postal and savings system. By privatizing a system that had assets of 340 trillion yen, it was

targeted as a lucrative market by the American insurance industry.



Joshi No Honkai, (A Woman's Great Satisfaction)

by Yuriko Koike

Bunshun Shinsho, 2007,
254 pages, ¥ 750

ISBN-13: 978 - 4166606023

Prime Minister Abe appointed Yuriko Koike as Defence Minister in the summer of 2007, a bold move in naming a woman to head a ministry of 260,000 officials and military personnel. Koike's book describes what she did, who she met, and what she discussed

with Japanese and foreign defence professionals in her two month-tenure. She resigned ostensibly to take ritual responsibility for scandals within the ministry, including security breaches of classified information. It was widely believed at the time, however, that she was ousted for forcing the resignation of a powerful vice minister, Takemasa Moriya, who resisted her authority. She denies this speculation in her book, revealing that it was she who resigned as Prime Minister Abe tried to persuade her to stay on. Moriya later was tried on charges of corruption. Prime Minister Abe replaced Koike with Shigeru Ishiba.

During her short tenure, Koike visited Washington and met with Vice President Dick Cheney, Secretary of Defence Robert Gates, Marine General Peter Pace who was the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, Director of National Intelligence J.M. (Mike) McConnell, Special Assistant to the president Stephen Hadley, and other present and former top officials. The focus of their discussions was the realignment of American forces in Asia, the pending extension of Japanese laws against terrorist threats that would enable Japan's Maritime Defence Forces to continue operations in the Indian Ocean, and the Japanese defence ministry's measures to prevent security breaches.

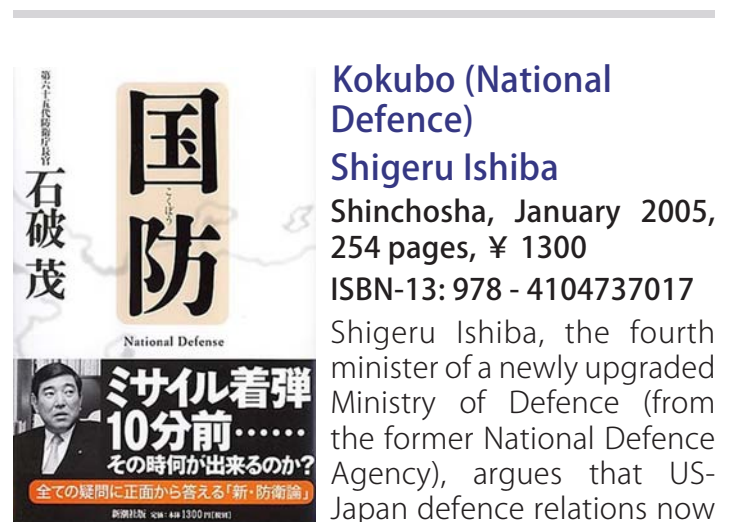
She then visited Pakistan, meeting with President Musharaf and senior defence and foreign ministry officials. All urged Japan to extend Maritime Defence Force operations in the Indian Ocean. Moving to India, she met with the defence minister, chiefs of the army, navy and the air force, and the national security advisor to discuss further cooperation in defence technology and defence of the sea lanes. Back in Tokyo, she said half jokingly in her farewell statement that "I shall return," a quote from Gen. Douglas MacArthur.

Yuriko Koike is potentially Japan's first woman prime minister, although professional political observers tend to dismiss that possibility. She has navigated the treacherous political map by frequently changing her party affiliation, earning a nickname the migrant bird. Her background also defies the conventional wisdom.

She grew up in a family steeped in the Middle East and the oil business as her father ran a trading company engaged in importing oil. Her father often talked about Japan's vulnerability in natural resources and Japan's need for an energy strategy. After graduating from high school in Ashiya, she dropped out of Kansei Gakuin University, moved to Egypt and enrolled in Cairo American University to study English, then enrolled in National

Cairo University, where she studied Arabic, and graduated with a social science degree. While in Cairo, she witnessed the Yom Kippur War in 1973 that triggered an oil crisis.

Returning to Japan, she became a television news commentator at Nippon Television and TBS. Her scoops included interviews with Yasser Arafat, leader of the Palestine Liberation Organization, and Muammar al-Gaddafi, leader of Libya. In 1992, she was elected to the House of Councillors and later to the House of Representatives from a Hyogo district. In 2002, she joined the LDP and Prime Minister Koizumi appointed her as Minister of the Environment. She also served as Minister in charge of Okinawa and the Northern Territories, as special assistant to Prime Minister Abe on national security, and as Minister of Defence in the Abe cabinet.



