

Trans-Pacific Racisms and the U.S. Occupation of Japan. By YUKIKO KOSHIRO. New York: Columbia University Press, 1999. x, 295 pp. \$18.50.

Although scholarship on race and racism has gained crucial importance in U.S. history and increasingly in Japanese history, most of such works tend to discuss race in the context of domestic politics or colonialism. Often replacing “race” with “culture,” scholars of international history have generally shied away from focusing on “race” as ideology or practice. Yukiko Koshiro’s fascinating study, *Trans-Pacific Racisms and the U.S. Occupation of Japan*, makes a critical intervention in this tendency. Koshiro argues that race was an implacable element of arrangements made during the U.S. Occupation of Japan, whose legacies have long outlasted the Occupation itself. By using race as a central category of analysis and examining a wide range of both English- and Japanese-language sources, Koshiro has produced an excellent historical narrative that is exciting and deeply unsettling.

Koshiro argues that, although the “success” of the Occupation seemed to have erased the race question from public memory, race in fact was a crucial tool which fostered friendly U.S.–Japan relations in the postwar period. American and Japanese prewar racial ideology was never fundamentally altered after the war, but was carefully remolded so as to facilitate and justify the existing racial hierarchies in the world. Both nations had a stake in the maintenance of these racial hierarchies. On the one hand, the United States could solidify Japan’s status as a strategic and ideological ally by acknowledging its assimilability into Western civilization. On the other hand, Japan could reestablish its national identity by gaining the status of an honorary white nation. A result of this mutual acceptance of racial ideology was the reaffirmation of the Western paradigm of racial hierarchy in the Pacific.

Contradictions in the treatment of the race question were manifested in, for example, the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP) policies on democratization, nonfraternization, and censorship. As the Occupation shifted from the first (1945–48) to the second (1949–52) stage, the clear line drawn between the conqueror and the conquered, based on the physical concept of race, was substituted with a more friendly collaboration exemplified by cultural programs such as sports events and movies. Yet such cultural propaganda did not erase the color line or alter the unwritten rule of nonphysical contact. Even though the Japanese gradually realized the nature of American racism, they opted to collaborate with SCAP in celebrating a new friendship, denying American racism, and obscuring the memory of race in the Occupation. In this context, Japan’s “dualistic racial identity” was reconstructed: the definition of “race” vacillated between the physical and the cultural, and the Japanese reaffirmed their sense of being inferior to whites but superior to other Asians and colored races.

Koshiro substantiates this claim by examining three areas of debate in postwar Japan: ethnic minorities, emigration, and miscegenation. Although racial equality was guaranteed by the SCAP–sponsored constitution, neither SCAP nor the Japanese government discussed the meaning of this provision or the status of Japan’s ethnic minorities and former colonial subjects. Thus, the rights of the Ainu, Okinawans, and Koreans remained circumscribed, and the Japanese perception of their superiority to other Asians was endorsed by SCAP. As the Japanese raised their hopes for overseas emigration in the postwar period, in the face of racist immigration policies in the U.S. and other Western nations, they focused their attention on relatively undeveloped regions shunned by whites (such as New Guinea and Brazil). As a result, both the

Americans and the Japanese reestablished the racial cartography of the world: while Japan would pose no threat to the West, it would assume the role of the most advanced colored race creating a new civilization in undeveloped areas as surrogates for the whites. As an increasing number of interracial marriages took place during and after the Occupation, American and Japanese treatment of their mixed-blood offspring crystallized both nations' concepts of national identity based on racial purity. Both nations demonstrated their abhorrence toward these children and desire for their exclusion from their societies. Rather than discussing the rightful place for the mixed-blood children, the consensual hatred of miscegenation and the preservation of mutual racism led both nations to push these children into a pariah group.

Koshiro demonstrates that such a multifaceted U.S.–Japan collaboration in the maintenance of the three-tiered vision of the Pacific Rim—America as hegemonic power, Japan as its junior collaborator, other Asian nations as their subordinates—and the deliberate neglect of the race question by both nations give context for the racialized tension between the U.S. and Japan since the 1980s as well as less than amicable relations between Japan and other Asian nations. *Trans-Pacific Racisms* is a valuable work that adds to our understanding of the racial politics of U.S.–Japan relations.

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Disparaged Success. By IKUO KUME. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press. 1998. xii, 242 pp. \$16.95.

Kume Ikuo, in *Disparaged Success*, attempts to present a new and counterintuitive interpretation of labor politics in Japan. He argues that organized labor in postwar Japan succeeded in attaining benefits in terms of wages and working conditions comparable to those in other industrialized countries despite its decentralized and divided structures. By examining labor politics at both enterprise and national levels, he contends that Japanese unions derived their influence vis-à-vis management and the state from their “political opportunity structures” rather than from their organizational resources. Thus, he challenges the “conventional understanding of labor politics” that the more unions are organizationally united and centralized, the more influential they become in industrial relations and national politics.

This book consists of eight chapters. In the introduction, Kume criticizes the “orthodox view” of labor politics in Japan, arguing that Japanese unions have not been as weak as assumed by its followers. Chapter 2 presents an analytic framework of the study. It emphasizes skills of workers and political opportunity structures (consisting of cross-class alliances and policy networks) as main sources of labor’s power at the micro- and macrolevels, respectively. Chapter 3 through chapter 7 provide a historical account of labor politics from 1945 through the early 1990s. These chapters focus on the following issues: how labor became a “legitimate actor” within the enterprise and achieved “substantial influence” on the decision-making of management (chapter 3); how wage bargaining at the national level (namely, *Shunto* or the spring offensive) developed in the direction of the “politics of productivity” in the 1960s (chapter 4); how private-sector unions took advantage of political opportunity structures and increased their participation in the policy-making process