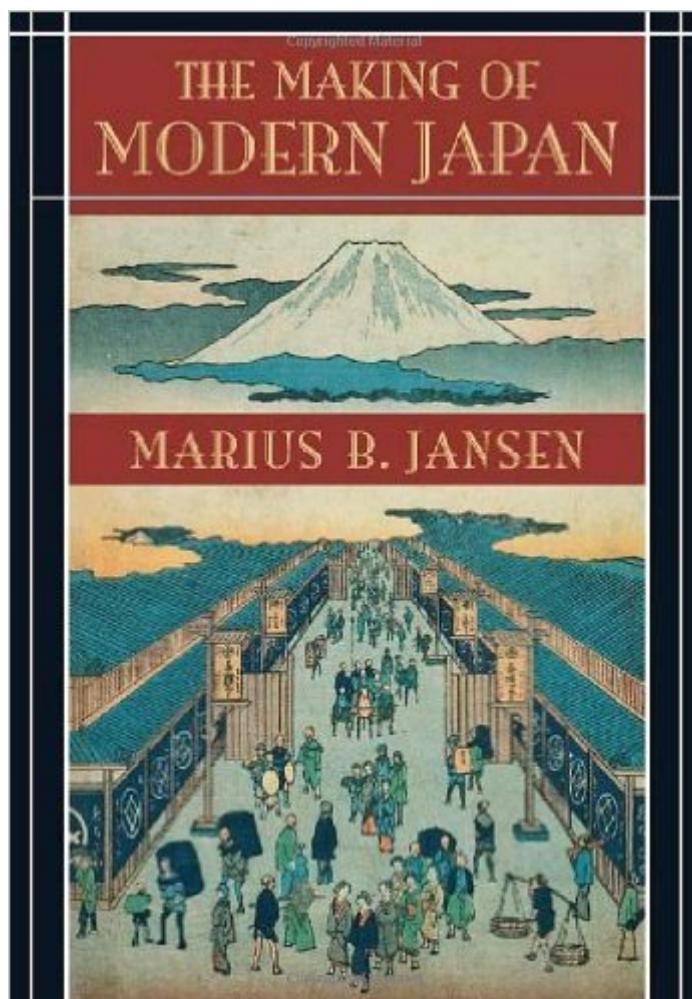


The book was found

The Making Of Modern Japan



Synopsis

Magisterial in vision, sweeping in scope, this monumental work presents a seamless account of Japanese society during the modern era, from 1600 to the present. A distillation of more than fifty years' engagement with Japan and its history, it is the crowning work of our leading interpreter of the modern Japanese experience. Since 1600 Japan has undergone three periods of wrenching social and institutional change, following the imposition of hegemonic order on feudal society by the Tokugawa shogun; the opening of Japan's ports by Commodore Perry; and defeat in World War II. The Making of Modern Japan charts these changes: the social engineering begun with the founding of the shogunate in 1600, the emergence of village and castle towns with consumer populations, and the diffusion of samurai values in the culture. Jansen covers the making of the modern state, the adaptation of Western models, growing international trade, the broadening opportunity in Japanese society with industrialization, and the postwar occupation reforms imposed by General MacArthur. Throughout, the book gives voice to the individuals and views that have shaped the actions and beliefs of the Japanese, with writers, artists, and thinkers, as well as political leaders given their due. The story this book tells, though marked by profound changes, is also one of remarkable consistency, in which continuities outweigh upheavals in the development of society, and successive waves of outside influence have only served to strengthen a sense of what is unique and native to Japanese experience. The Making of Modern Japan takes us to the core of this experience as it illuminates one of the contemporary world's most compelling transformations.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

First and foremost, I was very surprised at how readable this book is at times. For a book of this size, and the amount of material it covers, I was glad at how readable it was in certain parts. I also liked that the book was relatively neutral approach. The author clearly respects Japanese history and has mastered it, while not making excuses for their mistakes. To often Japanese and Chinese scholars have been seduced by the cultures of these areas and it clouds their writing and interpretations. I liked the neutrality of this book. I am less interested in social history, so I will not lie and pretend to have found those chapters interesting, it is not my thing. The chapters that I felt were the best dealt with the unification of Japan around 1600 and the events surrounding the Meiji Restoration of 1868. To me, one of the most interesting periods in Japanese history is the 16th and 17th century. The stories and actions of Oda Nobunaga, Hideyoshi, and Tokugawa Ieyasu (my screen name) fascinate me greatly. However, there is so little in English about them. It is so hard to find many sources on these great Japanese leaders and the final battles at Sekigara and Osaka castle. So it was quite enjoyable to read about them in this book. The Tokugawa Shogunate ruled Japan for over 200 years and was great to read how it came into power and stayed in power. If this time period interests you, you must read Totman's bio of Tokugawa and of course Cavell's Shogun. Equally as interesting is how the Tokugawa Shogunate collapsed and the Emperor was restored. The book does a great job detailing Perry's arrival in Japan and its forced opening to the west. The book also does a great job discussing the infighting in Japan going on at the time of Perry's arrival and after.

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