Kokubo (National Defence)

Shigeru Ishiba

Shinchosha, January 2005, 254 pages, ¥ 1300

ISBN-13: 978 - 4104737017

Shigeru Ishiba, the fourth minister of a newly upgraded Ministry of Defence (from the former National Defence Agency), argues that US-Japan defence relations now require Japan to be more

active. Japan in the past was passive and complacent, earning as a nickname for the National Defence Agency a shopping agency that paid the bills for jet fighters and weaponry but did little strategic thinking. He does not advocate revision of the constitution to permit Japanese forces to participate in collective security but rather a comprehensive review of present arrangements, including reducing Japan's share of the cost of maintaining American military bases in Japan. At the same time, he would seek to preserve the capability to deter enemy threats.

Shigeru Ishiba was born twelve years after the war. Although his father was Governor of Tottori Prefecture, Ishiba showed little interest in politics, graduating from Keio and joining a bank. When his father died, Ishiba was 25. Former Prime Minister Kakuei Tanaka, a king maker, summoned Ishiba and persuaded him to run for the House of Representatives in a Tottori district. He campaigned on domestic economic issues and won. In the next election, Ishiba supported a rise in consumer taxes, which was unpopular and fostered predictions that he would lose. Even so, Ishiba won with the top vote, which

persuaded him to tell the voters what he believed, not what he thought would make him win.

Ishiba became aware of international issues when he visited Kurdish refugee camps along the border of Iran and Iraq after the first Gulf War. He says that for the first time he realized the treacherous consequences of international conflicts. Added to that was his visit to North Korea with other parliamentarians to celebrate the 80th birthday of the North Korean leader, Kim Il-sung. Ishiba was shocked by the abnormality of its political system. Even though he served on LDP committees on agriculture and transport to consolidate his domestic political base, Ishiba kept up his interest in foreign policy and national defence and served as the Defence Minister in the Fukuda cabinet until July 2008.

A different and much shorter version of this collection of reviews first appeared on the National Bureau of Asian Research (NBR) Japan-U.S. Discussion Forum and is reproduced with permission.

Sir Ernest Satow's Private Letters to W.G. Aston and F.V. Dickins: The Correspondence of a Pioneer Japanologist from 1870-1918 edited by Ian Ruxton with an introduction by Peter Kornicki

Lulu Press inc, 2007,
321 pages including index
ISBN-13: 978-1435710009
£25.50

Review by Sir Hugh Cortazzi



Students of Japanese history in the nineteenth century have reason to be grateful to Ian Ruxton for the long and hard work which he has put into transcribing and publishing the diaries and letters of Sir Ernest Satow, an outstanding scholar diplomat. This is the latest in a series of books which Professor Ruxton has produced on the basis of

the writings, mostly in long-hand, of Sir Ernest Satow which are kept in the National Archives. Ruxton's first book *The Diaries and Letters of Sir Ernest Mason Satow (1843-1929) A Scholar Diplomat in East Asia* was published by the Edward Mellen Press in 1998. Since then he has produced five additional volumes including the present one covering different periods in Satow's life, in particular when he was Minister in Tokyo (1895-1900) and in Peking (1900-1906). Details can be obtained from <http://www.lulu.com/ianruxton>.

Issue 16 Volume 3 Number 4 (September 2008)

These letters to Aston and Dickins, two other scholars of Japanese culture, cover a wide range of scholarly topics but also many aspects of contemporary Japanese life and politics. They contain some fascinating sidelights on personalities, including some of Satow's colleagues in the Japan Consular Service, and on other scholars such as Basil Hall Chamberlain and the art collector William Anderson. The letters also give an insight to Satow's personality including how he came to become a practising Anglican. Despite Satow's deep interest in and knowledge of Japan, its language, history and culture, his roots were in the west and he believed western culture to be superior to that of Japan. He thought, as he explained to Dickins in a letter in 1907 that Lafcadio Hearn's style was "perfect but his [subject] matter is unconvincing," He was a realist rather than a sentimentalist in his relations with Japan. As a diplomat he had suffered too many frustrations in his dealings with Japanese officials.

