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cultural attitudes and assumptions, particularly through advertising. He analyses the cultural assumptions of France, including representations of gender, race, and class, in a way that is lively, interesting, and informative. His combination of business and cultural history is fascinating and should be read by all those interested in the subject.

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Dale M. Hellegers — *We, the Japanese People: World War Two and the Origins of the Japanese Constitution*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001. Two vols., pp. xvii, 826.

This is an important work, but it is slow going because of the references to the exhaustive archival research on which it is based. About 160 national constitutions have been created since World War II. However flawed or useless or senseless, they have all been created by their own countries, though often with outside help. It is well known that the 1947 Constitution of Japan was forced onto the country by the American Occupation in the wake of World War II. In my view, a new Japanese constitution was justified, but the process has always raised questions. The preamble says that it was created by “We the Japanese People”, but almost nobody has believed this. Hence this work on its origins is worthwhile.

It remains the most radically democratic constitution in the world, in which rights and liberties are unqualified. Thus it is unlike the previous Constitution of Great Imperial Japan of 1889, and indeed unlike the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms of 1982, which contains a huge and ambiguous qualification. The 1947 Constitution of Japan has been accepted by everyone in the Japanese legal and judicial world, but its application in a society based on inequality remains a problem. Until 1945 the social system was based on the ancient five Confucian relationships, all unequal, and in the first half of the twentieth century the primary relationships of loyalty to the ruler and filial piety towards one’s parents were emphasized above all else. Planting a radically democratic constitution based on individualism into such a country was problematical, but that is not a concern of this work.

Instead, it is concerned exclusively with American policy formation. Volume 1, *Washington*, deals with American debates over the projected American invasion of Japan in November 1945, the terms for Japanese surrender, the necessity of the atomic bombs, and the ultimate position of the Emperor of Japan and the imperial institution. The debates went on for years during the war, and Dale Hellegers shows through archival research the many groups and forces and conflicting views that went into decision-making, to the point that one wonders how any decisions were made at all. It is interesting that volume 1 relies exclusively on American English-language sources to show how Americans made up their minds about these matters. Use of Japanese sources, of which the author is capable, would have made the objective situation more clear (for example with regard to Japanese positions on the fate of the Emperor upon surrender), but the author has chosen to show the Ameri-

cans in their dilemmas. At the least, this work scotches forever the position trumpeted by General Douglas MacArthur, that he decided to spare the Emperor after Hirohito called on him on September 27, 1945, to take full responsibility for the war. MacArthur wrote that he was so impressed by His Majesty that he knew he was in the company of the First Gentleman of Japan and decided on the spot to spare him. This work shows that the matter was settled in American policy long before MacArthur entered Japan to begin the Occupation.

In light of all the years of planning and discussion, the Americans were surprisingly unprepared to carry out the tasks of the Occupation. Japanese sources are used together with English sources in volume 2, *Tokyo*, to show the objective situation of both the Japanese and the Americans. Again, the many discussions and conflicts among both the Japanese and the Americans, as well as between them, are discussed in exhaustive detail. The work ends with the presentation of the radical American constitutional draft to the Japanese and the complicated and devious process of translating drafts. It does not proceed through the discussion and adoption of the constitution by the Japanese Diet, during which Article 9, outlawing the maintenance and use of armed forces, was amended to permit interpretations that actually allow the existence of the Self Defense Forces. Appendices discuss all the constitutional drafts and the people who made them.

There are 2,312 footnotes to the text and more to the appendices. Here is a typical example (vol. 2, p. 768):

17 Nov. 1945, Tel. No. 2361, S/S to Harriman, in U.S. Department of State, *FRUS*: 1945, Vol. VI, 856-60; 20 Nov. 1945, n.a. to Marshall, Arnold, Handy re negotiations on FEC and AMC (NA, RG 165: OPD ABC 014 Japan (1 Sept. 1945) Sec. 1-A); 21 Nov. 1945, m/r A.P.G. [Pixton] (NA, RG 165: OPD ABC 334.8 FE (9 Nov 1944) Sec. 2-A).

That is a short one; many contain long anecdotes or explanations. Occasional comic relief is provided by the author's choice of words, some of which I had to look up: subreption, frangible, vergiberating.

It is a work that no one will ever attempt again, and so it will stand as definitive.

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Odile Join-Lambert — *Le receveur des Postes, entre l'État et l'utilisateur, 1944–1973*, Paris, Belin, 2001, 317 p.

Focusing upon *receveurs* — the rough English translation would be postmasters — primarily from the period 1944 to 1973, this book represents a carefully researched study of a group of key players in the twentieth-century French postal system. The idea behind this work is to conduct a study of a particular category of public servants in an era when France was entering the service economy. The study argues in favour of the fundamental continuity of the *receveurs*, who, as a body, managed to