

NUMBER 1 SHIMBUN

November 2020 · Volume 52 · No. 11



How was it for you?

Lust, corruption and creative bankruptcy
at the heart of literary Tokyo

NUMBER 1 SHIMBUN

November 2020 · Volume 52 · No. 11

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In this issue

After three tightly themed *Number 1s*, we're letting our hair down. Read on for a new series on PAC speakers, reflections on our South Asian connections, the making of Marunouchi, intrigue in Itabashi and Pennsylvania Avenue, a heartwarming animal rescue project, and Karen Severns on a film portrait of a Tokyo writer going downhill so fast he could almost be a memory.

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THE FRONT PAGE

From the President

Dear members,

No one can say the FCCJ doesn't cater to a broad range of interests, and this past month has provided a superb illustration of how we can simultaneously be at the center of different worlds. Tsuyoshi Kusanagi, a former member of SMAP, the boyband that dominated Japanese media for decades, made a rare appearance to talk to members about his role as a transgender woman in the hit film *Midnight Swan*. The event has been viewed well over 200,000 times on YouTube. Just two weeks later, we provided a platform for the academics who were denied appointment to the Science Council of Japan, in what became the first serious setback for Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga's fledgling government. That press conference was front-page news for Japanese media. If you missed either of these events, I highly recommend you watch them online.

Meeting our mission

Our job of providing insights into Japan's changing society, politics and pop culture for club members and the country as a whole is never an easy one. My two short months in this job have brought home to me just how much behind-the-scenes effort on the part of our staff and volunteers goes into coordinating the guests and livestreaming events for those who can't be present. At the same time, they have to make sure everyone is protected as far as possible from the risk of Covid-19 infection.

If you want these efforts to continue, please keep supporting us as members, even if you are less inclined to visit the club during the pandemic. Don't forget, you can watch the discussions live and ask questions remotely, even if you can't attend in person.

F&B and committees

In other news, you may have heard that our food and beverage vendor, BPI, who take care of the Main Bar and the Pen & Quill restaurant, will be leaving us at the end of December. We're in the final phases of picking a successor to take over the operation, and in the mean-



JULIO SHIKI

time we're planning some special farewell offers for members, so please take advantage of those in the last two months of the year. Some members have asked me about how best to support the FCCJ through these unprecedented times. Enjoying a delicious meal at a reasonable price is actually a great way of doing just that. That includes eating at Masukomi Sushi on the 6th floor, or just picking up one of their wonderful take-away offerings for lunch or dinner.

Finally, don't forget that we are always looking for members to join our committees and bring their expertise to various aspects of our management. We still have vacancies for the Associate Member Liaison Committee and the IT Committee and would be delighted to hear from anyone who is interested in taking part. Please don't hesitate to contact me at president@fccj.or.jp, or via the office.

● Isabel Reynolds has been reporting for Bloomberg in Tokyo since 2012. She has lived in Japan for more than 20 years and been a Regular Member of the FCCJ for most of that time.

PROFILE

THERE GOES THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

HIROAKI FUJII ON THE MAKING OF MARUNOUCHI



SUVENDRINI KAKUCHI

Like many of his colleagues, FCCJ associate member, Hiroaki Fujii has started working more days at home, a trend that, he expects, will only expand against the backdrop of the Corona virus. The change, however, has not fazed the veteran employee whose career at Mitsubishi Real Estate now spans over three decades. On the contrary, he cannot believe his good fortune. His new office in Tateyama nestles into the northern Alps.

“I spend eight hours a day at my desk with a cool breeze wafting through my window, listening to the songs of nightingales,” he muses.

Fujii, a law graduate, has long worked in real estate development across Japan, a deeply rewarding task, especially when it revitalizes old cities and attracts new residents. Given his experience in the corporate world, he views the change in today’s working culture as a new era. This era embraces teleworking and flexibility and rejects tired management models tying employees to gruelling commutes and long office hours.



Top picture: Marunouchi today from Google Earth.

Bottom: Marunouchi in the mid-1960s. Both the Kokusai Building and the Yurakucho Building are under construction. The Yurakucho Denki Building has yet to take shape.

THERE GOES THE NEIGHBOURHOOD



Hiroaki Fujii

“Take my own situation. Right now, I work four consecutive days in Tateyama. I no longer have a tiring commute to the Tokyo office from the suburbs. People like me appreciate the freedom of working remotely. It is liberating and more productive,” says Fujii.

Office vacancies

Indeed, social distancing has affected Japan’s corporate world and that includes new challenges facing Tokyo’s lucrative real estate market. A recent Bloomberg article points out the capital’s office vacancy rate has risen to over 3 percent, the highest since January 2018 and Morgan Stanley, quoted in the article, forecasts it could climb to record levels over the next five years (*Japan Times* October 8th 2020, from Bloomberg).

To cope, says Fujii, whose company is the lead developer in the capital’s posh Marunouchi vicinity, the focus is on innovative approaches to repurposing space. He points to the potent example of the transformation of the Marunouchi Naka Dori street linking Yurakucho to Tokyo station and Otemachi. The avenue, familiar terrain for foreign correspondents, has shed its dour business image of dark suited salary men to emerge, in the last year, into an airy and sophisticated counterpart dotted with open cafes and green walkways.

As Fujii sees it, the Covid pandemic has accelerated changes that were already underway in younger, more tech-savvy business communities. “Their demands are the next growth opportunity,” says Fujii. He should know. Fujii is now the executive director of OMY Area Management Association, a non-profit organization established to foster interaction among businesses in the locality. The office, a FCCJ neighbour, hosts get-togethers for the business community. As he puts it, “Cultivating a sense of belonging and collaboration is an important service in today’s commercial property market.”

Within the walls

Historically, Marunouchi, literally ‘inside the circle’, historically within the (castle) walls, was the site of the former Edo castle, constructed with a moat for Tokugawa Iyeyasu. In 1890 the land

Banishing the 80s gloom: leafy boulevards and *al fresco* dining in Naka Dori

was bought from the Meiji government by the enterprising banker, Iwasaki Yasunosuke, creating the domain of Mitsubishi Shoji.

During the massive construction boom of the 1970s and 80s, when Fujii entered Mitsubishi, Marunouchi was a natural host for banks and offices and a natural destination for that post-war samurai, the salaryman. Two decades of drab, low-ceilinged offices followed, and the area exuded the gravitas of the work ethic. For real fun, office workers gravitated to the bars and restaurants of Ginza or Shimbashi, and Marunouchi after dark was little more than a ghost town.