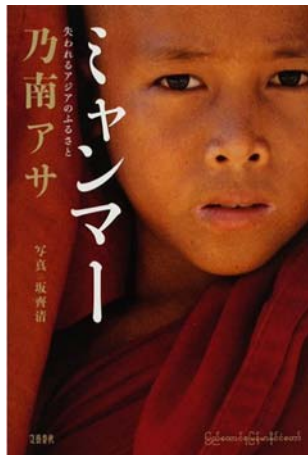
Satow's life as a subordinate to Sir Harry Parkes, the British Minister in Tokyo from 1865-83 was often difficult and he was often critical in his letters of Sir Harry, especially Parkes' domineering manners, but in a letter to Dickins in 1893 Satow summed up his assessment of Parkes in the following favourable terms: "Sir Harry's life was entirely occupied by his duties as British representative. There was hardly any other side to it. He lived in and for his work, and contributed more than any other foreigner to making the history of Japan during that period. Even when the Japanese were not apparently asking his advice, they were greatly influenced by his criticisms on their proceedings. His is the most commanding figure of that period. But to present him you must describe the events amid which he moved." Parkes aroused the ire of Sir Edward Reed M.P. and of the American journalist Edward House who was paid from Japanese funds. Satow did not agree with many of their criticisms.

On treaty revision Satow, writing from Montevideo (he had been appointed Minister to Uruguay) in 1889, thought that Britain's "best policy is to be consistent, and to continue to say 'Show us first your codes'" [legal codes]. He was critical of the line taken by Brinkley [Captain Frank], and Palmer [Major General H.S. Palmer, the special correspondent of the Times at that time] who criticised British dilatoriness over Treaty revision. He described Brinkley as "Inouye Kaoru in an English dress." Satow thought that, the Germans having been willing to make concessions before the other powers, "Bismarck had played us false."

It is interesting in the context of the Times that in 1894 Satow thought that John Milne, the founder of seismology in Japan and frequent writer of letters to the Times, would make a good correspondent for the paper. However Brinkley was appointed as Palmer's eventual successor.

It is noteworthy that Satow consistently refers to the Mikado rather than the Emperor and headed his letters up to 1882 "Yedo."

There is much of value for scholars in these letters even if some is inevitably ephemeral and of limited relevance.



**Myanmar -
Ushinawareru Ajia No
Furusato**

**(Myanmar - Missing
Homeland in Asia)**

by Asa Nonami

**Bungei Shunju, June 2008,
206 pages**

ISBN 13: 978-4163701400

Paperback ¥ 1400

Review by Mikihiro Maeda

Global warming and climate change are spreading worldwide due to environmental destruction and degradation. On top of this, Cyclone Nargis hit Myanmar and caused a deadly natural disaster on May 2, followed by the Sichuan earthquake in China on May 25. Although ordinary citizens in Myanmar could not access water to drink and lost electricity after the storm, the military junta not only decided to reject visa applications for disaster experts and aid workers but also wanted only cash and aid in the beginning. Moreover, the junta went ahead with a referendum for a new constitution on May 10, only one week after the cyclone, and the junta concluded that almost all citizens supported the new constitution and the current regime.

This book was published on June 15th, about one month after the tragedy. Well-known Naoki Prize winning novelist Asa Nonami wrote a travelogue with many beautiful photographs taken by Kiyoshi Sakasai. Even though the author makes plainspoken confessions of her experiences while travelling in Myanmar, her affection for the Burmese she met and her passion for her travel are well conveyed.

Early on in the book, she mentions the two names for the country--"Burma" and "Myanmar"--a dilemma for people who want to identify the state of the country. It is widely known that the pro-democracy movement

against military rule was widespread in this country in 1988, and that a general election was held in 1990 for the first time in almost 30 years. The National League of Democracy (NLD) won a landslide victory in this election and Aung San Suu Kyi, leader of the party, earned the right to be Prime Minister. However she has been under house arrest by the military junta since 1989 and therefore prevented from assuming the leadership role. Those people who do not recognize military rule refer to the country as "The Union of Burma," and others call it "The Union of Myanmar." The author believes that the term "Myanmar" is more suitable for referring to this multiracial country, while the term "Burma" only indicates the Burmese, who account for 70 percent of the nation.

With respect to her relationship with Myanmar, Nonami initially did not include this country as a travel destination in her itinerary, but a terrorist incident forced her to change her travel plans. She chose Myanmar as an alternative destination. Once she arrived there she grew to like it very much and revisited Myanmar twice. Based on those visits, she narrates the story in a flowing style full of affection.

She often presents candy to children whom she encounters while travelling to ease their tension and to facilitate conversation (p75). She is impressed by the attitude of monks who diligently persevere day and night, and by citizens who live in a simple way diligently. She also recalls the old Japanese life style from her youth and thinks that the people of Myanmar live in peace that Japanese used to embrace, but worries that Japanese might lose this peace due to increasing affluence (p103). She also hopes that the citizens of Myanmar are able to have bright prospects for a "free society" in the near future (p147).

