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W. Scott Morton, J. Kenneth Olenik

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Japan: Its History and Culture W. Scott Morton, J. Kenneth Olenik
This is a revision of the long successful, short, illustrated cultural history of Japan, from its beginnings about 3000 BC to the present day, first published in 1970 and continuously in use over several editions in colleges and universities nationwide. It is designed as a straightforward, detail-rich portrait of a nation not well understood in the West. The position of Japan on the international scene has changed markedly since the current edition was published in 1994: Japan had been a star of postwar industrial production and methods; over the past few years, it has encountered serious trouble with market forces; its financial practices, particularly the tacit collaboration between powerful factions in government and industry, has come under question and even attack. departure from tradition have begun to have a significant presence. The book is distinctive in its incorporation of cultural elements, at their high point, into the unfolding story of political events. Rather than just following the political and military course of history, treating them separately from the cultural side, Morton presents an integrated view, showing the parallel development of cultural and political events, as well as their influence on each other. For example, the sweeping effect of Chinese culture on Japanese is treated as an organic whole, exploring its results in government, social life, religion and art. The book also casts fascinating sidelights on significant personalities, works of literature and historic events. Balanced treatment is key; each period in the past is given equal treatment, with somewhat more emphasis on contemporary history and recent developments.

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