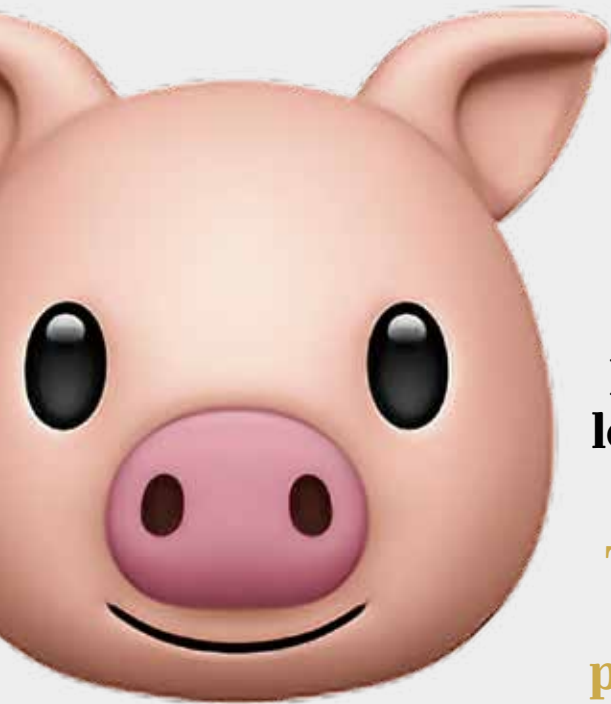




NUMBER 1 SHIMBUN



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**Year of the Pig:
FCCJ journalists
look to the future**

***The Japan Times:*
Language, the
past tense and the
future imperfect**

**Carlos Ghosn:
Deciphering a fallen
corporate icon**

2019 gets underway...



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the FCCT

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FREEDOM OF THE PRESS INFO

FROM THE PRESIDENT



DEAR FELLOW MEMBERS,

A very happy New Year from President Peter Langan and myself!

We are all settling into the new facility and getting to know the premises. On the dining front, we're happy to announce that the Correspondents' Lunch is once again on the menu and, as of this writing, we are very close to agreeing on a new Food and Beverage contract that promises exciting new dining choices in the year ahead. This has been a long process and we appreciate everyone's patience; we're hopeful the new food will make it well worth the wait.

Meantime, the Professional Activities Committee has been doing great things, hosting a press conference with former Tokyo Governor Shintaro Ishihara as well as Kazuhisa Takeda, former director of Takeda Pharmaceuticals, who spoke about his opposition to the company's acquisition of Shire. We also held a lively discussion about press freedom, which over 66,000 viewers watched on the livestream. Looking forward, the committee has tentatively booked famed American film director Rob Reiner in February.

And there is more good PAC news to report: We're very close to hiring a new staff member. That will be a big help in ensuring we get the best speakers at the club and should also make the current staff's workload a bit more manageable. A special thanks to Ito-san for holding it all together these past few months.

There have been other successful events at the Club: The Communications & PR Committee held a Rugby Media Night on Dec. 3. Committee members Kumagai-san and Yamada-san as well as board liaison Dan Sloan were instrumental in setting up the event with rugby counterparts, and the GM and his team did an excellent job with food and beverage arrangements. Total attendance was 280, including the chairman of the Japan World Cup Committee and other sport VIPs and some members of the Tokyo 2020 Organizing Committee, as well as some 116 paying guests.

Finally, we'd like to issue one last reminder that the deadline for the Swadesh DeRoy Scholarship is Jan. 18, 2019. This year's theme is "Japan's Future in a Changing World: Geopolitical, Economic, or Demographic Dynamics." Any current undergraduate or graduate student in Japan, or any Japanese student enrolled in an overseas journalism program, is eligible to apply, so please encourage the aspiring journalists in your lives to enter.

This has been a challenging but also very exciting year for the Club, so on behalf of President Peter Langan and the rest of the board, thank you for your optimism and support. We are all looking forward to big things in the year ahead.

– **Abigail Leonard**

FREEDOM OF THE PRESS NEWS

The FCCT's ongoing struggle with the Thai military government

By *Michael Mackey*

PUSHING THE ENVELOPE OF freedom of the press isn't an easy thing to do in a country run by the military. The Foreign Correspondents' Club of Thailand has tried to walk a fine line in continuing an active events program despite some serious restrictions – and even shutdowns by the authorities. What it can and cannot do is weighed down by some fairly draconian pieces of legislation and, since the 2014 coup, a military government with very definite opinions about the press.

Things got off to a rough start in the early days of the coup when the Club upset the authorities by allowing the fugitive politician Chaturon Chaiseng a platform.

"Chaturon was one of the last of the former cabinet members to turn himself in, and a subject of genuine media interest," says FCCT President Dominic Faulder. "He made no attempt to resist arrest after he had finished making a statement, and the soldiers sent to collect him

Six times since the coup, police have shut down or forced cancellation of Club events . . . it is clear who still wields the power

from the clubhouse in steel helmets and webbing arrived twenty minutes late. Three weeks later, we had the new junta spokesman sitting in the same spot."

Things have improved since. Police no longer enter the Club and sit around as they did in the early days of the coup. "It's pretty stable, and it's not gotten worse," says Faulder. "Our relationship with Lumpini police station, which has the Club in its precinct, is civil enough. We are not an activist organization – we are a press club. Much of our programming is geared to current events and whatever happens to be topical. That can unavoidably cause friction."

A non-provocative approach has been key to how the FCCT has dealt with Thailand's military rulers. The military was looking for a way to talk to the foreign media and the Club's attitude has been that it is there for the generals as much as the politicians. That seems to have some traction with the military.

"We want to hear what they have to say – our door has always been open to them," says Faulder, though appearances by government officials, in some ways the lifeblood of any press club, have been scanty since the coup. In fact, since 2014, no prime minister has appeared at the Club, while prior to that it was an annual

event. Only three ministers have visited in that time.

There have been moments, especially in the early years of military rule, when the Club's position was precarious. Six times since the coup, police have shut down or forced cancellation of Club events. The most recent incident shows that it is clear who still wields the power.

The FCCT had organized a panel discussion for Sept. 10 about a UN report on the Rohingya. That itself, while there are parallels with Thailand, wasn't the trigger for what turned out to be a swift and brutal response. But the flyer promoting the event named General Min Aung Hlaing, Myanmar's military commander. Although he's been cited by the UN for his involvement in the crackdown on Rohingya, he has some friends in very high places in the Thai military and political establishment and was able to mobilize them to halt the event.

