

episode from Saikaku's "Life of an Amorous Man" (*Kōshoku ichidai otoko*) and William Sibley's retranslation of Akinari's "The Blue Cowl" (*Aozukin*). The translations all read very well. The book also includes a number of illustrations, from medieval *engi emaki*, through Edo *shunga*, to the modern work of Go Mishima and Sadao Hasegawa.

As might be expected, the selections are arranged in chronological order, starting with excerpts of a twelfth-century *monogatari*, *Ariake no wakare* (trans. Robert Khan), from which the anthology as a whole takes its title, and concluding with excerpts from Paul McCarthy's translation of *Yes Yes Yes* by novelist Hiruma Hisao (b. 1960). The selections fall into two relatively clear chronological halves, with the break coming between Akinari and a selection of correspondence between Minakata Kumagusa and Iwata Jun'ichi (trans. Sibley) from the 1930s. Yet the two halves are by no means unconnected, and there are some interesting connections, such as the Minakata/Iwata discussion of Edo period *nanshoku* (which in turn leads to both an interview with Takahashi Mitsuo and his rather discursive "The Searcher"), and the treatment of *kabuki* in both Mishima's "Onnagata" (trans. Donald Keene) and Tate's "Benten."

The major weakness of the book is that it seems to be attempting to appeal to too many kinds of readers at once. Whether it will satisfy the usual patrons of Gay Sunshine Press, I cannot say; but concern for that more popular audience has somewhat weakened its value as a scholarly tool and as a textbook. For instance, there is an introduction by Schalow to the whole volume, reprinted from *The Gay and Lesbian Literary Heritage* (New England Publishing Associates, 1995). In this introduction, Schalow presents his reading of the relationship between Kaoru and the Eighth Prince in the *Tale of Genji* as an essentially romantic one. Intriguing as this reading is, it seems to me that in an introductory text Schalow owes it to his readers to indicate that such a reading is far from standard. I do not take issue with the interpretation so much as with the fact that students are going to think it matter-of-fact (the *teisetsu*, as they say in Japan). On the other hand, presumably out of concern for the common reader, Sibley leaves parts out of his translations of Akinari and the Minakata/Iwata correspondence. Nonetheless, the collection might serve well in a class on gender or sexuality. Certainly almost every "hot-button" issue is hit in one or more of the stories: sodomy, sex with juveniles, incest, cross-dressing, narcissism, sadism, masochism, religious guilt, and so on. It might also serve in a Japanese literature course, though one might want to supplement it with selections from, for instance, *Hagakure* and Mishima's better known works.

Of course, what this selection of texts does is in fact problematize the entire notion of reading "gay" back into the past, or of defining a particularly "Japanese Gay" identity. For a collection that recognizes itself as "tentative and exploratory," it succeeds admirably.

JOSHUA S. MOSTOW  
The University of British Columbia

*Political Bribery in Japan*. By RICHARD H. MITCHELL. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1996. xvii, 206 pp. \$25.00.

Based on his comparative and historical study of political bribery in Japan, Mitchell concludes that significant political reform in Japan requires fundamental changes in broadly held cultural practices and values. Mitchell weighs formal

institutional causes of political corruption, but joins those who emphasize habits of behavior and values. His review of failed political reforms in Japan and of the factors that allegedly curbed political corruption in England in the late nineteenth century lend credibility to this conclusion.

Mitchell provides an engaging and concise history of political corruption in Japan, reviewing major bribery scandals and election law violations and reforms, and generally confining himself to the central government. This book leads us forward from the seventh century with pauses to describe and reflect on the impact of Japan's most celebrated corruption scandals. Several patterns emerge in these chapters: top figures tend to escape prosecution and, particularly, punishment; a background in police work can be useful to a political career; countries that Japan has colonized and its transport industries crop up often in major scandals; and publication of information abroad frequently catalyzes investigations (in the Siemens case, Reuters reported from London on information uncovered in the course of a trial in Berlin). The ubiquity of political corruption in Japan in the past, as today, leads Mitchell to ask not only, "Why did this occur?" but, "Why was it uncovered and punished"? He concludes his discussion of prewar Japan by suggesting that the "old-style" politicians, political merchants, and the *zaibatsu* all survived their persecutors—the Home Ministry's crusading bureaucrats, radical army officers, and the Justice Ministry's procurators.

