1843-70," the author describes briefly the growth of the "mission spirit" in Griffis to serve as a bridge of understanding between the United States and Japan through an analysis of his family background, his college years and his contacts with the earliest Japanese students.

In the second chapter, "The Call to Japan", the author explains the complex process of Griffis' decision to go to Japan in spite of the negative family reactions. Both in the third chapter, "Teaching in Feudal Fukui" and the fourth, "Griffis in Tokyo, 1872-74", the author analyzes Griffis' experiences and activities as a pedagogue, missionary, professor, sensei (mentor), and "an eyewitness to the end of Japan's feudal institutions and the beginnings of her transformation to modernity".

In the final chapter, "Bridge Between East and West, 1874-1928," the author focuses upon Griffis' activities after his return to the U.S.A. and evaluates his roles as a Christian scholar, pastor, writer, teacher, and historian. Beauchamp considers Griffis as "the first western historian to focus on the role of the mikado and its accompanying "mikadoism" as a key element in Japanese history".

Finally the author points out the two roles of Griffis as a historian of Japan, that is, as a "common man" and as a foreign employee (yatoi). Concerning the former, citing Mrs. Frances Helbig's criticism, the author mentions that Griffis' history abounds in descriptions of the life and the problems of the common man. As for the latter, he characterizes Griffis' role as the foreigner with a sense of mission helping the Japanese help themselves much like a leader of the Peace Corps, Point Four or AID in developing countries today.

The author has successfully utilized the tremendously voluminous materials from the Griffis collection at Rutgers University and has contributed to the academic study of cross cultural and international education from the historical point of view, though some minor misprints and omissions of historical facts are found. It may be necessary to refine this masterpiece through utilizing more original materials in Japanese from the Japanese side and through more comprehensively analyzing Griffis' interpretation, appreciation, and criticism of Japanese culture and people after his return to the U.S.A.

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Frequently authors write against something as much as for anything. The books reviewed here exemplify this.

George C. Hildebrand and Gareth Porter want to debunk the impression that, since the National United Front of Kampuchea (NUFK) victory in Cambodia in April 1975, Khmer people have starved and that the NUKF leadership drove people out of the city of metropolitan Phnom Penh because it was against urban development. This
was a prevailing impression in American press and government accounts. The authors go even further, arguing that the U.S. State Department and White House, with the cooperation of much of the American news media, deliberately construed information in order to shift responsibility for grave food problems in Cambodia from themselves to the new Cambodian government. In so doing, the U.S. government and press made the NUFK’s leadership appear as atrocious as Nazi Germany’s.

Hildebrand and Porter counter this impression with a provocative alternative interpretation of NUFK policies and their causes. Largely due to the heavy bombing of Cambodia’s countryside, cultivated rice land dropped almost 500 percent between 1969 and 1974. Simultaneously, people moved into towns and cities in droves. Phnom Penh, the capital, grew from 600,000 people to nearly 3 million. These conditions, coupled with widespread corruption within the Lon Nol government—including officials stealing a sizeable percentage of the rice contributed by the U.S. government and then selling it at high blackmarket prices—created grave food shortages for most and starvation for many crammed into the cities. Meanwhile, the NUFK grew stronger in the countryside. Rather than relying almost entirely on aid from Americans, as the Lon Nol government did, the NUFK government relied on its ability to assure a minimum diet to all its supporters. The NUFK government did this through significant agrarian reforms and distributing more equitably agricultural produce. It also stocked food at the village level in order to feed refugees returning to the countryside after the Lon Nol government’s defeat.

The authors argue that refugees in the cities did not have to be forced to return to the rural areas. They no longer had reason to stay in the cities once the war ended. What the NUFK government did was to implement a plan it had made prior to Lon Nol’s defeat to resettle refugees on the land and reverse starvation. Since then, it has overseen continued agrarian changes in the villages that have resulted in expanded food production and distribution.

Jack M. Potter argues against the “paradigm” that Thailand had a “loosely structured” social system. Since John Embree offered this analysis in 1950, it has greatly influenced and guided ethnographic studies of Thailand. The paradigm essentially holds that, in contrast to peoples in several other Asian countries, the Thai “allow considerable variation in individual behavior; place less importance upon observing reciprocal rights and duties; have a ‘determined lack of regularity, discipline, and regimentation’; and are without a strong sense of duty and obligation in family relations” (p. 1). Drawing upon his own research as well as other ethnologies (including those claiming to support the “loosely structured” paradigm), Potter counters with a new paradigm that better depicts Thai society because it accounts for “basic structural uniformities present in almost all Thai villages, while giving due recognition to the variations that exist” (p. 148). Briefly, his synthesis consists of “eleven structural elements” that “generate rural communities”: the extended-stem family cycle; bilateral kindred; neighborliness and formal neighborhoods; cooperative labor-exchange groups; junior-senior relationships; class and status divisions; entourages (or patron-client relationships); political factions; administrative hamlets; village community; and village Buddhist temples and monasteries.

Although less obvious than the above authors, James C. Scott also argues against influential schools of thought. One is the idea that a peasant tries to maximize his or her power, achievement, and profit. Accordingly, one can understand why a peasant rebels by knowing whether she or he has been frustrated or deprived from attaining or keeping something that the peasant wanted. Scott claims such analyses are erroneous.