With two hours to go, a dozen Lumpini police officers showed up, shutting down the event on the grounds it was a threat to national security. They were quite clear about the Club's lack of options. "We are not asking," said Police Col. Thawatkiat Jindakuananong. "We are ordering you to cancel."

"In hindsight, we should have left [his name] out," says Jonathan Head, former FCCT president and one of the organizers. "It's a reminder that they are watching and that they will intervene."

Such heavy-handed responses have forced the FCCT into some nimble footwork about rescheduling and repackaging their events. Another event in May 2017 that promised to focus on the theft from a public place of a plaque marking the end of Thailand's absolute monarchy (still unsolved, by the way), was also shut down. So the Club very quickly held an event on the freedom of the press where the issue of the plaque, among others, was raised.

With elections scheduled for February, the hope is things will get easier, although given the turbulence of Thai politics that is not a given.

The FCCT has kept going through four sometimes difficult years, been one of the few places in Thailand where rational debate is free and open and kept the issue of press freedom alive in a country, and a region, where it is under constant threat. That is a significant achievement – one it hopes to build on in the coming years. ●

Michael Mackey is a journalist based in Bangkok and author of the book *Sulphated Dreams*.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Canadian turned British press mogul



Lord Thomson of Fleet Street updated Club members on his latest press moves on Oct. 5, 1967. Seated to his left is FCCJ President Al Kaff of United Press International, and to his right is Masaru (Mas) Ogawa of the Japan Times, who both served on the Board multiple times during the 1960s and were longtime Club stalwarts.

Born in Ontario, Canada, on June 5, 1894, to a Canadian father and an English mother, Roy Herbert Thomson started his career selling radios. To increase demand for his product, he launched a radio station in 1931, then bought a local newspaper in 1934. Acquisition of more radio stations and newspapers followed, as did diversification into other commercial activities. By the early 1950s, his organization had grown to 19 newspapers, including one in Florida.

With this as a base, Thomson launched the *Canadian Weekly Review*, a newspaper for expats living in Britain, purchased the *Scotsman* newspaper in 1952 and in 1957 bought Scottish Television. Two years later, in 1959, his company acquired a group of UK newspapers that included the *Sunday Times*, and in 1966 he bought the *Times*, bringing the two newspapers under common ownership for the first time. Thomson's media empire eventually came to include more than 200 newspapers in Canada, the U.S. and the U.K. as well as television and other diversified interests. In the 1970s his involvement in an oil venture in the North Sea was also successful.

In 1964, Roy Thomson was honored in the U.K. for his public service by being named Baron Thomson of Fleet, the acceptance of which resulted in the loss of his Canadian citizenship. Even as a baron, however, he was known for avoiding ostentation, and continued to use London's subway system to commute to his office. Later, in 1970, he was also made a Knight Grand Cross of the Order of the British Empire (GBE).

Lord Thomson of Fleet died in 1976, leaving his title and businesses to his son, Kenneth Thomson, who became the 2nd Baron of Fleet but used the title only in his London office. The son went on to further expand the Thompson holdings, at one time being named by Forbes as the richest Canadian, but that is another story.

– **Charles Pomeroy**
editor of Foreign Correspondents in Japan,
a history of the Club that is available at the front desk

The Dog days are over. Welcome to the Year of the Pig

Happy days are here again, as FCCJ correspondents make their predictions for headlines and stories in 2019



An aging Japan continues to tackle its labor shortage problem, with flexible work hours, counseling and time off for couples trying to conceive. (If it all fails, companies to introduce AI and robots to remove human workers from the equation forever.)

– Ilgin Yorulmaz

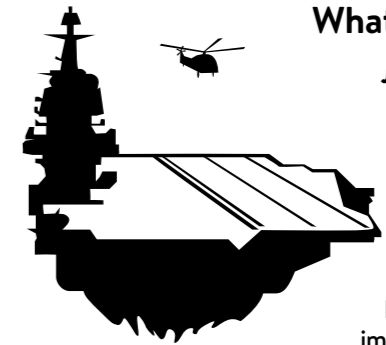
Dateline, Los Angeles: Shohei Ohtani hits 40 home runs in a year of performing exclusively as a batter, goes on to star in his first Hollywood movie and marry Taylor Swift.

– Bob Whiting

In a bid to reduce costs, newsrooms employ artificial intelligence to replace editors. The change is quickly reversed once the internet-connected AI software turns every publication into a Trump Twitter feed.

– Albert Siegel

What's in a Name?



Jan. 23: Inspired by their success in redesignating the aircraft carrier, *Izumo*, as a “multi-purpose operation destroyer,” Japan’s Self-Defence Forces comes up with improved names for other military equipment.

Hand grenades are to be renamed “security fireworks”, assault rifles will be known as “projectile projectors”, and flame throwers will be rebranded as “utility cigar lighters”. Seppuku is to be referred to as “tummy tickling”.

– Richard Lloyd Parry

TOKYO OVERWHELMED BY FLOOD OF 27 FOREIGN WORKERS AFTER CHANGING IMMIGRATION LAW.

– Isabel Reynolds

Diet session extended as gov't admits it needs to lose weight

– Daniel Hurst

‘HonEn’ Trade Deal Hailed as Example for World

A trade agreement signed on June 1 will set a vibrant, exciting example for all newly independent and reformed countries, said representatives of the Federated State of Honshu and the Counties of United England.

The agreement comes after the islands of Okinawa, Shikoku and Hokkaido held referendums and voted for independence from the island of Honshu.

As Scotland, Wales and Northern Island had similarly voted to break away as independent nations from England following Brexit, the Honshu-England, or HonEn, deal made a lot of sense, the representatives said, declining to be named or give any details.

– Peter Langan

BOJ keeps rates on hold (Jan. 20, 2019)
BOJ keeps rates on hold (Mar. 20, 2019)
BOJ keeps rates on hold (Apr. 20, 2019)
BOJ keeps rates on hold (Jun. 20, 2019)
BOJ keeps rates on hold (Jul. 20, 2019)
BOJ keeps rates on hold (Aug. 20, 2019)
BOJ keeps rates on hold (Sep. 20, 2019)
BOJ keeps rates on hold (Oct. 20, 2019)
BOJ keeps rates on hold (Nov. 20, 2019)

– Robin Harding

GRAPHICPHOTO | DREAMSTIME.COM

Winter Cancelled, Cherry Blossoms Bloom in January; Nation goes straight from sweaty autumn to humid spring

- David McNeill

RYOKANS ALLOW CUSTOMERS TO HAVE BREAKFAST FROM 9 AM

- Sonja Blaschke

Invasion of South Korea will 'save democracy': Kim Jong-un

- Julian Ryall

Dog Days of August

On Aug. 23, 2019, U.S. President Trump, Russian President Putin and Chinese President Xi stun the world by concluding a "non-aggression and friendship treaty." Afterward, President Trump proudly declares, "This is the deal of the century, which will stabilize world order."

