BOOK REVIEWS

A Mission to Japan

Science Has No National Borders. Harry C. Kelly and the Reconstruction of Science and Technology in Postwar Japan. HIDEO YOSHIKAWA and JOANNE KAUFFMAN. MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, 1994. xx, 137 pp. + plates. $22.50 or £19.95.

Did Japan build an atomic bomb during World War II? We know that Japanese physicists attempted to do so on a very small scale. Though there have been claims that they completed an atomic weapon and were able to transfer the technology to North Korea prior to Japan's defeat, there is no real evidence to support them. However, during the Allied Occupation, fears of a bomb prompted the U.S. Army to destroy Japanese cyclotrons. The ensuing uproar in Japan and the United States led to the appointment of two senior scientists to the Occupation to ascertain what progress the Japanese had made on the bomb and to help the Allied Forces distinguish between military research and appropriate peacetime activities. One of the men chosen was Harry C. Kelly.

A Scientific Intelligence Survey of Japan, led by MIT's Edward L. Moreland and Karl T. Compton, had already found that Japanese science posed no immediate military threat. Nevertheless, scientists were needed to maintain surveillance over R&D in Japan and to advise the General Headquarters (GHQ) of the Occupation on policy and action relating to science. The two men deemed suitable for the job were Kelly, who had worked on radar during the war at MIT's Radiation Laboratory, and his lab colleague Gerald Fox. Both understood physics and, not having been involved in the Manhattan Project, were unlikely to be in a position to give away U.S. atomic secrets.

Fox and Kelly arrived in Japan in January 1946 and were assigned to the Scientific and Technical Division of GHQ to advise on science. Fox stayed only for eight months, but Kelly remained for four years and became deputy chief of the division in 1948. The book under review traces Kelly's years in Japan and the attempts to reorganize Japanese science and technology along democratic lines, rebuild Japan's R&D base, and promote economic growth. The events leading up to the establishment of the Science Council of Japan and Kelly's role in facilitating links between the Occupation Forces and the Japanese scientific community are described in detail.

The Japanese formed various committees to determine how the Science Council might be elected and what form its charter would take. Meanwhile, Kelly did his best to encourage their activities and was instrumental in bringing about visits to Japan by two high-powered U.S. scientific advisory groups, one led by Frank Jewett, president of the National Academy of Sciences, in July 1947, and a second that included the physicist I. I. Rabi in late 1948. The groups assessed the Japanese situation, encouraged the reorganization of the sciences, and lent their support and prestige to the moves under way by the Japanese. The Science Council of Japan was established in July 1948 as an independent consultative body consisting of 210 elected members and met for the first time in January 1949. A Scientific and Technical Administration Commission was also created as a governmental coordinating body located in the prime minister's office.

Kelly was keen to encourage scientists to cooperate with industry and government, but Japan's wartime experience made academics suspicious of such links. One who was not reluctant to embrace private enterprise was Yoshio Nishina, one of the leaders of Japan's wartime bomb project and a highly respected physicist. With Kelly's help, Nishina was able to save the Institute of Physical and Chemical Research (Japan's premier prewar research organization) by embarking on the production of penicillin to keep the institute solvent. The story of the friendship and mutual respect between these two men shows how "science has no national borders," but the emergence of Cold War tensions certainly made for better U.S.-Japan scientific cooperation.

Joanne Kauffman has transformed what was an anecdotal text that lacked references into a scholarly, highly readable, concisely written book on the reorganization of Japanese science. Insufficient knowledge of Japan and the language has allowed a small number of inaccuracies with respect to names, customs, and dates to creep in, but these do not detract from the overall achievement of the book. The book resembles a diary in format and invites reading. It is unashamedly a tribute to Kelly and provides strong evidence of the importance of individual actors in the shaping of Japanese science, science policy, and U.S.–Japan relations. It is a harbinger of a number of major studies on this theme that will be published over the next few years.

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Young Men of Today

No Man's Land. Men's Changing Commitments to Family and Work. KATHLEEN GERSON. BasicBooks, New York, 1993. xvi, 366 pp. $25.

Kathleen Gerson reports here on the results of her study of the varying ways in which contemporary young men have configured their lives with respect to family and work roles. Although the book bespeaks a serious effort of sociological data-gathering and interpretation, it is likely to appeal more to a general readership than to Gerson's colleagues in the social sciences. That this is so should be taken as a tribute despite the academics who might say that her study reveals little that is new to them. Maybe, but that is beside the point. In contrast to most academics, and, most unforgivably, sociologists, who actually do know a great deal about issues of the day but tend to share their expertise only among themselves in tortuous and arcane language, Gerson writes about the dilemmas and directions, satisfactions and dissatisfactions of men's lives in such a way that they, and others like them, will have no trouble finding themselves in her book.

Gerson's approach to the study of emergent and changing patterns of men's lives is also refreshing. Her book is emphatically not cast in the tradition of "men's studies," in which men are too often portrayed as victims, either because of the alleged burdens of power and privilege, or because they have been stripped of those by feminists and others associated with "alternative lifestyles." Gerson is clear in recognizing the privileges and advantages enjoyed by men at the same time as she insists on the "need to examine how social opportunities and constraints shape men's lives no less than women's."

Her book challenges stereotypes of and generalizations about typical men and traditional men. Where the latter are concerned, she incorporates a lucid historical