Out of the shadows

Today, that past is barely a memory. The Naka Dori project has cut road traffic and encouraged pedestrians. The paved streets host regular street markets and food fairs. Diverse business models are also increasing share office spaces and learning labs that host seminars and webinars, such as the ongoing sustainable development campaign, a collaborative venture including the Norin Chukin Bank, another member of the Marunouchi neighbourhood. The aim is to generate start-ups and attract clients with a difference. “Relying on office rentals *per se* is a precarious model,” maintains Fujii.

Still, the spotlight on a hybrid working system remains the most enthralling development for Fujii. A sports fanatic - he runs marathons and cycles for miles on uphill roads - his life could not be more rewarding. “I now live in a larger space and have more time for my family,” he said. Eating out is also a different experience. Instead of squeezing into expensive Tokyo watering holes, he now prefers to relax at the small diners in his neighbourhood and get to know his neighbours.

With the increase in satellite offices or ‘hubs’ outside urban areas, Fujii sees cities attracting people for unique and exotic business opportunities. “We live in exciting times,” he says. “Tokyo has become a place for learning new things and meeting new people. I look forward to the future.”

● Suvendrini Kakuchi is Tokyo Correspondent for *University World News* in the UK.

FEATURE

SOUTH ASIA AT THE FCCJ

REVIEWING OUR LEGACY



WIKIPEDIA

Isabella Bird, British explorer, writer, photographer and naturalist

MONZURUL HUQ

Historically, men have dominated foreign correspondence, with phenomenal exceptions: Isabella Bird (1831-1904), Martha Gellhorn (1908-1998), and Oriana Fallaci (1929-2006) were all special observers of their time whose writings still resonate in ours. Isabella Bird's dispatches from Japan and China towards the end of the nineteenth century included not only correspondence but also longer, richer accounts that still inform and engage more than a century after her death. Women like these inspired others to follow, and their number has been rising in recent years, though not as fast as the FCCJ would like.

Gender is an aspect of diversity in which we have underperformed but, with four female presidents during the first two



KV Narain in full flow

decades of this century (including the current incumbent) we have not done too badly, although the proportion of women members and Committee Chairs is still far too small. However, from the perspective of nationality, the FCCJ has done well, compared to many other press clubs. And here South Asian correspondents have played a historically important role.

KV Narain

Our Workroom carries the name of KV Narain, an Indian who was among the first non-Japanese Asian to play a major role in Club affairs. He was followed by several others. We have a Scholarship fund named after Swadesh De Roy, a distinguished Indian who left a generous fund at the disposal of the Club to initiate a scholarship for aspiring young journalists. The Swadesh De Roy Scholarship fund is still operational, with annual compe-

SOUTH ASIA AT THE FCCJ



VC Lingam celebrating his 90th birthday at the Club



Firdous Khergamvala moderating a press conference

titions for students of journalism and media studies here and abroad. However, apart from the Scholarship, the life and career of Swadesh De Roy himself have not otherwise been commemorated or made known to beneficiaries of the Scholarship set up in his name. Clearly, he deserves more recognition.

KV Narain, in particular, was a Club stalwart. He chaired the Library and Workroom Committee for years and worked hard to make sure that those from the less powerful media around the world had a place to work and research. The Internet was a long way off and our workroom and library were essential tools for many of our regular members. KV, as he was known among colleagues and friends at the FCCJ, was instrumental in giving the workroom and information gathering facility a definite shape. Small wonder that we honor KV by naming the place after him, though the commemorative plaque originally set up in KV's honor seems to have gone missing since our move to the Nijubashi Building.

KV Narain first came to Japan in 1937 as a student. No sooner had he settled in Tokyo than Japan went into full-scale war with China. KV stayed on after the war and began reporting for Indian newspapers. He was subsequently made a regular correspondent of *The Hindu*, the left-leaning English-language daily published from Madras (present day Chennai). In 1961, he joined the Club, remaining an active member until 1998, the year he returned to his hometown, Bangalore.

VC Lingam, Swadesh De Roy and UD Khan

KV's counterpart among associate members was VC Lingam, the grand old man who was a regular at the Club until his death in 2014. Like KV, Lingam also came to Japan to pursue tertiary studies in the mid-1930s. He also joined the Club in the early 1960s and remained a member until his death.

Lingam's legacy was built on by Swadesh De Roy, who came to Japan as a correspondent of the Press Trust of India, a government-linked news agency. Swadesh joined the Club in 1964, ran for various posts, sat on the board and in 1979 became the FCCJ's first South Asian President. Both KV and Swadesh wrote for *Number1 Shimibun*. Swadesh contributed a regular column, "Up our Alley". The fact that contributions to *Number1 Shimibun* were all unpaid gives some sense of these journalists' devotion to our Club.

In the early 1970s the FCCJ saw the emergence of another very active South Asian. Umar Daras Khan or UD Khan was a Pakistani who joined the Club in 1974 and remained a member until his death in the late 1990s. Many of our veteran members remember him as a perpetual loser in FCCJ presidential elections. UD Khan ran for President almost every year from the late 1970s to the mid-1990s without ever bagging the top prize. This failed to discourage him from helping to run the Club and he was always available to serve on committees.

SOUTH ASIA AT THE FCCJ



Former Japanese Prime Minister Masayoshi Ohira and Swadesh De Roy enjoying an intimate moment at the Club

Firdous Khergamvala

A close contemporary of UD Khan, Firdous Khergamvala was set to be FCCJ President in early 2000 when premature death robbed him (and us) of victory. Firdous replaced KV as correspondent for *The Hindu* and he too was a regular presence in the workroom. Firdous too served on various committees and was elected to the Board several times. The Club later named the small conference room at the Denki Building after him. Again, this small mark of recognition was set aside when our Club moved to its current premises. For the sake of knowing and honoring our own past history, we do need to restore the Club's formal recognition of Firdous Khergamvala's historic contribution to our activities.

Maintaining tradition

I myself am one in a line of South Asian journalists perpetuating the rich and storied history of South Asians at the FCCJ. Our colleague Suvendrini Kakuchi is another. Both of us have served as President and we remain active in various FCCJ committees. Another important aspect of diversity we uphold is that we represent the media of our own countries rather than the ubiquitous media of the Western world. This is in itself a challenge as sometimes our hosts do not know who we are or which media institution we represent.

KV used to recall an encounter with Indonesian officials accompanying President Soekarno during one of his Tokyo visits in the early 1960s. As he was joining a press conference, an Indonesian official at the entrance asked KV for his affiliation. When KV told the official that he was a Hindu, the man replied, "I wasn't asking for your religion, I was asking for the name of your media."

I still deal with similarly inane queries from hosts, many of whom confuse my name with that of my newspaper. More than a few invitations to press events addressed to "Mr. Prothom Alo" have come my way. But this too is a part of diversity in practice as it shows that the Club is not just a forum for a significant handful of media giants. As with South Asian, East Asian representation at the Club has grown significantly.