In the final part of this book, the author converses with a monk who loves and admires Japan because Japan has a rich and "free" society. But the monk feels that Japan is too far away from Myanmar and he cannot imagine when he will be able to visit Japan (p203). He also believes that Myanmar's politics are not good for the citizens, who want to take part in a world community and indicated the outbreak of the protests by saying that something undoubtedly will happen soon (p200).

The 2007 crackdown against anti-government protests and Cyclone Nargis caused the author to wonder when she will be able to visit the country next, and she worries that if ever allowed to visit she probably will see some unimaginable impact of the crises on the scenery, the citizens, and the nation itself (p13). In the introduction of this book, she reveals that the main motive for writing it is that in case the Myanmar she knew never returns, at least her memories will be recorded.

I have interviewed many Burmese who live in Japan (as well as Japanese who have had a relationship with Myanmar) and I gained sympathy for the Burmese similar to that which the author embraces. Many Burmese are friendly and pro-Japanese, and her sentiments toward them are quite understandable. But the key reason why I recommend this book is that the author not only covers Myanmar as a mere travelogue but also addresses the problems this country is facing and how the situation affects the people. For example, the book covers U.S. economic sanctions on Myanmar and delay of the democratization process, concentration of wealth to big cities etc. The author concludes that the monks and other citizens are compelled to rely on prayer for a better future (p78). Hopefully, many people will read this book and more Japanese will become concerned about Myanmar.

According to an NHK international radio program broadcast on July 2, two months after the cyclone hit Myanmar, one hundred thirty eight thousand people were killed or are missing. More than one million people are still in need of aid supply and more than 2.4 million have been displaced. There also are concerns about possible outbreaks of infectious diseases, while the military government is saying that the emergency relief stages are over even though so many people are still suffering. On the bright side, restoration of normal daily life for citizens can be highly anticipated if there is successful UN intervention utilizing the international doctrine of the "Responsibility to Protect (R2P)" or other mechanisms.

The author was born in Tokyo in 1960. After she dropped out of Waseda University (School of Social Sciences) she worked for an advertising agency. She made her debut as a novelist when "Blessing Breakfast" won the Nihon Suiri Suspense Award in 1988. In 1996 she won the prestigious Naoki prize for "The Hunter" (Kogoru Kiba)."

This review was produced in collaboration with Global Communications Platform and first published on the Platform: <http://www.glocom.org>

Outsourcing and Human Resource Management: an International Survey edited by Ruth Taplin

Routledge, September 2007, 244 pages

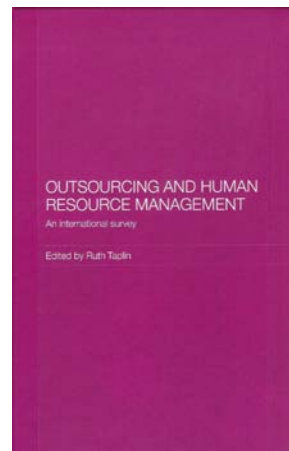
ISBN-13: 978-0415428910

Hardback £75

Review by James Brewer

For all the fuss and emotion over outsourcing, the learned literature on the subject has been scant. Vital aspects including the human resource issues

and the legal and insurance implications have been barely touched on. Outsourcing goes beyond the question of simply a search for cheaper labour, and its teething problems are forecast to pile up legal costs in the US alone of \$500m.



In her latest book, Ruth Taplin, director of the Centre for Japanese and East Asian Studies, has assembled analysis from a dozen experts on this widely-used strategy deployed by organisations including banks, insurers, multinational companies and even small- and medium-sized enterprises. The book comes up with news on some surprising developments, such as the

trend to insourcing in Europe. This brings people into a business to work alongside permanent employees, with adjustments according to workflow.

One of the strengths of the book is its international reach, encompassing insurance requirements, operational management and recruitment in the context of the financial services, automotive and IT industries of Japan, North and South Korea, South Africa, Mexico, Eastern Europe, China, India and elsewhere.

Prof Taplin insists that outsourcing constitutes a new historical phase in global production and the global division of tasks. She warns that too often outsourcing is seen as a process that can be universally applied while ignoring the country-specific and crosscultural issues.

Risk assessment and an understanding of enterprise risk management are vital. Objectives do not have to be too ambitious, but they have to be clear – there have been enough corporate missteps in the past few weeks to drum in that lesson, but more company-shaking bungles come to light every day.

