he was motivated by more than just his enthusiasm and passion for history. As Stephen Suloway, the book's translator, puts it, "he expresses an impassioned questioning of society, and still he is the dispassionate examiner" (p. xix).

Readers will not find here a systematic comparison with other countries and cultures, obviously not the main concern of this work. Mita explores the Japanese mind by studying its history, not by comparing it with other societies. In other words, it is a great case study, but not a systematically controlled one.

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Occasionally one is fortunate in receiving a book to analyze that is concise, well written, informative, enjoyable, and an addition to the literature. Zaibatsu by Hidemasa Morikawa is such a volume. Even though a translation of his earlier work, the translator, Ruth McCreery, with the assistance of Steven Ericson, has done such excellent work it appears fluent and seamless. It can thus be read for information and enjoyment.

Zaibatsu traces the history of several family business groups (zaibatsu) that arose after Meiji, usefully including information on the lesser-known Asano, Okura, Furukawa, Fujita, Nissan, and Yasuda, along with the big three: Mitsui, Mitsubishi, and Sumitomo. Morikawa portrays and examines them as a distinct business form sharing certain common characteristics compared to joint stock companies or individual family-owned firms. He views them as unique because they are diversified across several businesses and family controlled. Yet in depicting their evolution, he notes they did not dominate Japan's business environment as often portrayed. Rather, they competed strongly in select activities such as trade, shipping, banking, mining, textiles, paper, and insurance.

Further, the more successful ones became more dependent over time on competent managers repeating the trend of family control yielding to professional managers noted by Alfred Chandler, Jr., for the U.S. He also convincingly argues that Japan's economic growth and natural shift from light to heavy industry, which the military build-up accelerated, hurt rather than helped them. This was because, excepting Yasuda, increased capital requirements strained family resources and retention of control. Capital had to be raised by selling shares in the parent holding company to the "public." The public, in turn, was usually related companies and employees. So one sees even at this stage the development and origins of the interfirm and stable shareholdings characterizing various postwar groupings. Nevertheless, in Morikawa's view the Occupation's break-up of the zaibatsu only finished off a process of declining family control and power shift to professional managers and strong subsidiaries already far advanced by the 1930s.

The strategies, senior managers' personalities, and successes or failures of each group are vividly drawn during each major economic period. In this way, Morikawa demonstrates how the professional managers' education and frequently foreign experience allowed them to project, analyze, and assess the real business needs associated with Japan's growth and modernization and thus increase their influence. Their
foreign experience helped them to structure joint ventures to access critical technologies, e.g., the associations with G.E. and Siemens. Since they were frequently recruited from the upper civil service, an early form of amakudari ("descent from heaven"), they had important government contacts, too. In Mitsui's case, their foresight proved particularly beneficial in preparing for the end of World War I, enabling Mitsui to grow and prosper during the interwar period while several competitors floundered.

For Morikawa, the 1930s and the Occupation are the end of an evolutionary process beginning with the dislocations of Meiji and the opportunities presented to a few entrepreneurs and wealthy families. In his paradigm, the zaibatsu evolved from initial core businesses involving political connections, mining, or finance. The first type, most notably Mitsui and Mitsubishi, used political connections to develop monopolies such as the Iwasaki's establishment of Nippon Yosen and its capture of Japan's shipping. After having successfully built this, though, Iwasaki sold shares to the public, financing Mitsubishi’s development and diversification into other businesses like insurance, banking, trade, shipbuilding, and mining. However, like Mitsui, it soon separated itself from political dependency since this was eventually seen as hobbling their initiatives rather than as a benefit. Others, such as Furukawa, started with mining, primarily copper or coal, then vertically integrated into fabrication, e.g., electric wire, and finally diversified into other related activities along with trade and banking. Sumitomo also built its group on mining but expanded even more broadly. In this manner, Japanese business's origins were in primary production like many other developing economies before it evolved into a value added economy as those resources were depleted.

A fascinating aspect of the narrative is the many names and business practices associated with the postwar period that have their origins in the zaibatsu. The multisubsidiary form they adopted evolved into today's industrial groupings. In addition to Mitsui, Sumitomo, and Mitsubishi, firms like Hitachi, Furukawa Denki, Fujitsu, NEC, Nissan, and Okura all began with the zaibatsu. Thus while World War II was a watershed, Japanese business has evolved historically along with the economy, and understanding many of Japan's biggest companies requires knowledge of their origins and development. Morikawa's Zaihatsu skillfully presents this perspective, assembling in one place both a clear historical description and useful data. Therefore, anyone interested in history, Japan, business, or all three, should find it not only an important reference but good reading as well.

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Frequent recent U.S. tours have shown that kyōgen is readily accessible to and very enjoyable for American audiences. Still, kyōgen receives little scholarly attention outside of Japan. Play texts, which are short, witty vignettes, only hint at the magic that takes place on the kyōgen stage. Carolyn Morley’s book is a welcome addition to the scant information available in English on kyōgen. It is a study of the relationship between performance and written text, a relationship Morley examines in the context of changes over time in audience values and expectations.