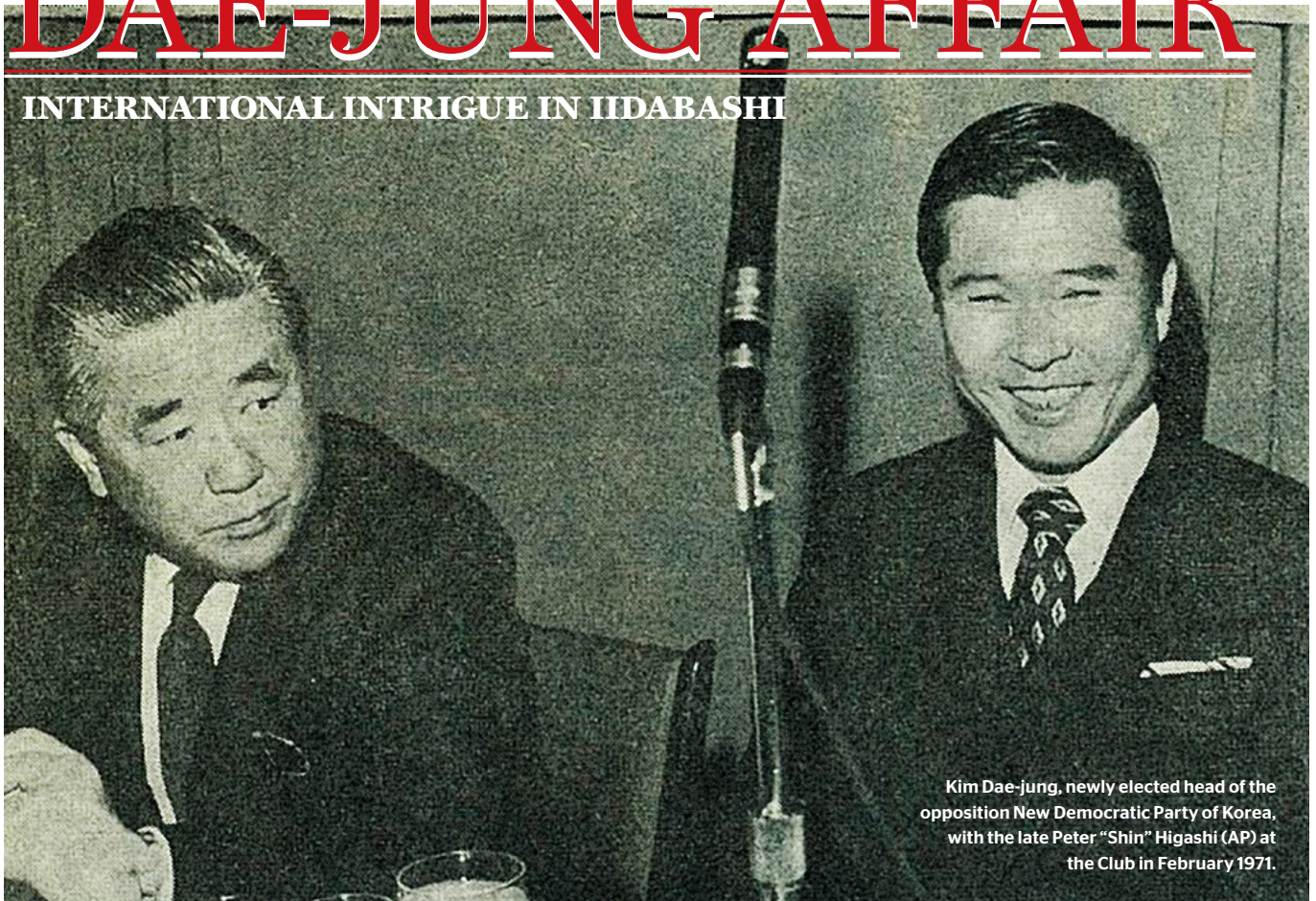
We could certainly do with a great deal more help and engagement from our Chinese, Korean and Japanese friends and colleagues, both in running the Club and in making it a more congenial place to visit. Historically, the problem has lain in the language barrier. But this is gradually being eroded, and we look forward to far greater involvement in FCCJ activities from both East and South Asian Members.

● Monzurul Huq is Tokyo Bureau Chief of the Bangladesh daily *Prothom Alo* and a former President of the FCCJ.

FEATURE

1973: THE KIM DAE-JUNG AFFAIR

INTERNATIONAL INTRIGUE IN IIDABASHI



Kim Dae-jung, newly elected head of the opposition New Democratic Party of Korea, with the late Peter "Shin" Higashi (AP) at the Club in February 1971.

MARK SCHREIBER —————

The abduction of South Korean politician Kim Dae-jung from a Tokyo hotel on August 8, 1973 precipitated a major international crisis, with some media comparing it to the Israeli Mossad's abduction of Nazi fugitive Adolf Eichmann from Argentina in 1960. Almost a half century later, it still evokes strong memories.

After a series of sometimes stormy negotiations, diplomatic relations between Japan and the Republic of Korea (ROK) were normalized in June 1965, and by the beginning of the 1970s, two-way trade, including granting of manufacturing licenses and technical transfers by Japan, began taking off.

Park Vs. Kim

ROK president Park Chung-hee, a former army lieutenant general, had seized power following a 1961 coup d'état. Under pressure from its American ally, South

Korea held a presidential election on April 27, 1971, in which Park was opposed by a charismatic 46-year old member of the New People's Party, Kim Dae-jung.

Park, who had served as a junior officer in the imperial army of Manchukuo in the waning months of World War II, was an old-school authoritarian and disinclined to relinquish his power to a young upstart with nebulous ideas about democracy.

Large numbers of ballots, including those of Kim and his wife, had been ruled illegal; and in two major cities where the opposition had its power base, administrative "oversights" resulted in many voters not receiving their ballots at all. After the official returns gave Park, with 6,340,000 votes, a clear win over Kim's 5,400,000, Kim denounced Park's victory as a fraud.

On October 17, 1972, Park ordered the national assembly dissolved and banned all political activities. Portions of the constitution were suspended, pending the promulgation of a new constitution by the end of 1972.

Kim's reaction was to embark on a campaign aimed at

1973: THE KIM DAE-JUNG AFFAIR

discrediting Park by rallying the large overseas Korean communities in Japan and the U.S.

Kim had been issued an ultimatum ordering his return to Korea, which he rejected, saying it was a “trap” to halt his activities. On July 10, 1973, Kim flew from California to Japan, where his contacts had arranged a special six-month visa waiver on medical grounds.

