

[PDF] Japan: A Reinterpretation

Patrick Smith - pdf download free book

Books Details:

Title: Japan: A Reinterpretation

Author: Patrick Smith

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Description:

For years westerners have viewed Japan as a nation of democratic, hard-working, unabashedly pro-Western people, a viewpoint promulgated mainly by a group of postwar scholars known as the Chrysanthemum Club. Journalist Patrick Smith takes a hard, fresh look at Japan and its relations with the West--particularly the United States--in *Japan: A Reinterpretation*. Smith asserts that the economic miracle we in the West have long admired was achieved at the expense of true political reform, creating a corporation instead of a democracy. Now that the miracle has collapsed, the Japanese are in a state of cultural, political, and social malaise.

Smith approaches Japan from many different directions: first by reinterpreting the country's postwar history as presented by the Chrysanthemum Club, then by delving into the lives of ordinary Japanese. From the overworked salarymen to the upper echelons of Japanese politicians, Patrick Smith paints a bold new picture of a nation suffering from overdevelopment. In addition, *Japan: A*

Reinterpretation focuses on infrequently examined topics such as Japan's educators and writers. Though some of Smith's statements may seem a bit hyperbolic, his book is solidly researched and impeccably presented. --This text refers to the edition.

From Library Journal Smith, a journalist (New York Times, International Herald Tribune), attacks the view of Japan held by most Americans. Articulated best by Edwin O. Reischauer (*The Japanese*, 1977; updated as *The Japanese Today*, LJ 1/88), it sees the Japanese as "our hard-working, uncomplicated, compliant friends." This view, argues Smith, glosses over many unattractive things about Japan, including the subservient position of women, violence in the educational system, poverty in rural areas, and undue stress in the workplace. Smith believes that by acting as apologists for Japan, Reischauer and others in what has become known as the Chrysanthemum Club have failed to allow the Japanese their own past. After examining Japanese history, society, and culture, Smith sees the Japanese "re-creating themselves, making themselves anew." This will allow them to see themselves as they actually are. A thoughtful work; highly recommended. William L. Wuerch, Micronesian Area Research Ctr., Univ. of Guam
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