Soon afterwards revelations surface that the pact contains a secret protocol by which the three signatories agree to partition the world, particularly natural resources, according to their respective spheres of influences.

Based on the terms of the protocol, China will acquire the disputed Senkaku Islands and Russia will continue its occupation of the Northern Territories. Bewildered and humiliated, Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe announces his resignation, saying "The international situation is bizarre."

Some observers pointed out that the signing marked 80 years to the day on which the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact was concluded on Aug. 23, 1939, that contained a secret protocol defining Soviet and German "spheres of influence."

- Eiichiro Tokumoto

BREXIT FOR QUEEN: MONARCH PASSES ON, LEAVING UK AS UK LEAVES EUROPE

- John Harris

Aug. 15: Japanese officials are stunned to find that 90 percent of foreign workers arriving under immigration laws passed last year hail from post-Brexit Britain. . . . **Sep. 28:** On a visit to Tokyo, British prime minister Boris Johnson **squashes** another small child during a Rugby World Cup event. . . . **Sep. 30:** In a welcome speech at the Kantei, prime minister Shinzo Abe congratulates his British counterpart on securing an agreement to sell jam to Saitama.

- Justin McCurry

Shinzo Abe tries marijuana edibles during a trip to the U.S. and becomes an instant convert and staunch advocate. On his return to Japan, he rams through the repeal of the Cannabis Control Law, decriminalizing medical and recreational use with immediate effect. Premium Fridays are renamed Freaky Fridays and workers are encouraged to start the weekend early with a few hits from a bong. A plethora of creative solutions to Japan's demographic, economic and social problems spring forth, but nobody can be bothered implementing them. The birthrate ticks up slightly.

- Gavin Blair

At the Rugby World Cup, Japan's national team counters All Black's haka; performs choreographed routine to Namie Amuro song

- Mustela Nigripes

OSAKA TO OPEN NATION'S FIRST CASINO RESORT IN 2024

- Michael Penn

Osaka wins the nation's first integrated casino resort and unveils a detailed plan for the casino floor that includes hourly performances by Yoshimoto Kogyo comedians, a special "Yakuza VIP Members Only"-room, 24 hour takoyaki stands in the lobby, and one-yen slot machines.

- Eric Johnston

War of words

A year after changing owners, the *Japan Times* finds itself embroiled in a fight over the past.

By *Tim Hornyak*

Press freedom in Japan has been the focus of growing debate in recent years amid reports of pressure on reporters to toe the line of the Abe administration. The latest episode in this saga was a change in editorial policy on WWII-related terms at the *Japan Times*, under new management since 2017, that sparked heated debate in the newsroom and threats of cancellations from irate subscribers.

It began with a Friday, Nov. 30 page-two "Editor's note," appended to a story on a judgment by South Korea's Supreme Court against Mitsubishi Heavy Industries for its use of Korean workers. The paper mentioned it was changing nomenclature when referring to comfort women and forced laborers to "women who worked in wartime brothels, including those who did so against their will, to provide sex to Japanese soldiers" and "wartime laborers." Many readers, including your humble scribe (disclosure: I am also a contributor to the *Japan Times*), were surprised.

The reaction from readers of the paper was swift. In a blog entry later that day, Minako Kambara Suematsu, CEO of the JT's owner News2U Holdings, wrote of her astonishment at the intense response from readers on social media and in phone calls. She said the change in wording was the result of long discussions among the editors with diverse opinions, and expressed support for the editorial department. She closed with the vague promise that "The *Japan Times* will continue to correctly communicate the present and future of Japan to the world."

MEANWHILE, THE MOVE BY the paper was generating international headlines and an internal revolt. Over the weekend, the *Guardian*, NPR and the *Chosun Ilbo*, among others, ran stories on the change in wording, reporting critics' views that the paper had bowed to rightwing pressure to change historical descriptions. The *New York Times*, whose international edition is distributed by the *Japan Times*, appeared to have been blindsided by the paper's move. Danielle Rhoades Ha, NYT VP Communications, told the *Number 1 Shimibun*: "The *New York Times* uses precise language on this topic and will continue to do so."

As discontent among staff members continued to simmer, the paper had to act. On Monday, Dec. 3, Executive Editor Hiroyasu Mizuno met with the staff over two hours in an attempt to calm the waters. He and CEO Suematsu followed up with another marathon session the next day, in which many reporters and editors expressed their views. In the end, a compromise was reached: a new committee would

be formed and assigned to review the matter of the controversial wording.

On Dec. 6, an extraordinary message signed by Mizuno was splashed over one full page in the paper. Titled "We are listening," it was a statement in which he took responsibility for the decision to run the Editor's note and apologized for damaging the trust of readers and employees.

Mizuno, whose only previous byline in the paper had been an interview with the prime minister, did not walk back the changes, but said the paper would discuss its choice of language. "It pains us, as journalists, that this note has tarnished our reputation as an independent voice," wrote Mizuno, who did not respond to questions from the *Number 1 Shimibun*.

BUT NOT ALL THE reaction to the JT's move was negative. Some welcomed it. In a Dec. 6 Twitter post retweeted over 8,000 times, American attorney and author Kent Gilbert—who contributes a weekly column to the conservative tabloid *Yukan Fuji*—called on his followers to send messages of support to the JT. And on Dec. 7, Twitter also saw Masahisa Sato, Japan's State Minister for Foreign Affairs, wonder aloud whether the change was "the result of accumulated efforts or a symbolic change," seeming to hint that there could have been outside pressure on the paper.

In response to questions from the *Number 1 Shimibun*, the

"being in a state of extreme concern," though levels of fright have in the past depended on certain changeable conditions

ALL THE NEWS WITHOUT [REDACTED] OR [REDACTED]

"preference for one institution or person," while acknowledging that preference can vary according to historical (or contemporary) pervading political views

Japan Times denied any government pressure behind the change. Asked whether it was motivated by South Korea's decision to dismantle a Japan-funded foundation for comfort women, the paper said, "No. Our discussions regarding comfort women began long (almost a year) before this move."