Trouble ahead

Upon Kim’s arrival at Tokyo’s Haneda airport, a sympathizer warned him of rumors that Korean yakuza based in Japan were planning to make trouble, and he was persuaded to cancel an auto excursion in Yokohama on the weekend of August 4-5 out of abduction fears. By this time, Kim’s staff had become highly agitated, urging him not go anywhere without at least one bodyguard.

On August 7, Kim informed a *Yomiuri Shimbun* reporter of plans to organize a Japan-based group, tentatively named the National People’s Congress of Korean Democracy, which he planned to convene on August 15, the anniversary of Korea’s liberation.

On the morning of Wednesday, August 8, Kim and his secretary/bodyguard took a taxi from the Palace Hotel in Otemachi to the Hotel Grand Palace in Iidabashi for a meeting with Yang Il-dong, head of Korea’s Democratic Unification Party, who was in Tokyo for medical treatment.

Kim’s secretary escorted him to Yang’s room, number 2211, and then went downstairs to the lobby for a late breakfast while Kim, Yang and another Korean legislator named Kim Gyong-in, who was also Kim’s distant relative, discussed their country’s political situation. After

taking lunch together in the room, Yang departed for the hospital.

Abduction

About 1:15, Kim exited the room for his next appointment. As he stepped into the corridor with Kim Gyong-in, a group of five or six men pounced on him, hustling him into the adjoining room, 2210, while his relative was forced back into room 2211.

Forcing Kim down on the bed, the men held a chloroform-soaked handkerchief over his face until he became groggy. After several minutes the men dragged him to the hotel elevator, where he was shoved into a waiting car in the hotel basement.

Just before 2:00 pm Kim’s secretary/bodyguard went upstairs and learned of the abduction from the other Kim.

How Kim’s abductors determined he would visit Yang’s hotel room that morning — information known only to a very few persons — is one of the many unsolved mysteries of the case. In their 1986 work *Yakuza*, authors David Kaplan and Alex Dubro quoted the *Far Eastern Economic Review* as citing “informed sources” that Tosei-kai gang head Chong Gwon-yong, also known as Hisayuki Machii, was a leading participant in the abduction.

By 3:15 pm, the Tokyo Metropolitan Police issued an emergency bulletin, and fearing that Kim’s abductors would attempt to spirit him out of the country, put the nation’s air and seaports on special alert.

No such attempts were made to set up checkpoints along the Tokyo Metropolitan Expressway, however, which was exactly where Kim’s abductors headed.

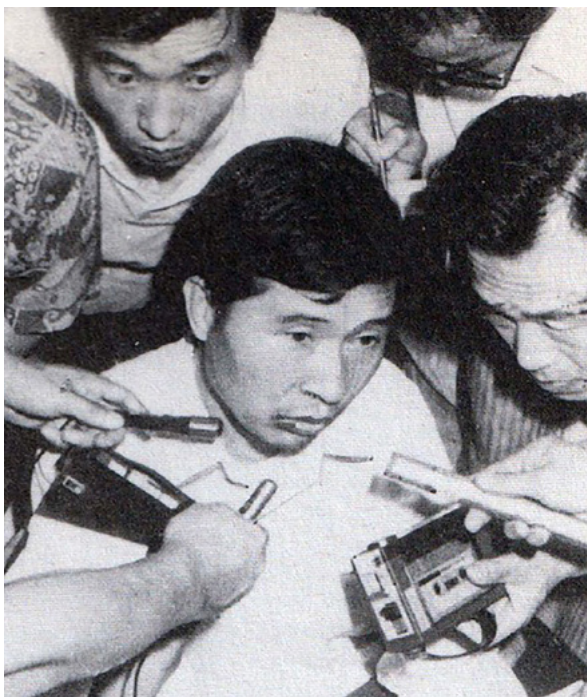
Bound and gagged on the floor of the car, Kim was driven to an apartment believed to be in Kobe’s Higashinada Ward. There, he was relieved of his money, his Korean identity card, business cards and wristwatch, and given a different set of shoes and clothing. His bindings were reapplied and his face was swathed in gummed tape so that only his nose protruded.

At the port, Kim was transferred from a small motorboat to the 536-ton freighter “Dragon Gold,” out of Busan, which had been anchored in Osaka port from the end of July.

Retrospective

Some years later, the then-Minister of Justice Isaji Tanaka divulged that on the evening of the kidnapping, he’d been informed by a “certain superpower” that the American CIA had sent word to its Korean counterpart that it would not tolerate Kim’s assassination. The quickness in reacting was supposedly out of concerns that Kim would be weighed down and tossed overboard while at sea.

In his investigative work on the KCIA, journalist Kim Jong-sik wrote that on August 11, the U.S. CIA’s station chief in Seoul, Donald Gregg, certain that the KCIA was



Kim Dae-jung besieged by the Korean press following his abduction

1973: THE KIM DAE-JUNG AFFAIR

東京新聞速報 東京中日スポーツ

金大中氏 死去



韓国元大統領
85歳 太陽政策を推進

〔ソウル＝築山英司〕ノーベル平和賞を受賞した韓国の金大中元大統領が十八日午後一時四十三分、入院していたソウルの延世大セブランス病院で死去した。八十五歳だった。

大統領在任中（一九九八―二〇〇三年）に対話と協力を通じて北朝鮮の変化を促す「太陽（包容）政策」をとり、歴史的な民族和解を推進した。

一方で、北朝鮮は核開発を着実に進めており、最近では太陽政策への評価も見直されている。

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Tokyo Shimbun marks Kim Dae-jung's death, 4th August 2009

the culprit, wired the State Department that, “We have obtained evidence that the KCIA is responsible. Kim still appears to be alive and we intend to take measures to ensure his safe release.”

During his voyage, Kim was to learn he had at least one sympathizer among the ship's crew, when one whispered reassuringly, “Someone is looking after you.”

On August 12, the ship carrying Kim landed at a small port adjacent to Busan. Kim was driven north in a van and taken to a house somewhere in Seoul where he was questioned by a young man as to why he had been engaging in anti-government activities outside the country, an accusation that Kim hotly denied.

The man said he had been ordered to drive Kim home. Shortly after 10 pm on August 13, after a 129-hour ordeal, Kim rang the doorbell of his home. His family reacted with jubilation and relief, with Kim's wife, who had barely eaten or slept during the crisis, repeating, “It's God's mercy” over and over.

US and Japanese media

On August 14, the front pages of every major newspaper in Japan carried photos of Kim, arms bandaged and looking lean and haggard, describing his ordeal to Korean reporters.

