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WRITING EXAMPLE:

Book Announcement

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For Immediate Release

***New book on the modern
Japanese monarchy published
by Harvard University Asia
Center***

Ezra Vogel, the esteemed Professor Emeritus of Harvard University: *"Kenneth Ruoff is an outstanding scholar who has examined in great detail the role of the Japanese emperor from 1945 to 1995. Given the controversy of the emperor's role, this is a highly timely and informative book."*

The International Herald Tribune/Asahi News Service (Japan): *"'The People's Emperor' is certain to be one of the most-discussed books of the coming year."*

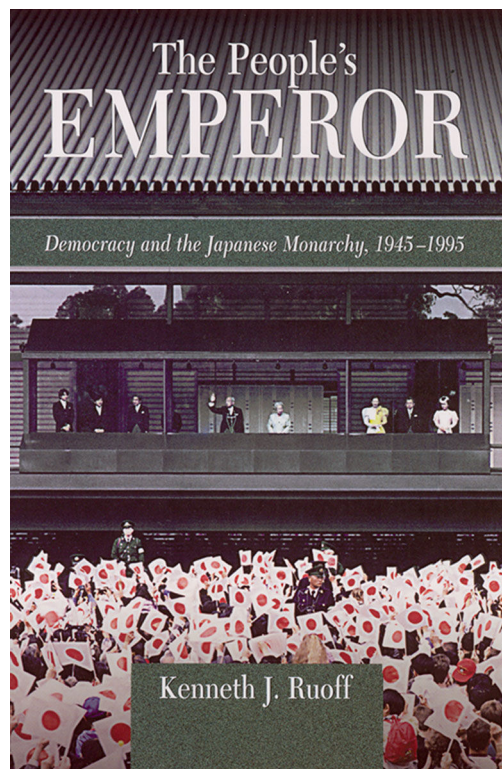
Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Rich Read, who was based in Japan for the *Oregonian:* *"Ruoff's book is a fine study with appeal well beyond academe."*

The South China Morning Post: *"Ruoff's scholarly yet lucid account of the emperor's role in postwar Japanese society is a timely addition to the literature on this intriguing institution. It also provides a fascinating insight into postwar Japan's political struggles. This is an excellent work of accessible history."*

Philippe Pons, *Le Monde:* *"A stimulating analysis of the contemporary Japanese monarchy."*

Few institutions are as well suited as the monarchy to provide a window on modern Japan. Since the Meiji Restoration of 1868, Japanese supporters as well as opponents of the throne have used it to define themselves and their nation. After Japan's defeat in 1945, the American occupation authorities forced the Japanese to re-examine the relationship between the monarchy and the nation by imposing a new "democratic" constitution on Japan that stripped the emperor of his powers and redefined the institution as a symbol. Despite the many changes, however, the monarchy – which is also a family – remains significant both as a political and cultural institution.

To coincide with one of the most-anticipated events in Japan this year – the birth of the next likely heir to the throne – Harvard University Asia Center is publishing ***The People's Emperor: Democracy and the Japanese Monarchy, 1945-1995*** by **Dr. Kenneth J. Ruoff.**



In this first full-length English-language study of the monarchy in Postwar Japan, Ruoff examines its reform during the Occupation (1945-1952), as well as its evolution in the decades since the Japanese regained the power to shape their monarchy and polity.

In order to understand the monarchy's function in contemporary Japan, the author analyzes the role of individual emperors in shaping the institution; interpretations of the emperor's new constitutional position as symbol; the emperor's intersection with politics; the issue of the emperor's and the nation's responsibility for the war; nationalistic movements in support of cultural symbols of the monarchy; and the remaking of the once-sacrosanct throne into a "monarchy of the masses" that is embedded in the postwar culture of democracy.

For many Japanese, the monarchy represents Japan's "timeless" culture and "traditional" customs and beliefs. The author, in contrast, demonstrates the monarchy's "postwariness" and calls into question claims of traditionality.

About the author and the research behind the book

Dr. Kenneth J. Ruoff is widely regarded as the foremost authority on the contemporary Japanese monarchy in the English-speaking world. He graduated with honors from Harvard College and completed his Ph.D. at Columbia University, where he also received two masters degrees. In 1998, he was awarded a postdoctoral appointment at Harvard University's prestigious Edwin O. Reischauer Institute of Japanese Studies in order to continue his project on the contemporary Japanese throne. Ruoff currently serves as the Director of the Center for Japanese Studies at Portland State University, where he teaches Japanese history.

The People's Emperor is based on eight years of exhaustive research, including three years of fieldwork in Japan. During that time, Ruoff (who is fluent in Japanese) examined the published works of leading Japanese scholars and journalists, and conducted extensive interviews with government officials and dignitaries, noted academicians, and members of the Imperial Household Press Club, among other leading authorities.

Ruoff's access to thousands of pages of archived documents was facilitated by his status as a civil servant of Japan's national government, which resulted from his position on the Faculty of Law at Hokkaido University. He was also "leaked" numerous "highly confidential" Imperial Household Agency internal documents detailing political briefings of the present emperor and other sensitive matters.

As a result, *The People's Emperor* is filled with startling revelations that shed new light on a variety of significant issues – from Emperor Akihito's continuing behind-the-scenes involvement in politics to the palace reforms he instituted after ascending to the throne in 1989 (among them, the abolition of the "imperial stool analyzer," whose official duties were to examine the emperor's stool after every bowel movement).

The People's Emperor

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The People's Emperor is a must-read for anyone who seeks to understand contemporary Japan. "The monarchy is at the center of modern Japanese nationalism, and nationalism continues to be a powerful force in Japan, just as it is in the United States and in so many other countries," Ruoff stresses. "The Japanese invoke the monarchy to define themselves and their nation, and in times of stress, such as the economic difficulties Japan has experienced in the past decade, questions of national identity take on greater importance."

The People's Emperor: Democracy and the Japanese Monarchy, 1945-1995 by Kenneth J. Ruoff is available at Harvard University Press (800-448-2242 or www.hup.harvard.edu) and will be available at Amazon.com and Barnes and Noble online (www.bn.com).

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The People's Emperor: Democracy and the Japanese Monarchy, 1945-1995

by Kenneth J. Ruoff

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