The paper's new owner has generally played its cards close to its vest while quietly making changes. "Overall, the paper's editorial policy has lurched rightward," says Jeff Kingston, a history professor at Temple University Japan, whose long-running column—often critical of the Abe administration—was terminated in 2017. The JT has increased columns by op-ed writer Kuni Miyake, a former Japanese diplomat and assistant to Akie Abe; meanwhile, syndicated American liberal columnist Ted Rall hasn't appeared since October.

The *Japan Times* is Japan's oldest English-language daily. For over 120 years, it's been a vital voice for Japan in the international community, surviving mergers, wartime state control and the decimation of newspapers amid digitization. In a market with countless online choices for news, aligning editorial views with government policy seems a surefire way of turning loyal readers off. After all, independence is a newspaper's *raison d'être*. ●

Tim Hornyak is a freelance writer who has worked for IDG News, CNET News, Lonely Planet and other media. He is the author of *Loving the Machine: The Art and Science of Japanese Robots*.



The savior who fell to earth

Thoughts on the rise and fall of Nissan's controversial ex-CEO by his former speechwriter.

Opinion: **On Carlos Ghosn**

By John R. Harris

Carlos Ghosn would scoff at my contention that I wrote “something like 250,000 words he uttered” as his speechwriter from 2005 through 2008. Having once said, “I have a horror of approximation,” he would demand the exact figure. However many, every word was a challenge to write given his standard brief: “Send me something, I’ll tell you if it’s wrong.”

That made it like golf in the fog. In order to anticipate his thinking, I had to imprint in my brain his voice, his Latinate mode of expression and every word ever said by or about him. Ten years later it’s still all there. And since his arrest on Nov. 19, 2018, all that verbiage has continuously run through my mind as I try to make sense of this shocking event.

Speechwriters learn to enter the C-suite like the guy who cleans the lion cage at the zoo, showing boundless respect but no fear, equally ready for a purring schmoozer or a snarling furniture thrower. Ghosn was neither of these. There was no small talk. Behind a cool-as-ice demeanor lay palpable potential for volcanic anger (luckily never directed my way) and a sense that his mere displeasure could lead to dispassionate beheading. But above all, what stood out was his discipline, focus and grasp of detail. An intimidating cat for sure.

No minutes of my life have ticked by more slowly than the three I sat in silence across the table as he read my very first draft. Occasionally, his imposing eyebrows would lift with questions like, “Mr. Harris, is there one ‘I’ in fueled or two?”

I might have been more intimidated, and might not have survived, but for the fact that I’d spent the three prior years working closely with two Ford-appointed Mazda CEOs (Mark Fields and Lewis Booth) on a turnaround equally significant if less high-profile than Nissan’s “Revival.”

Having been close witness to two analogous automaker turnarounds, I have an informed perspective on the first of two questions the “Ghosn Affair” raises in my mind.

What did Ghosn do for Nissan?

“Le Cost Killer,” the nickname French media gave Ghosn before his arrival in Japan, has led too many journalists into the lazy trope that curing a sick automaker is mainly about cost-cutting. In fact, what Ghosn did was much more complex and profound. Nissan CEO Hiroto Saikawa further distorted history in his post-arrest presser by dismissing Ghosn’s contribution to Nissan’s revival. Fact is, it would never have happened without him, if only because Renault would never have bet \$5 billion on Nissan without Ghosn to drive it.

In 1999, Nissan was a dysfunctional mess. Where other Japanese automakers, like Mazda, have head offices inside their plants with the roosts ruled by oil-stained engineers, Nissan’s Ginza HQ was stuffed with headless chickens, Keio and Todai men with clean fingernails, each jealously guarding his own fiefdom. Not just unable to see the forest for the trees, they were obsessed with the sacred cows grazing beneath them.

When confronted with a forest, Ghosn has an analytical brilliance that instantly gauges its extent and the average size of each tree before precisely calculating the market value of the timber within. That’s why his crucial first move in 1999 was to bring over a hand-picked team and direct their benchmarking of every function in Nissan – just as he had done with spectacular results two years earlier at Renault.

Once armed with a detailed diagnosis, Ghosn moved quick-

ly to fix what he found. Sure, cost cuts were part of the remedy. But any automaker is like a giant clock with literally millions of moving parts, and Ghosn quickly and brilliantly got the whole works ticking in harmony.

He broke down siloed fiefdoms by slaughtering sacred cows their chieftains had long defended and mandating “cross-functional teams.” He eradicated the headless chickens by focusing each team on three do-or-die commitments. He instituted promotion by merit, not seniority. But crucially, he got everyone onside by communicating brilliantly to the workforce. This was true leadership.

Equally significant, as an Arab outsider, Ghosn shunned what his French colleagues might have tried. Raised on the Babar books, about an elephant who is turned into a proper Frenchman, the French have a powerful instinct to impose their own norms. Instead, Ghosn was careful to maintain Nissan’s Japanese “identity” (one of his favorite words) in the Alliance.

The result: after eight years in the red, Nissan was back in the black within two years – recording its highest profit ever.

Ghosn made other brilliant contributions, too. Stung by criticism that Nissan was an environmental laggard, at the FCCJ in 2006 he quipped that “if you criticize hybrids people think you are *retarded*.” Shortly after I counseled him not to use that term again, he had a road-to-Damascus conversion, leading the industry in deciding that the future was all-electric. Overriding the objections of Nissan engineers, he launched development of the LEAF EV.

What did Ghosn do for Nissan? Beyond question, he saved the company. There was no one else to do it, and he did it. The question is . . .

What did saving Nissan do to Carlos Ghosn?

It made him a rock star, and as many a poor boy has learned, that can be a lethal dose of success. To understand his trajectory, consider who Ghosn was before he burst onto Japan’s stage in 1999.

Forget the boilerplate that dubs him, “French-Brazilian.” In his socks, Ghosn is Maronite-Christian Lebanese, a cohesive Arab tribe with a vast diaspora found even in remote locales

GENIUS COMES IN A COMPLICATED PACKAGE

like the Amazon, where his grandfather ran a bush airline. Both wives have been of this tribe, and first wife Rita started a restaurant in Daikanyama because Tokyo had no decent Lebanese food.