Three days later, Japanese newspapers reported that

ROK Premier Kim Jong Pil had addressed a personal letter to Prime Minister Kakuei Tanaka acknowledging Korean involvement in the abduction and extending “apologies to Prime Minister Tanaka, Foreign Minister Masayoshi Ohira and the Japanese people.”

On August 28, Japan's ambassador to Seoul Torao Ushiroku visited Kim's home for 20 minutes – the first encounter with any Japanese since his release.

By early September, a left thumbprint lifted by police from the hotel room was confirmed as belonging to Kim Dong-woon, First Secretary at the ROK embassy in Tokyo.

In March 1974, L.A. Times Tokyo bureau chief and FCCJ president Sam Jameson interviewed Kim at his home in Seoul.

“In the South, we had freedom, if not always bread. Now we no longer have freedom,” Kim told Jameson. He voiced his exasperation over the South Korean government's refusal to permit him to travel abroad, owing to his being “a witness in the investigation of his kidnapping” – this despite his not having been questioned since the previous October.

Unanswered questions

Clearly the Kim abduction was a large-scale operation. Yet to this day it has never been fully established how high up the plot went, or whether the ultimate aim of the operation was to force Kim to return to Korea, or assassination. The Japanese government eventually decided not to push for a formal apology, allowing South Korea to save face. Some cynics have pointed to the Kim incident as a classic example of Japan's reluctance to take a firm stance on international issues not related to its economic well being.

A decade after the incident, in August 1983, the police closed their investigation. It was not until April 1995, nearly 22 years after his ordeal, that Kim Dae-jung would once again set foot in Tokyo. This time he was provided with heavy security by his hosts.

On April 14, I was ushered into the FCCJ library and introduced to Kim. I informed him I was writing a book on Japan's most famous postwar crimes including the story of his abduction. His subdued reaction, in halting English, clearly indicated he preferred to put the incident behind him.

Kim Dae-jung proved to be a hardy survivor in the rough-and-tumble world of ROK politics. He was elected president in 1998 and awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2000. Alas, he did not live to see the unification of his homeland, passing away in 2009 at age 85.

Portions of this article appeared in *Shocking Crimes of Postwar Japan* (Yenbooks, 1996).

FEATURE

WHITE HOUSE'S “POLITICAL” VOICE OF AMERICA PROBE DRAWS CRITICISM

JUSTIN McCURRY

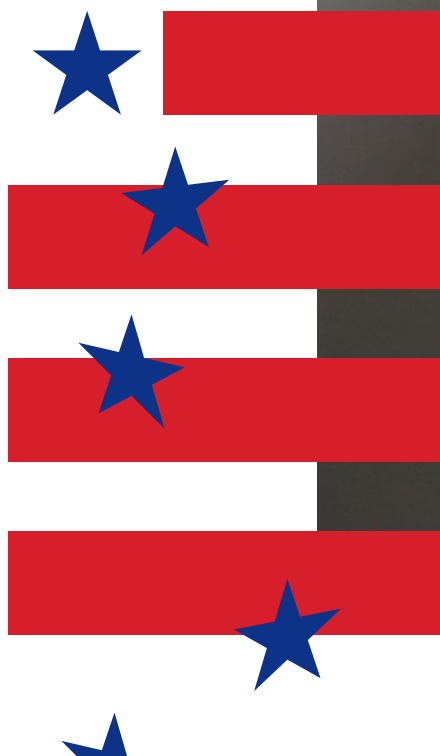
Friends and colleagues of Steve Herman have voiced dismay and disbelief following reports that the FCCJ's former President (1997-8) is being investigated for alleged bias against the Trump administration.

Many current members will recall Herman, the White House bureau chief for Voice of America [VOA], as an urgent, keyboard thumping presence in the workroom at the Yurakucho Denki Building as he edited his latest radio dispatch from Tokyo down to the last second.

After stints as a VOA correspondent and bureau chief in India, South Korea and Thailand, Herman became the network's senior diplomatic correspondent before being appointed White House bureau chief.



PHOTO COURTESY OF STEVE HERMAN



WHITE HOUSE'S "POLITICAL" VOICE OF AMERICA PROBE DRAWS CRITICISM

As the US presidential campaign reached its climax, NPR reported that political appointees at the US Agency for Global Media [USAGM] - the government body that oversees VOA - had investigated Herman and compiled a confidential report claiming his reporting had been "unfair" towards Trump, in violation of the broadcaster's journalistic standards.

Trump appointee orders investigation

According to NPR and other US media reports, Michael Pack, the Trump-appointed chief executive of the USAGM, ordered two political operatives he had hired as aides to investigate Herman's reporting on the administration.

Pack seems to have been particularly troubled by Herman's revelation that the US vice president, Mike Pence, had not worn a mask during a visit to the Mayo Clinic in April.

According to Jackson Diehl, deputy editorial page director of the Washington Post, Pack's appointees submitted a 30-page report recommending that Herman be "banned from covering presidential politics because of an alleged "conflict of interest," based on Herman's comments on Twitter, where he has well over 100,000 followers, and on his social media "likes". However, at the time of writing, no action had been taken against Herman.

'Straight down the middle'

Trump's appointment of Pack, whom the *Post* described as an associate of the President's former aide and alt-right propagandist Stephen Bannon, has fueled accusations that the USAGM's investigation was politically motivated.

The Asian American Journalists Association said allegations by political appointees regarding Herman's journalistic integrity were "alarming".

"They are the latest in a slew of insidious actions undermining VOA's editorial independence," the AAJA said in a statement. "We condemn any action taken that undermines the journalistic independence of VOA," it added, noting that Herman is a long-time AAJA member and board member of its Washington DC chapter.

The FCCJ Freedom of the Press Committee backed the AAJA statement, saying it "stands behind Herman ... and behind the principles of press freedom".

Regular members recall Herman as a hard-working journalist who was among the first foreign reporters to get close to the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant after it suffered a meltdown during the March 2011 triple disaster.

"I've known Steve for more than a decade and in all that time I've never known him to be anything other than

an impartial journalist," said Martyn Williams, a former FCCJ President and a journalist/researcher for the North Korea Tech and 38 North websites.

"He's straight down the middle and only interested in the facts. In knowing him personally, I don't think I can remember ever having any political discussions with him that were framed around his beliefs and opinions rather than the facts on the ground."

Suvendrini Kakuchi, Tokyo correspondent for University World News, agreed that Herman strived for objectivity in his reporting. "In conversations about news he would keenly avoid sounding biased in his comments," she said, adding that the USAGM investigation was a "great disappointment".

"I was also impressed by his generosity to other working journalists, such as sharing tips on producing an effective radio broadcast and encouraging people to look into new ventures and topics. As a President of the FCCJ he was hugely popular," Kakuchi said.

