

Two essays on Taoist influence on Japan are particularly engrossing, especially since it is only in the last fifteen years that Japanese scholars have begun looking at Taoism in Japan, rather than China. Senda Minoru identifies Taoist elements even in the oldest Shinto imperial layers of Japanese culture: the living god concept, sacred treasures, the Emperor's Palace, *The Tale of Genji*, and so on. He finds Taoist elements in fairy tales and even in contemporary festivals, such as New Year's (*kagami mochi*, *miko*), Setsubun, Dolls' Festival, Children's Festival, Tanabata and others. Lisette Gebhart's essay, "The Peachblossom Utopia: Taoist Thought in Modern Japanese Literature" develops two fascinating lines of thought. The first is the metaphoric use of China, a kind of reverse Orientalism, in which China is identified with the "Other," and is used as a way of rediscovering the "East." Her second line of thought explores the uses of the Taoist idea of a "Peachblossom Utopia" (*tōgenkyō*, a kind of Arcadia) by numerous contemporary writers, including Ōe Kenzaburō, Nakagami Kenji, Murakami Haruki, Ōba Minako, and Kōno Taeko. These uses range from attempts to restore classical aesthetics to their rightful place to neo-Romantic impulses combining Asian and Western elements.

The final article in the collection, "Traditional Legal Thought and Present-Day Law," by Ronald Frank, shows how the Japanese legal system, which in the late nineteenth century adopted the form of the European civil codes, retained in practice many traditional elements, such as a reliance on *giri* (duty) rather than code to regulate behavior, and a reliance on conciliation rather than litigation in the settlement of disputes.

This book compactly and effectively introduces the reader, generalist and specialist alike, to elements of the Japanese spiritual traditions that have shaped its response to the challenges posed by modernization.

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*Japan's Asia Policy: Regional Security and Global Interests.* By WOLF MENDEL.  
New York: Routledge, 1995. xiv, 228 pp. \$65.00.

Very readable in style and quite comprehensive in substantive coverage, this is an excellent study of Japan's policy in Asia and will remain for many years a favorite textbook among students of Japanese foreign policy or Asian international relations. As indicated by the subtitle, the author deals primarily with the security and political dimensions of Japan's policy in Asia.

The author first posits two competing images of postwar Japan: on the one hand, a nation that "drifted along currents of international politics . . . without any particular purpose or sense of direction" (p. 1) and, on the other hand, "a remarkable continuity in the basic processes of the political system," reflecting a "shrewd calculation of where Japan's interests lay" (p. 3). The author's own view is "somewhere in the middle" (p. 5). Particularly welcome is the author's reminder in chapter 2 that Japan's contemporary search for a major power role in Asia has its historical precedence in previous centuries when Japan faced the difficult choice between an Asian identity and a position of dignity in the Western-dominated world system. Chapter 3 examines the impact of the breakdown of the postwar international system on Japan's Asia policy. The author observes that although the regional security environment is less certain today than during the Cold War, Japan is now released from the constraints

of the Cold War and can pursue a more independent course vis-à-vis the United States (p. 48). Because economic developments are of secondary importance to the author, however, this chapter fails to take into full account the remarkable continuity one observes in the Japan–U.S. relationship in which close bilateral economic ties and the two countries' respective regional and global economic interests indicate the continuation of a stable alliance across the Pacific.

Chapters 4 and 5 discuss Japan's interests and policy in Northeast Asia and in Southeast Asia, respectively. The author travels the familiar terrain of big power relations, including the legacies of history, territorial disputes, economic relations, ethnic/cultural issues, and domestic politics. The author maintains that the U.S.–focused Japanese policy in Northeast Asia is ending, and that either a balance-of-power system or Asian integration is likely to emerge. In the author's view, Japan's postwar policy in Southeast Asia was not guided by any "coherent or Machiavellian design" but instead by Japan's political and economic interests and the notions that "Asian thinking and conduct had their own roots" and that the Asian "logic of behavior and thought" would remain "long after the non-Asian powers had departed from the scene" (p. 122). Chapter 6 places Japan's regional policy in the global context and entertains several possible directions for the nation's policy such as isolation, a major international role, an Asian policy, and a balanced policy. In the concluding chapter, the author persuasively argues that Japan's Asia policy in the twenty-first century will depend largely on how increasingly diversified domestic interests will engage with their historic identity and traditions amidst the globalizing forces of international economics and technology.

Although a more complete understanding of Japan's postwar policy in Asia would require fuller discussion of its economic power in the region, this book presents an accurate and balanced understanding of the opportunities and obstacles that the nation's external environment has provided for Japan's policymakers.

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*Partings at Dawn: An Anthology of Japanese Gay Literature.* Edited by STEPHEN D. MILLER. San Francisco: Gay Sunshine Press, 1996. 351 pp. \$19.95.

The book under review proclaims itself "the first of its kind," and as such it has an obvious importance. Moreover, it is a pleasure to see work that has previously appeared as articles or in other contexts brought together in book form. (I am thinking particularly of Paul Schalow's translation and study of Kitamura Kigin's "Wild Azaleas" or *Iwatsutsuji*.) The anthology also provides many translations of works never before available in English, such as the early fourteenth-century "Story of Kannon's Manifestation as a Youth" (*Chigo Kannon Engi*, trans. Margaret H. Childs) and selections from a seventeenth-century joke-book, "Today's Tales of Yesterday" (*Kinō wa kyō no monogatari*, trans. Schalow). Among the translations of modern texts are four by Takahashi Mutsuo: the stories "The Searcher" (*Tankyūsha*, trans. Miller) and "The Hunter" (*Mitsuryōsha*, trans. Steven Karpa); and one long poem, "Ode" (*Home-uta*) and six shorter ones (trans. Hiroaki Sato). There are also two works by Tate Shirō: "Portrait of a Thief—The Real Benten Kozō" (*Benten kozō yami no utsushi*, trans. Kenneth Richard) and "Jinbei" (trans. Anthony Chambers). The volume also includes new translations of previously translated works: The late Robert Danly's rendering of an