His French-ness was painted on by Jesuit schooling in Beirut, and math brilliance opened doors to the top schools in Paris. But as a nerdy lad in a snobbish city that generally shuns Arabs, it’s unlikely that university was a garden of carnal delight for young Carlos.

Most of his career was spent in drab backwaters like Clermont-Ferrand, the grim French industrial city where he met first wife Rita playing bridge. And Greenville, South Carolina, where three of four offspring were born. Social life there revolved around playing cards with the Rotary set. By some accounts Ghosn was a hen-pecked husband. “Was Rita dominating?” I asked someone who socialized with the couple in Tokyo. “Oh, totally! Over the top.”

It was only two years before his first Tokyo visit that Ghosn

hit anything like the big time. Catapulted into the number two spot at Renault in late 1996, he returned to the bright lights of Paris and quickly pulled the rabbit from the hat that presaged his feats at Nissan. Even after moving to Tokyo, though, Saturday night chez Ghosn was hardly a glamorous affair. While four teenagers did homework, Rita would often invite neighbors over to play cards.

In 2008, after 10 years of dogged effort at Nissan, Ghosn at 54 was at the pinnacle of success just as his personal circumstances started to shift. Once the youngest child departed for university, his marriage began to dissolve. After decades of highly disciplined existence, he was ripe for a midlife crisis.

Ghosn is studiously discreet, but a number of puzzle pieces from that era suggest a pattern. His long-time personal assistant was shunted off to a new role. In the name of diversity, he began surrounding himself with women who just happened to be attractive. Rumors of affairs began to circulate. Like that classic comic about a nerdy, sexually repressed gaijin who finds fulfillment in Japan, it seems Ghosn discovered his inner *Charisma Man*. Add to that the 2009 arrival in Japan of his co-accused, Greg Kelly, the Tennessee fixer who secured tax incentives that greased the move of Nissan’s North American base to Nashville.

Fast-forward to October 2016, when Ghosn rented Versailles for an opulent Marie Antoinette-themed second wedding to the glamorous blonde Carole Nahas. Her kids were in the photos, his were nowhere in sight. How far Ghosn had gone in a decade from Saturday night bridge with the neighbors.

None of this is to suggest Ghosn is guilty of anything. The point is that rock star success seems to have changed him. Had his most notable traits – discipline and focus – not somehow slipped, surely he would not be in his current predicament.

And, while any knife thrust from an embittered ex-wife must be taken with a whole shaker of salt, Rita’s social media comments since Ghosn’s arrest are disturbing:

“All narcissists are hypocrites. They pretend to have morals and values that they really don’t possess. Behind closed doors, they lie, insult, criticize, disrespect and abuse. They can do and say whatever they want, but how dare you say anything back to them or criticize them. They have a whole set of rules for others, but follow none of their own rules, and practice nothing of what they preach.”

Perhaps we shouldn’t be shocked. Genius often comes in a complicated package, and according to a study widely reported in 2016, one-in-five CEOs are psychopaths. That’s not to say Ghosn is, but the man I encountered would turn on impressive charm when required then flick it off straight after – which made his warmth feel somehow feigned. So while my own experience with Ghosn left me with enduring respect for his ability, I have few warm memories.

Still, I sympathize with his current plight, jailed indefinitely with no chance to defend himself as his reputation is destroyed by a daily torrent of abuse. This hideous process reveals Japan’s justice system as only one step removed from Saudi Arabia’s. While Japanese prosecutors have not dismembered Ghosn with a bone saw, denying anyone the right defend himself or to bail goes against all principles of natural justice. At the end of this sordid affair I believe Japan’s reputation will have suffered more than Ghosn’s. ●

John R. Harris is a veteran speechwriter who has served CEOs and politicians on three continents from his forest lair on Chiba’s Pacific coast.

Stirling Elmendorf

By Justin McCurry

Three years surrounded by the bucolic idyll of south-eastern Shikoku as a teacher on the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) program was enough to stir a passion for photography that, 14 years later, has given Stirling Elmendorf a successful career and personal contentment in the heart of the Tokyo megalopolis.

Twelve months into his stay in the town of Kaiyo, Tokushima Prefecture, where he lived in an old house near the beach, the American invested in a digital camera, hopped on his bicycle and let his gift for exquisite composition do the rest. He was immediately hooked, and resolved to take photographs for a living on his return to the US.

Based in his birthplace, Washington D.C., Elmendorf started out shooting for corporate and political clients before focusing on architecture and interior design – a change he attributes to the influence of his photographer mother. Desperate for a change of pace, he relocated to northern California in 2009, dividing his time between the Bay Area and downtown San Francisco.

During a working holiday in Japan, he met Kumiko, now his wife and business partner, whose energy and determination make his photography business a genuinely collaborative venture. “She is absolutely pivotal on the business side of the things,” says Elmendorf, whose pre-opening images of the FCCJ’s new premises feature on the Club’s website. “She’s an incredible organizer, has a great relationship with clients and is great with people. It doesn’t matter what the assignment is, she just says we can do it. She’s a little more aggressive than I am and I guess that rubs off on me.”

That refusal to take no for an answer served the couple well when, soon after they married in the US, they took the plunge and moved to Osaka, Kumiko’s home for the previous 20 years. There were times, though, when they wondered if the relocation had been a huge mistake. “For about the first four months we were eating oatmeal for breakfast and lunch every day because we had so little money and no clients,” Elmendorf recalls with a laugh.

Not to be deterred, they went online and looked up architecture and design offices, targeting those whose websites looked in need of a makeover. “We didn’t make any appointments and literally went door to door. Some people would see this foreign man and a Japanese woman wearing wild makeup and take a step back, but some agreed to chat for a few minutes. So we would sit down and talk, sometimes for hours.”

Elmendorf adopts the same disarming approach towards all of his clients, who now include the likes of Carl Zeiss, Fred Perry, Harry Winston, Bulgari and Rolex. “The one thing

that we have never changed is the way we do business,” he says. “Our goal is really simple – to treat everyone in exactly the same way, to be very casual and extremely friendly, but extremely respectful at all times. And we want people to have fun. Our photo shoots are not quiet, heavy affairs.”

“The best thing about my job is meeting new people and having the opportunity to make them feel great about the work that they’ve done. We really appreciate that they put their trust in us.”

Elmendorf makes time for an eclectic range of assignments – constant reminders, he says, of why Japan is such a fascinating subject for an architectural photographer. He is as comfortable photographing houses in Nara and family-run factories in

Osaka as he is shooting brand-name outlets in Ginza and high-rise office blocks in Marunouchi. “We shoot everything from kindergartens to Bulgari, and everything in between,” he says.