Julian Ryall, Tokyo correspondent for the *Daily Telegraph* and the *South China Morning Post*, said, "For anyone to suggest that Steve is anything other than a straight arrow is just silly. But I guess they're of the opinion that if they throw enough accusations around, if the President's 'base' swallows it and Fox picks up the cudgel, then something will eventually stick."

Williams shares concerns that the investigation was part of a "predictable" attempt by an increasingly embattled White House to steer media coverage in a more favourable direction just weeks before the presidential election.

"What the White House and Trump fail to understand is that impartial, fair news coverage that shows the best and worst of America is actually the best advertisement for the country," Williams said.

"VOA is targeted at countries where there isn't a free press, so to hear a state-funded broadcaster report critically but fairly on the administration projects a good impression of the US and its democratic values."

Herman, who has declined to comment publicly while the investigation's findings are still under deliberation, was in familiar territory covering Trump's campaign stops in Nevada and Arizona, as *Number1 Shimbun* prepared to go to press.

"It's sad that Steve is having to defend himself against these accusations at the same time as doing his job," Ryall said. "I can only say that I hope his overlords [at the USAGM] are swiftly replaced by a new administration and he can get back to doing what he does best."

● Justin McCurry is Japan and Korea correspondent for the *Guardian* and the *Observer*, and co-chair of the FCCJ Freedom of the Press Committee

FEATURE

OBSESSION, LUST AND CORRUPTION IN LITERARY TOKYO



FATHER TO SON, PAGE TO SCREEN

Writer meets muse
on his way downhill

© 2019 BARBARA FILM COMMITTEE

KAREN SEVERNS

Osamu Tezuka, the godfather of Japanese comics, began serializing his second adult manga, *Barbara*, in 1973. His most celebrated work, from *Astro Boy* and *Kimba the White Lion* onward, had been aimed at adolescents. His mature, more literary content might well raise eyebrows outside Japan, but dark deviations from routine creations were virtually a moral imperative for Japanese artists in the 60s and 70s, as they responded to society's upheavals.

Loosely inspired by Offenbach's fantastical *The Tales of Hoffman*, in which the muse of poetry demands absolute fealty from a philandering poet, *Barbara* was a satire on Japan's literary and political establishments as well as an exploration of the limits of the authorial voice.

It was also sexually charged, supernaturally tinged and more than passing strange. Autobiographical in the Cocteauian sense ("all artists paint their own portraits"), its depiction of a famous



Director Macoto Tezuka

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OBSESSION, LUST AND CORRUPTION IN LITERARY TOKYO



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Barbara, bemused in Mnemosyne's lair

author's gradual descent into debauchery (some of it taboo) and eventual madness could be understood allegorically.

Long considered unfilmable, the controversial erotic manga has now reemerged in a live-action adaptation directed by the author's own son, Macoto Tezka, with backing from an international team of producers and acclaimed collaborators, including legendary cinematographer Christopher Doyle (*In the Mood for Love*, *They Say Nothing Stays the Same*).

Tezuka's *Barbara* follows bestselling erotic fiction writer Yosuke Mikura, played by former SMAP superstar Goro Inagaki with world-weary panache. He prowls the backstreets of late-night Shinjuku in sunglasses, going downhill fast in a failed effort to carouse away his own creative bankruptcy. Despite standing at the pinnacle of literary success, with groupies and fawning politicians to prove it, Mikura has become a slave to crippling sexual perversions, leading to peculiar encounters with animals and inanimate objects whom he hallucinates into women.

Rescue seems to arrive in the form of a belligerent, unkempt young woman named Barbara (Fumi Nikaido), whose ministrations – alternately tender and insulting – promise to jolt Mikura out of writer's block. But when Mikura's suspicion that Barbara is an actual muse is confirmed (her mother is named Mnemosyne, after all), he drifts further into even darker territory, and is soon testing the extremes of depravity.

Making his mark

Macoto Tezka started mounting this sensual, phantasmagorical

reimagining of his father's story in 2018 to celebrate what would have been the legendary figure's 90th anniversary. A visual artist in his own right, Tezka made an early mark with his debut feature, *The Legend of the Stardust Brothers*. He has continued to create films in every genre while also serving as the caretaker of his father's legacy (a staggering 700 manga volumes and 60 animated works).

He has said that he first read "Barbara" as a young lad, and that it made a deep impression on him. But while he had adapted other Tezuka work in anime form (most notably *Black Jack*), the decision to bring "Barbara" to life came only after he felt confident that he could imbue it with his own vision of his father's primary concerns.

As Tezka told an audience after the film's world premiere at the 2019 Tokyo International Film Festival, "I think there are many similarities between [the setting of the manga in 1973] and now, such as the increasing wealth gap and the public's frustration toward the government. The manga is a good fit for our modern times."

Join the Film Committee on Tuesday, November 17 at 7:00 pm for a sneak preview of *Tezuka's Barbara* (ばるぼら). The director will be on hand for the Q&A session. (Japan, 2019, 100 minutes. In Japanese with English subtitles).

● Karen Severns is a writer, educator and film programmer. She has chaired the FCCJ Film Committee since 2009.

PAC AFTERWORD

ONCE MORE WITH FEELING...

YUKIO EDANO, LEADER OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY



DAVID McNEILL —————

Yukio Edano is imprinted on the minds of many Japanese for his role in the 2011 Tohoku disaster. For several harrowing weeks, Japan's then Chief Cabinet Secretary was one of the nation's most visible faces, appearing on TV daily in a rumpled boiler suit to reassure the public that his government had the Fukushima nuclear crisis under control.

The rest is history: in 2012, Edano's Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) lost power to a rejuvenated Liberal Democratic Party, in large part due to the perception that Fukushima showed a government doing precisely what it said it wouldn't do: lose control. The party shrank, split

and dissolved into infighting between some of its biggest political egos. Now the DPJ is back for a second try. Call it Democrats Mark II.

Edano returned to the FCCJ at a PAC presser on September 23rd as newly elected leader of the center-left Constitutional Party of Japan (CPJ), following the merger of the Constitutional Democratic Party of Japan and the Democratic Party of the People. As if harking back to their glory days, some of the party's 150 lawmakers wanted to revert to the party's 2009 name.

Whatever they call themselves, Edano's new crew face an uphill fight. The CPJ's parliamentary strength is still dwarfed by the LDP and its allies, who have 450 seats. Once written off by some, the LDP, meanwhile, has jud-

OBSESSION, LUST AND CORRUPTION IN LITERARY TOKYO

dered back to life. Before his recent departure as party leader and prime minister, Shinzo Abe led the LDP-led coalition to six straight election victories.