In 2005, McKinsey carried out a study of 30 outsourcing deals worth \$20bn, and up to half of them failed to deliver the anticipated value. Cint Kortmann, an advocate of insourcing who has run schemes serving insurance and banking businesses that would otherwise employ enough staff fulltime to cope with peak loads, says there is an increasing need for talents in the global market, yet a decreasing set of organisations that provide the "nursery facility".

This is certainly a theme becoming increasingly

familiar to the marine, insurance and legal components of our readership. He argues: "If human resources professionals can overcome their need for 'ownership' of employees, insourcing may be just the answer they are looking for."

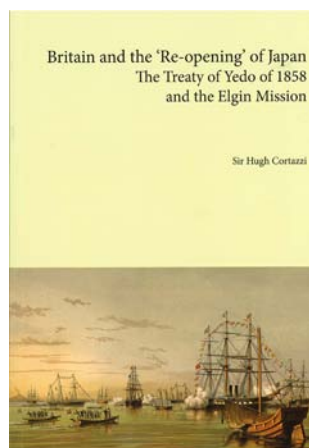
Mr Kortmann founded his own company, Talent&Pro, in 1998 to insource graduates into insurance, pensions and banking, and has built it into a service with turnover of €25m (\$37m) by bringing in people to carry out both complex and straightforward tasks while the rest of a company gets on with its core activities.

Former Lloyd's broker Oliver Prior, a consultant to FirstCity Partnership, offers what must be one of the best round-ups to date of the risk aspects. It would be naïve, he emphasises, for a major bank to assume that its risks can be transferred to a data-processing centre in Asia. A bank outsourcing a function continues to carry the reputational and legal risk in the view of its clients and regulators.

Even the best indemnity agreements can be worthless if there is inability to enforce them or to obtain redress, says Mr Prior, whose career has included posts at all the top brokerages of Sedgwick, Aon and Willis.

It is almost impossible for an outsourcer to secure insurance in their own name that will guarantee service levels – so the onus for a third-party guarantee should be placed during the tendering phase on the prospective provider of the services, says Mr Prior in the course of his invaluable treatise on the pitfalls.

This review was produced in collaboration with the Journal of Interdisciplinary Economics



Britain and the 'Re-opening' of Japan
The Treaty of Yedo of 1858 and the Elgin Mission
by Sir Hugh Cortazzi

Japan Society, 2008,
93pages
Paperback £10 (free to Japan Society members)
ISBN: 978-0-9559977-0-9

Review by Sean Curtin

This excellently researched work examines the treaty which established diplomatic ties between the United Kingdom and Japan one hundred and fifty years ago. It

also looks at the British diplomat who was instrumental in making it happen. Its pages are packed full of fabulous period photographs and superb illustrations that enhance the narrative. The publication was launched on 25th September by the author at a well-attended event at the Japanese Embassy in London and formed a key part of celebrations to mark the 150th year of bilateral ties.

Sir Hugh traces the events that led to the signing of the Treaty of Yedo on the 26th August 1858 and the pivotal role played by the British diplomat the Earl of Elgin. While the Anglo-Japanese treaty is the main focus of the work, the author also reminds us that the primary purpose of Elgin's mission was to conclude a treaty with China and an agreement with Japan was only of secondary importance. Elgin had found his dealings in China strenuous while Japan was for him a far more pleasurable experience. Elgin was enchanted by his time in what was for him the mysterious land of the rising sun. This aspect is also explored with the author providing a wealth of fascinating background information which helps recreate Japan from Elgin's perspective.

The Treaty of Yedo opened diplomatic and trade relations between the two countries which soon began to flourish. In a relatively short period Britain became a key element in Japan's modernization process. To underline the strength of ties, Sir Hugh points out that in the decades after the treaty forty percent of the foreign experts employed in Japan came from Britain. The relationship became so strong that it eventually evolved into the Anglo-Japanese Alliance which was signed in 1902.



Sir Hugh Cortazzi

However, producing the treaty was a daunting task beset by many problems during the preparation phase leading up to the 26th August 1858 signing. Perhaps the greatest obstacle was the language barrier which contained a real element of what could be labelled double Dutch. Because previous Western contact had mainly been with the Netherlands, Japanese interpreters were trained only in Dutch. Thus treaty negotiations involved a tedious and error-prone translation process from Japanese to Dutch and then from Dutch to English. Given that the art of interpreting was in its infancy and the wide gulf between Japanese and Western concepts, negotiations were beset by endless misunderstandings. Yet, despite these formidable challenges, the parties succeeded and laid the foundation for a strong and enduring relationship that has thrived for one and half centuries.