Mitchell addresses major debates about the causes and roles of political bribery in Japan, including the role of bribery in easing gridlock between the Meiji oligarchs (who got votes for policies) and the party politicians (who got money for votes for reelection). Japan's various reforms in electoral systems and bribery laws (e.g., universal male suffrage in 1925; the expansion in the membership of the Liberal Democratic Party in 1977) do not so much produce unintended consequences as no consequences: practice continues more or less unchanged. Japanese procurators face particularly difficult challenges because the general acceptance of the practice of gift giving obliges them to differentiate gift giving from bribery.

Among the themes that arise in this book are the distinction between bribery and favoritism, and the persistent linkage of (uncovered) cases of political bribery with efforts by outsiders to enhance their influence. With gift giving pervasive and accepted, procurators typically had to do more than prove that politicians or bureaucrats received gifts; they also needed to show that the gifts were larger than those established by precedent and that the gift givers expected favors in return. So long as no unusually large gifts were involved, these guidelines might not prohibit the awarding of contracts to long-time associates offering uncompetitive bids. Given the importance of enduring social ties in economic and political life in Japan, this suggests that favoritism is acceptable so long as those who dispense favors are not unduly venal in demanding recompense.

Outsiders, however, have no regular ties to key figures and therefore have incentives to incite venality in order to receive favors. Mitchell discusses many cases in which political bribery, or its disclosure, is associated with efforts by outsiders to break into the circles of power. The link between corruption and efforts to crash the gates of the establishment may help to account for the large number of cases that involved Japan's former colonies and its railroads (where the span of jurisdiction transcended established local authority relations).

To conclude, I note three minor complaints. Mitchell's conclusions about the political orientation of Justice Ministry procurators (did they favor the Seiyukai political party?) seem inconsistent (pp. 30, 50, and 62). His interpretation of the 1993 election—the "people spoke at the polls" (p. 128)—is unconvincing given that for

the most part they were reelecting incumbents. And while Mitchell uses comparison with England and the United States to good effect, the studies of China and Korea do not offer many significant insights into the causes or consequences of political bribery in Japan.

DANNY UNGER  
Georgetown University

*Authenticating Culture in Imperial Japan: Kuki Shūzō and the Rise of National Aesthetics.* By LESLIE PINCUS. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996. xii, 271 pp. \$45.00.

At its core a meditation on Kuki Shūzō's famous "*Iki*" *no kōzō* (the structure of *iki*) of 1930, Leslie Pincus's remarkable book ranges far beyond that text to provide a major reinterpretation of the role of "culture" in the formation and legitimation of the modern Japanese state. One could say that via a theory of cultural hegemony she breathes new life into prewar Marxist approaches to modern Japanese history. In the process, she provides a useful framework for Taishō and Shōwa period intellectual history and a plausible explanation for the stream of Japanese cultural nationalism known as Nihonjinron.

Pincus's argument—laid out most fully in the epilogue but anticipated throughout her exhaustive study of the context as well as the text of "*Iki*" *no kōzō*—relies on a creative adaptation of Neil Larsen's theory of aesthetic modernism's role in establishing civil hegemony in late-modernizing states on the periphery of world capitalism. In her view, the Meiji state, like many of the postcolonial regimes discussed by Larsen, was modeled after the modern European nation-state. Therefore, like them, it was haunted by the "specter of derivative beginnings;" it also suffered the "residual effects of European and American imperialism" in the form of unequal treaties and racial exclusion (p. 239). The Meiji state was also similar to postcolonial regimes in that its "bourgeois revolution . . . [began] without an effective, integrated base in civil society and without a unified class subject" (p. 237). Therefore, the Japanese state was also forced to create the revolutionary class subject after the fact. This it did, through education and other means, but the nascent bourgeoisie was, in any case, weak and dependent upon the old ruling class; that is, "the bourgeois conquest of civil society remained incomplete" (p. 241).

The completion of that conquest was the task undertaken by modernist producers of culture like Kuki Shūzō: "As if in belated compensation for the unfinished project of hegemony, an elite corps of writers and theorists—representatives of a compromised but dominant class—attempted to produce a missing unity in discursive terms" (p. 241). Like intellectuals in Larsen's postcolonial states, the Japanese writers sought to construct that unity by superimposing a modernist aesthetic directly onto "images of prerationalized native culture." The end product was an idealistic culturescape, "inhabited by a collectivity defined in ethnocultural rather than political terms, pure 'Japaneseness,' so to speak" (p. 235).

Kuki's "*Iki*" *no kōzō* was typical of such culturescapes, which claimed to express the essence of Japaneseness. Yet, like most Nihonjinron, it was largely European in provenance. Pincus traces Kuki's intellectual itinerary from Paris, where he first jotted down his musings on "*iki*": from there to the philosophical quest through Germany which led him via phenomenology and hermeneutics to the dematerialized,