Outsider policies

Edano was keen to point out how much he and Yoshihide Suga, Abe's successor, have in common. Both are "outsiders", entering politics via the backdoor rather than the dynasties that spawned Abe and many others. Both are ex-chief cabinet secretaries: Edano during the 3.11 disaster and Suga during the coronavirus pandemic. As Edano put it, "The fact that we are now leaders competing for political power is a point I'd like to emphasize."

But he was equally insistent on their differences. Where Suga led a pro-business party that had invest-

ed heavily in "neoliberalism," a CPJ government would work for a fairer distribution of wealth and "protect the lives and livelihoods of people." It would campaign to reduce the 10% consumption tax (doubled during the Abe era) to zero and instead tax corporations, "which are making huge profits".

"From the time of the Nakasone administration (in the 1980s) through Koizumi and Abe there has been a stance of neoliberalism, of placing priority on competition and putting responsibility on the individual - the smaller the government, the fewer regulations, the better," said Edano. "We are proposing a society where people will cooperate and support each other, and where the government will be proactive in helping people overcome risks and barriers."

Rebuilding lives amid the pandemic had become especially pressing, he said, given the "disparities and divisions that have widened within our society over the last 30 years". Japan is the only country in the industrialized world where economic growth has stagnated, he pointed out. "We believe we can be a new choice for people."

There was more: the CPJ would make Japan a world leader in renewable energy - while pulling "as quickly as possible" out of nuclear power. "Global warming is the highest priority for all of humanity for this century and into the future," Edano said. Japan's technology and skills meant "we should be domestically aiming for

100% renewable energy and utilize these technologies to share around the world."

Prospects

It was inspiring stuff but will voters buy into Democrats Mark II? After all, Mark 1 seemed a bit shambolic. Before being derailed by the 2011 disaster, DPJ leader, Yukio Hatoyama had promised to slash Japan's huge public works spending, transfer funding to welfare, health and education, tackle the nation's powerful bureaucracy, and begun transforming Japan's Cold-War alliance with Washington.

The party's opponents said Hatoyama lacked the killer instinct needed for hand-to-hand political combat with the LDP, which had been in office for all but 10 months since 1955 - and so it proved. Hatoyama fell at the first hurdle - abandoning his pledge to move the American military base, Futenma, out of Okinawa. His party, in any case, always seemed ideologically conflicted, a motley crew of left and right united mainly by their distaste for LDP rule.

This time would be different, insisted Edano. "Anyone who is in the party has agreed to sign up to the party's clear basic principles." One of the problems with the DPJ was a lack of experience, which had led to disagreements within the party, he admitted. "Our new party is based on the lessons that have been learned from the past and we have strong confidence that we can move forward."

As for Okinawa, Edano's party would again seek to redress the issue that sank Hatoyama: the imbalance of US military forces on the tiny main island. Step 1 would be cancelling construction of Futenma's "replacement" base off the fishing village of Henoko. "We place importance on the US-Japan alliance and wouldn't try to railroad through any changes, yet it is possible to come up with a solution that includes the base not going ahead."

"Even without the base it is possible to ensure there is sufficient presence of the US military in the region."

First up, of course, there was the small matter of weakening the LDP's grip on power, which means grappling with if not matching the party's vast political network - and coming up with 233 CPJ candidates. "We cannot compete against this unless we grow own network," admitted Edano. "I am hoping that by the time of the next general election, we will be recognised as a viable choice."

● David McNeill is co-chair of the FCCJ's Professional Activities Committee and a professor at the Department of English Language, Communication and Cultures at Sacred Heart University in Tokyo. He was previously a correspondent for *The Independent* and *The Economist* newspapers and for *The Chronicle of Higher Education*.

“Disparities and divisions that have widened within our society over the last 30 years”. Japan is the only country in the industrialized world where economic growth has stagnated, he pointed out. “We believe we can be a new choice for people.”

CLUB NEWS

New members

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS



BARBARA WAGNER-GMEINER is a native of Eisenstadt and Vienna, where after a foray in fashion design she studied economics. Since 2007 she has been the Head of Communications at the Esterházy Private Foundation in Eisenstadt, (Esterházy Betriebe GMBH), working on management structures and on the preservation, restoration, and expansion of the region's historical monuments and collections:

<https://esterhazy.at/en/about/esterhazy-foundations>



TOM WILSON came to his new posting at the Australian Embassy in late January this year, just before COVID-19 started to spread. He first came to Japan as an exchange student at the International Christian University High School and is enjoying reconnecting with Japan and getting to know fellow Club members.



ESTEBAN MIYASHIRO NAKAIMA is a professor at Aichi Toho University (Nagoya), Faculty of Business. Nakaima-san is Okinawan but was born in Peru. He has worked on IT for Amazon, Microsoft and Citigroup. He loves travel and has visited all 47 prefectures in Japan.



BENJAMIN SKEPPER is an internationally acclaimed Australian/Japanese artist, classically trained musician, qualified lawyer, and published researcher. In 2007 he founded the creative enterprise Contrapuntal KK, immersing creative thinkers at the intersects of art, culture, science and technology. He is also a Research Fellow of the Moscow State Conservatory in music, genetics and medicine.

PROFESSIONAL/JOURNALIST ASSOCIATE MEMBERS



JUN KITAJIMA is a professor at the Graduate School of Information and Communication teaching Intelligence Strategy and Global Public Affairs. He specialises in anti-corruption issues, especially bribery. He enjoys boating, diving, photography, film and reading the classics.

REGULAR MEMBERS



FRANCESCO BASSETTI is a freelance journalist and editor specialising in environmental issues. He writes about climate science for the Euro-Mediterranean Centre on Climate Change (CMCC), Renewable Matter, LifeGate.com, and the *Japan Times*.



MARA BUDGEN is a freelance journalist specialising in sustainable development. As Chief Editor of the English-language issue of LifeGate Media, Italy's top sustainability communications company, Mara manages fifteen contributors from four continents. She also writes for the *Japan Times*.

CLUB NEWS

Exhibition

11/9 - 12/4 **Animal Refuge Kansai**

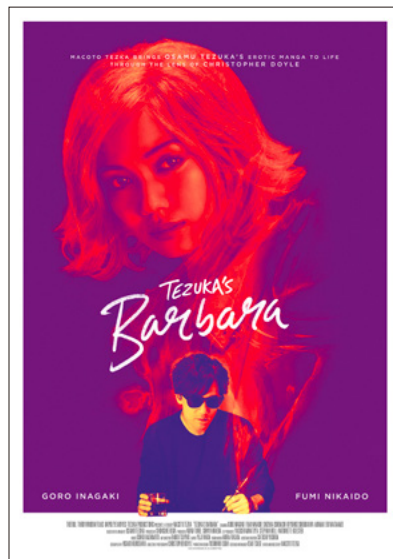


KYOKO HARADA

Kitten finds new amusement and friendship at ARK.
NPO Animal Refuge Kansai www.arkbark.net

Join the Film Committee

November 17 at 7:00 pm
 for a sneak preview of
 Tezuka's *Barbara* (ばるばる). The director will be on
 hand for the Q&A session.
 (Japan, 2019, 100 minutes.
 In Japanese with English
 subtitles).