The couple lived in Osaka for five and a half years when they decided that the time had come to move to Tokyo, where many of their clients were located. Eighteen months on, he is refreshingly free of the cynicism that can creep up on some of the city’s longer-term residents.

“We’ve only been here for a year and a half so we’re really still in candy store mode, where it’s just fun to be here,” he says. “We’re surprised and delighted to find so much greenery here compared to Osaka. And we’re shocked by how well put-together Tokyo is as a city. It’s very inspiring for both of us. One

thing I would love to do is shoot more public buildings, like museums, libraries and schools. That would be really fun.”

Now 43, Elmendorf had a peripatetic upbringing, spending nearly half his life overseas, with periods in Honduras, Ecuador, India, Mozambique, and Rwanda due to his father’s job with the US Agency for International Development. For now, he is happy to explore his Tokyo neighbourhood – by bicycle, of course – and go wherever his assignments take him. He would, though, welcome more time to practice his guitar and indulge a love of *sentō* public baths that blossomed in Osaka.

“My brother and I are really fortunate enough to have grown up in countries that were developing and weren’t fiscally in the same place as somewhere like Japan,” he says. “It really helps you appreciate what you’ve got, how hard people work and how little they have. Not a day goes by that I don’t wake up and think how fortunate I am to live in Tokyo and how much I love it here.”

Justin McCurry is the Japan and Korea correspondent for the *Guardian* and *Observer* newspapers in London and reports for the English-language service of France 24 TV.

“FOR ABOUT THE FIRST FOUR MONTHS WE WERE EATING OATMEAL EVERY DAY BECAUSE WE HAD SO LITTLE MONEY AND NO CLIENTS.”



ANDREW POTHECARY

New technology and the fake news battlefront

The Wall Street Journal is preparing its journalists to detect deepfakes, a job that is increasingly difficult thanks to advances in AI

By Francesco Marconi and Till Daldrup

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IS FUELING the next phase of misinformation. The new type of synthetic media known as deepfakes poses major challenges for newsrooms when it comes to verification.

The *Wall Street Journal* is taking this threat seriously and has launched an internal deepfakes task force led by the Ethics & Standards and the Research & Development teams. This group, the WSJ Media Forensics Committee, is comprised of video, photo, visuals, research, platform, and news editors who have been trained in deepfake detection. Beyond this core effort, we're hosting training seminars with reporters, developing newsroom guides, and collaborating with academic institutions such as Cornell Tech to identify ways technology can be used to combat this problem.

"Raising awareness in the newsroom about the latest technology is critical," said Christine Glancey, a deputy editor on the Ethics & Standards team who spearheaded the forensics committee. "We don't know where future deepfakes might surface so we want all eyes watching out for disinformation."

The production of most deepfakes is based on a machine learning technique called "generative adversarial networks," or GANs. This approach can be used by forgers to swap the faces of two people – for example, those of a politician and an actor. The algorithm looks for instances where both individuals showcase similar expressions and facial positioning, then look for the best matches in the background to juxtapose both faces.

Because research about GANs and other approaches to machine learning is publicly available, the ability to generate deepfakes is spreading. Open source software already enables

anyone with some technical knowledge and a powerful-enough graphics card to create a deepfake.

DEEPPFAKE CREATORS CAN USE a variety of techniques. Faceswap is an algorithm that can seamlessly insert the face of a person into a target video. This technique could be used to place a person's face on an actor's body and put them in situations that they were never really in. Forgers can also graft a lip-syncing mouth onto someone else's face, transfer facial expressions from one person into another video, making them seem disgusted, angry, or surprised – or even transfer the body movements of a person in a source video to a person in a target video.

Journalists have an important role in informing the public about the dangers and challenges of artificial intelligence

"We want all eyes watching out for disinformation."

technology. Reporting on these issues is a way to raise awareness and inform the public.

"There are technical ways to check if the footage has been altered, such as going through it frame by frame in a video editing program to look for any unnatural shapes and added elements, or doing a reverse image search," said Natalia V. Osipova, a senior video journalist at the *Journal*. But the best option is often traditional reporting: "Reach out to the source and the subject directly, and use your editorial judgment."

If someone has sent in suspicious footage, a good first step is to try to contact the source. How did that person obtain it? Where and when was it filmed? Getting as much information as possible, asking for further proof of the claims, and then verifying is key.

If the video is online and the uploader is unknown, other questions are worth exploring: Who allegedly filmed the footage? Who published and shared it, and with whom? Checking the metadata of the video or image with tools like InVID or other metadata viewers can provide answers.

IN ADDITION TO GOING through this process internally, the *Journal* collaborates with content verification organizations such as Storyful and the Associated Press. This is a fast-moving landscape with emerging solutions appearing regularly in the market. For example, new tools including TruePic and Serelay use blockchain to authenticate photos. Regardless of the technology used, the humans in the newsroom are at the center of the process.

"Technology alone will not solve the problem," said Rajiv Pant, chief technology officer at the *Journal*. "The way to combat deepfakes is to augment humans with artificial intelligence tools."

Deepfakes are often based on footage that is already available online. Reverse image search engines like TinEye or Google Image Search are useful to find possible older versions of the video to suss out whether an aspect of it was manipulated.

Editing programs like Final Cut enable journalists to slow footage down, zoom the image, and look at it frame by frame or pause multiple times. This helps reveal obvious glitches: glimmering and fuzziness around the mouth or face, unnatural lighting or movements, and differences between skin tones are telltale signs of a deepfake.

In addition to these facial details, there might also be small edits in the foreground or background of the footage. Does it seem like an object was inserted or deleted into a scene that might change the context of the video (e.g. a weapon, a symbol, a person, etc.)? Again, glimmering, fuzziness, and unnatural light can be indicators of faked footage.

In the case of audio, listen for unnatural intonation, irregular breathing, metallic sounding voices and obvious edits, all hints that the audio may have been generated by artificial intelligence. However, it's important to note that image artifacts,

glitches, and imperfections can also be introduced by video compression. That's why it is sometimes hard to conclusively determine whether a video has been forged or not.

A NUMBER OF COMPANIES are creating technologies – often for innocuous reasons – that nonetheless could eventually end up being used to create deepfakes. Adobe is working on Project Cloak, an experimental tool for **object removal** in video, which makes it easy for users to take people or other details out of the footage. The product could be helpful in motion picture editing. But some experts think that micro-edits like these – the removal of small details in a video – might be even more dangerous than blatant fakes since they are harder to spot.

