

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.

MARI YOSHIHARA
University of Hawaii at Manoa

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

of the government after the first oil crisis (chapter 5); how private-sector unions defended employment security of workers in depressed industries in the early 1960s and in the second half of the 1970s (chapter 6); and how labor “strengthened its position” in the policy-making process in the 1980s despite the neoconservative stance of the government (chapter 7). Chapter 8 examines the Japanese pattern of labor politics in the context of cross-national comparison, suggesting that the Japanese pattern based on the decentralized union movement has competitive edge in the age of post-Fordism and flexible production.

Disparaged Success is one of the few English-written books that comprehensively examines the postwar development of labor politics and industrial relations, and this makes the book highly valuable. Kume’s book is also important in that it is one of the first attempts to explain labor politics in Japan from an explicitly comparative perspective, putting the Japanese case in the context of analytic frameworks used by studies of labor politics in other industrialized countries.

This book has several serious problems, however. First, it has the problem of methodology. If the purpose of this study was to advance a certain theoretical framework in opposition to another, it should have systematically presented the competing hypotheses derived from the opposing theoretical frameworks before putting them to an empirical test and concluding which hypotheses better explained empirical phenomena. Kume skips this social scientific procedure, starting with the assumption that the theoretical framework based on political opportunity structures always explains empirical phenomena better than the competing framework based on resource mobilization. More specifically, he makes few references to specific studies based on the “orthodox view” of labor politics in Japan, and summarily dismisses them as being “obsessed with” the weak labor thesis, without a detailed analysis of his intellectual target.

Second, since Kume is excessively concerned with political opportunity structures of labor unions at the expense of their resource mobilization, he fails to examine labor unions themselves. Kume thus overlooks an important question of interest-representation by unions. He seems to assume that unions represent the interests of members through a democratic and autonomous process (p. 70), though he fails to make any empirical verification of the assumption. Studies of enterprise-level industrial relations in Japan indicate that the internal political process of labor unions tended to be oligarchical rather than democratic. If so, it is problematic to claim the strength of labor based on the participation of a handful of union leaders in the decision-making process of management and/or the government.

Third, empirical evidence does not support Kume’s claim that organized labor in postwar Japan succeeded in attaining benefits in terms of wages and working conditions comparable to those in other industrialized countries. The data he uses to press his case are incomplete or inaccurate. The groups of workers included in wage data vary across countries. Moreover, the wage data do not take exchange rates and price levels into consideration. Contrary to his claim, other studies show that the wage level of Japanese workers is one of the lowest among OECD countries. Concerning working hours, the data of the Ministry of Labor he uses has been criticized for underreporting real working hours by 250–300 hours (For an extensive critical review of Kume’s treatment of data, see Jin Igarashi “‘Nihongata Rōshikankei’ Sanbiron o Hihansuru” [The Analysis of the Praise for Japanese-Style Industrial Relations from a Critical Perspective], *Seikei Kenkyū* 73, November 1999).

Despite these drawbacks, *Disparaged Success* is an important contribution to the area of comparative labor politics and industrial relations.

AKIRA SUZUKI
Hosei University

The American Occupation of Japan and Okinawa: Literature and Memory. By MICHAEL S. MOLASKY. London and New York: Routledge, 1999. xii, 244 pp. \$55.00.

Historians and literary scholars are more fully appreciating the importance of the American occupation (1945–52) to the construction of Japanese memories of the wartime and postwar periods. In the field of history, John Dower's most recent book, *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II*, comes to mind. In the area of literary studies, the book under review by Michael Molasky is a good case in point.

Molasky's study is ambitious, wide-ranging, and insightful. He does a fine job of exposing and analyzing the multidimensional, contended nature of Japanese memories of life under American occupation. Molasky is primarily concerned in his book with "occupation literature," a term he coins for literary works written by Japanese mainland, Okinawan, and women writers that "depict interaction between the American occupiers and the occupied populace" (p. 3). He examines relatively well-known works such as Kojima Nobuo's "American School," Higashi Mineko's *An Okinawan Boy*, Ōe Kenzaburō's "Prize Stock," Sono Ayako's "Guest from Afar," and Nosaka Akiyuki's "American Hijiki," as well as less commonly known, neglected, or forgotten stories by Okinawan and female authors.

Molasky's critical approach to his subject is comparative (in that he compares and contrasts the works he discusses) and multidisciplinary (he introduces and draws, for instance, on colonial discourse, feminist and race theory). He is particularly interested in, and adept at, reading allegorically. As Molasky is doubtlessly aware, this practice of allegorical reading can run the risk of neglecting the personal, lived experience of the women and men portrayed in the works he discusses. His judicious application of theory, close reading, and sensitivity to issues of victimization, oppression, inequality, and injustice make for a provocative, engaging, and illuminating study of Japanese occupation literature.

Molasky addresses three basic questions: (1) how did Japanese men represent their experience of the American occupation; (2) to what extent do women's writings on the subject offer a "counter-history" to dominant male narratives; and (3) how have Okinawan writers depicted their distinct experience of life under American military rule? (pp. 1–2). With regard to the first: Molasky observes that, for male writers, life under American occupation was a humiliating, emasculating experience. In general, these authors represented their experience in terms of linguistic and sexual impotence. Molasky convincingly argues that male authors routinely employed images of rape (of Japanese women by American soldiers) to convey their own sense of powerlessness and shame. Moreover, by equating women's bodies with Japan, and occupation soldiers with America, they also used the sexual violation of women at the hands of occupation soldiers as an allegory for national subjugation and victimization.

In contrast, Molasky shows that Japanese women writers did not portray life under American rule as humiliating or identity-threatening, nor did they seek to attribute their postwar suffering and loss directly to the American occupiers. Instead, they located the source of their oppression in ongoing domestic conditions such as poverty,