New in the library

1



**Foundation of the Future: The Global
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 (「反核・写真運動」事務局)

3



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Andrew Gordon
University of California Press

4

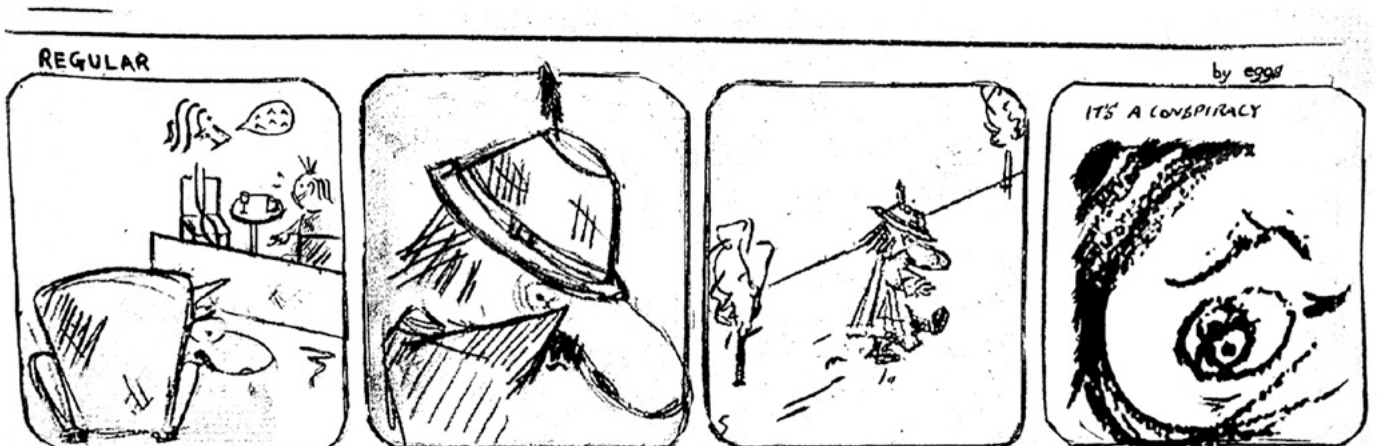


**Intimate Disconnections: Divorce
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Allison Alexy
The University of Chicago Press

5



**Pure Invention: How Japan's Pop Culture
 Conquered the World**
Matt Alt
Crown



ANIMAL REFUGE KANSAI

IT TAKES AN ELIZABETH

ANIMAL REFUGE KANSAI, 1990-2020

MARY CORBETT

When Elizabeth Oliver first opened the doors of her home to set up a refuge for abandoned animals in 1990, she had already been a 10-year veteran in the Kansai area volunteering for a national welfare organization. Long troubled by the negligible rate of adoption and alternative care options for animals against an extremely high number being routinely euthanized by the Public Health facilities and animal welfare groups, Oliver's new organization, Animal Refuge Kansai, quickly became a leading advocate for education and change to improve the plight of pets and to tighten laws governing the unregulated state of the pet industry.

Breakthrough

ARK's big break into national prominence came suddenly when the Hanshin Awaji Earthquake devastated a large area of Kansai in 1995. Overnight, 600 animals lost, homeless and with few facilities to take them in except to be euthanized, arrived at ARK. Extensive media exposure led to an army of volunteers, many celebrities amongst them, arriving from across the country. The ensuing media frenzy was not only a breakthrough for ARK, but a game changer for Japan's public awareness towards the prevention of cruelty to animals.

Tackling the pet boom

Soon after, an unprecedented pet boom swept across Japan, with negligible regulatory infrastructure to protect the surging number of pets sold, supplied primarily from unlicensed and untrained 'balcony breeders' who followed the cues from the media to anticipate the next flavor-of-the-month and send makeshift mills into overdrive. An early wave of popular puppies were of medium

to large size breeds, completely unsuited to Japanese homes. The population of abandoned early boom Huskies and Dalmatians skyrocketed. Next came the large number of store-purchased pets in need of serious medical intervention, many of them due to the exceptionally high incidence of unchecked inbreeding in Japan.

Positive developments

Some respite and hopes of a new awakening followed when the official national euthanasia statistics dropped dramatically, only to be revealed that the pounds, run by the Hokenjo Public Health facilities, had stopped taking in 'dead stock' of unsold puppies and kittens from pet shops. There are hundreds of thousands of animals born, and not accounted for in official statistics, which are now being euthanized by the mills and pet shops. During the early 2010s, Britain averaged over 1,300 cases of cruelty cases being prosecuted annually, while Japan, with twice the population, averaged 13. Prevention of cruelty and advocacy for better protection remains predominantly in the hands of private citizens and welfare groups.

ARK has been supported by a wide network of advocacy groups, volunteers, donors and collaborators throughout Japan, and the world, through its 30 years. It does indeed take a village to rescue animals, to house and care for them, to find them forever homes. More work and funding are needed to expand our educational and regulatory advocacy activities and to complete our Sanctuary in Sasayama. The photographs and artworks in this Exhibition have been contributed to this special FCCJ collection by supporters, many of them artists active as ambassadors for ARK.

● Mary Corbett is a writer and documentary producer based in Tokyo and is a member of the FCCJ's Board of Directors.

ANIMAL REFUGE KANSAI



HAMABREEZE

So Beautiful, So Inbred

Ken was originally purchased at a pet shop and soon manifested major medical complications common to American Shorthairs. The problem is particularly pronounced in Japan where most 'breeders' are neither licensed, nor such commonplace inbreeding practices regulated.

NPO Animal Refuge Kansai

www.arkbark.net

ANIMAL REFUGE KANSAI



KYOKO HARADA

Bath Time for Moon Bear

Newly arrived Moon Bear says 'NO' to a blowdryer after his welcome shower at ARK, and was adopted soon after, to lead a new life as a member of a diplomatic family.

NPO Animal Refuge Kansai

www.arkbark.net



New Membership Campaign

¥5,000 ~ ¥25,000
credit for introducing a new member

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if you introduce:

Associate, Diplomatic Associate or
Five-Year Associate member

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if you introduce:

Young Regular, Young P/J Associate,
Outside Kanto Regular or Outside Kanto P/J Associate member

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