There are algorithms for image translation that enable the **altering of weather or time of day** in a video. These could be helpful for post-production of movie scenes shot during days with different weather. But it could be problematic for newsrooms and others, because in order to verify footage and narrow down when videos were filmed, it is common to examine the time of day, weather, position of the sun, and other indicators for clues to inconsistencies.

Audio files can also be manipulated automatically: One company, Lyrebird, creates artificial voices based on audio samples of real people. One minute of audio recordings is enough to generate an entire digital replica that can say any sentence the user types into the system.

While these techniques can be used to significantly lower costs of movie, gaming, and entertainment production, they represent a risk for news media as well as society more broadly. For example, fake videos could place politicians in meetings with foreign agents or even show soldiers committing crimes against civilians. False audio could make it seem like government officials are privately planning attacks against other nations.

"We know deepfakes and other image manipulations are effective and can have immediate repercussions," said Roy Azoulay, founder and CEO of Serelay, a platform that enables publishers to protect their content against forgeries. "We need to really watch when they become cheap, because cheap and



Video fakery

Screen grabs from an original and an altered video. The second and fourth column are stills from the original. The first and third columns have had Barack Obama's facial movements mapped on to ex-president Ronald Reagan's. The video is on the Nieman Journalism Lab site here: <https://bit.ly/2zZxqH8>

effective drives diffusion."

Publishing an unverified fake video in a news story could stain a newsroom's reputation and ultimately lead to the public losing trust in media institutions. Another danger for journalists: personal deepfake attacks showing news professionals in compromising situations or altering facts – again aimed at discrediting or intimidating them.

As deepfakes make their way into social media, their spread will likely follow the same pattern as other fake news stories. In an MIT study investigating the diffusion of false content on Twitter published between 2006 and 2017, researchers found that "falsehood diffused significantly farther, faster, deeper, and more broadly than truth in all categories of information." False stories were 70

percent more likely to be retweeted than the truth and reached 1,500 people six times more quickly than accurate articles.

Deepfakes are not going away anytime soon. It's safe to say that these elaborate forgeries will make verifying media harder, and this challenge could become more difficult over time.

"We have seen this rapid rise in deep learning technology and the question is: Is that going to keep going, or is it plateauing? What's going to happen next?" said Hany Farid, a photo-forensics expert. "I think that the issues are coming to a head," he said, adding that the next 18 months leading up to the 2020 election will be crucial.

Despite the current uncertainty, newsrooms can and should follow the evolution of this threat by conducting research, partnering with academic institutions, and training their journalists how to leverage new tools. ●

Francesco Marconi is R&D chief at the *Wall Street Journal*. *Till Daldrup* is a research fellow at the *Journal* and a master's candidate at NYU's Studio 20 journalism program. This article originally appeared on the NiemanLab website and is used with permission.



The year-end in photos

Christmas slips away A diver dressed as Santa Claus swims with a moray eel in the Sunshine Aquarium, Tokyo by Yoshikazu Tsuno



Season's leavings
Fallen ginkgo leaves
by Stirling Elmendorf



New Year greetings
A Shinto priest plays the Shō during the year-end ceremony at Kanda Myoujin Shrine in Tokyo, for the start of 2017
by Katsumi Kasahara/
Gamma-Rapho

JOIN THE FILM COMMITTEE...

... on Tues., Jan. 15 at 7:00 pm for the acclaimed feature debut of Nanako Hirose, *His Lost Name*. Like her mentor, Cannes Palm d'Or winner Hirokazu Kore-eda, Hirose takes her time with her storytelling, and revelations do not arrive until long after the film's opening scenes. A troubled young man (Yuya Yagira, winner of the Best Actor award at Cannes for Kore-eda's *Nobody Knows*) is rescued from an apparent suicide attempt by taciturn widower Tetsuro (Kaoru Kobayashi of *Midnight Diner*), who gives him a place to stay, a job and most importantly, a sympathetic shoulder. But it's soon clear that the young man isn't the only one haunted by his past. Hirose will join us for the Q&A session after the screening.

(Japan, 2019; 113 minutes; in Japanese with English subtitles.)

— Karen Severns



FCCJ EXHIBITION

The Year of the Boar Illustration Group Exhibition Curated by Niya Niya Studio



by Sander Studio



by Motoko Matsuda

NIYA NIYA STUDIO WAS founded in Kamakura, Japan in 2017 by artists and designers Tada Kono and Yura Osborn. After working in the creative field in Los Angeles and New York, they have relocated to Kamakura where they started their design studio. They hope to make everyone smile with their artwork.



About the reporting of the rape allegations by Shiori Ito in Japan:

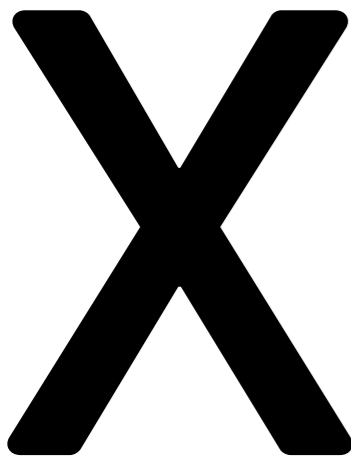
“THAT INCIDENT WAS UNFORTUNATELY SILENCED IMMEDIATELY BY THE ABE ADMINISTRATION AND THE CENTRAL POLICE . . . IT’S ALMOST LIKE, BECAUSE THE MEDIA HAS BECOME COMPLETELY SILENT, THAT THAT INCIDENT DID NOT EXIST.”

Yasuo Ohnuki,
Former NHK Europe Director
General & President of Free Press
Association of Japan,
at the Club, Dec. 7 2018

CLUB DIARY DATE

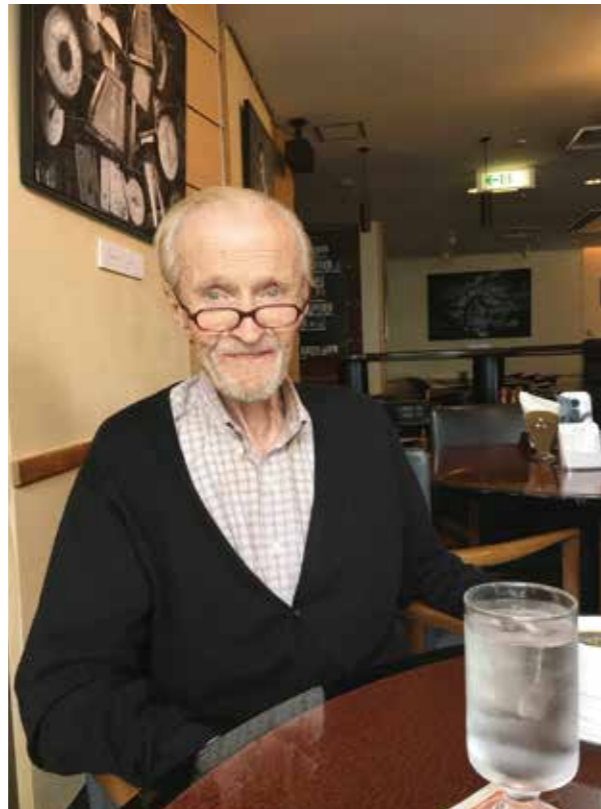
1/22

Book Break:
David Peace, author of Patient X: the Case-Book of Ryunosuke Akutagawa



IN MEMORIAM

Remembering Jack Spillum



KHALDON AZHARI

“No one could match him for his ready wit and lightning reactions. Always funny and good-natured, he was a pro.”

“I got to know Jack almost immediately after arriving in Tokyo in 1977,” says Bradley K. Martin, a long-time friend. “He was hard to miss: a very funny man, cutting a wide swath as he ambled through the Main Bar, stopping at tables here and there to crack wise. We had a running gag about his state of origin. I would always introduce him as a South Dakotan. Jack would simulate outrage. He was a North Dakotan, damn it!”

At one time, Jack was a pioneering foreign stockbroker with Sanyo Securities. “He was a major force in introducing the Japanese market to foreigners,” says Martin. “Not only gaijin investors but correspondents, like me. After I went to work for the *Asian Wall Street Journal* in 1983, it was good to have a real expert like Jack to explain things and introduce me to financial industry colleagues.” Jack left the securities business and went on to other pursuits, including investment banking, head hunting and the cedar-home business. He sold

THE FCCJ LOST JACK SPILLUM, an Associate Member for 51 years, on Nov. 23 in Tokyo. He was 83. A memorial gathering held on Nov. 30 to celebrate his life drew 50-plus friends to a standing-room only reception, an indication of Jack’s popularity.

John David “Jack” Spillum was born Oct. 29, 1935 and raised in Grand Forks, North Dakota. He arrived in Asia as a radio announcer with U.S. Armed Services Network in South Korea just after the Korean conflict.

Jack came to Tokyo in 1957 and

“No one could match him for his ready wit. Always funny and good-natured, he was a pro.”

never left. He joined the FCCJ in 1967, where he was a colorful and popular personality, perhaps best known among members for calling bingo numbers. “Jack was a great Emcee,” said Sandra Mori, who has long been associated with Club entertainment.

one of these to friend and fellow Club member Bob Neff, then with *Business Week* magazine, who wrote about the experience in the publication in June 1993. Later still, Jack had a prized gig teaching English to top-level Japanese business people.



Remembrances

Geoff Tudor and Mehdi Bassiri at the well-attended Memorial Night at the Club, above. Below, Jack in charge of a bingo night in 2005.

Jack had a very rough time with illness in his latter days. He was stricken by Parkinson’s Disease and its associated illnesses. “One of my great regrets has been that when I tried to visit him some months ago word came back that he was not up to receiving me,” says Martin. “Thinking about that now, I wonder if he was trying to ensure that I’d remember the healthy, jolly, larger-than-life Jack.” Other friends at the reception made similar observations.

Jack’s son, Jack Spillum Jr., also attended and paid a tribute to his late father, with a hilarious anecdote about their last time together in New York. “With eyes closed, you could imagine it was Jack Sr. at the mike,” said Bob Kirschenbaum, president of Pacific Press Service. “His dad would have been proud.”

– Geoff Tudor



NEW MEMBERS

REGULAR MEMBERS

Susumu Arai, *The Yomiuri Shimbun*
Michio Hayashi, *The Yomiuri Shimbun*

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Yoshihiro Hombo, *Mitsui & Co.*
Hiroyuki Kato, *Mitsui & Co.*
Yasuro Koizumi, *FiNC, Inc.*
Shinobu Nakagawa, *Fearnleys Japan, Ltd.*
Masao Nishikawa, *Sekisei Co., Ltd.*
Inketsu Okina, *Darwin Co., Ltd.*
Akihiko Sakurai, *Seika Corporation*
Motonori Sakai, *Wallenius Wilhelmsen Ocean AS*
Yosuke Kano, *Element HRC Ltd.*
Toru Nishiyama, *Maersk Line A/S*
Mamoru Sakamoto, *Itsumo.Inc*

REGULAR MEMBERS



SUSUMU ARAI, is, since June 2018, manager for international affairs at the *Yomiuri Shimbun*. He joined the newspaper in 1991, and has been posted as a correspondent to New

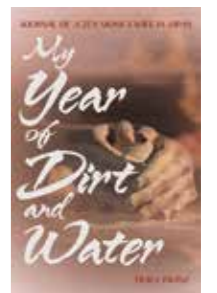
Delhi, Sydney, Islamabad and Phnom Penh. His prior position was deputy editor of the *Japan News*, the English newspaper published by the *Yomiuri Shimbun*.



MICHIO HAYASHI is a senior research fellow at the Yomiuri Institute, the think-tank of the *Yomiuri Shimbun* company. His coverage area centers around international/defense issues. Hayashi

joined the *Yomiuri Shimbun* in 1987 and spent half of his career as a correspondent overseas. His postings included New Delhi, Washington D.C., Brussels, Paris and London. He later held posts on the editorial board of the *Yomiuri Shimbun*, and as managing editor of the *Japan News*.

NEW IN THE LIBRARY



My Year of Dirt and Water : Journal of a Zen Monk's Wife in Japan

Tracy Franz
Stone Bridge Press

Japanese Contemporary Politics

Akio Igarashi; Mark E. Caprio and Miranda Schreurs (ed.)
Routledge
Gift from Akio Igarashi



Pax Japonica: the Resurrection of Japan

Takeo Harada
LID Publishing
Gift from Daniel Slater

Make It Happen!: Japanese Companies Need To Elevate Marketing As A Core Function To Succeed Outside Japan

Robert E. Peterson
CreateSpace
Gift from Daniel Slater

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