

Choshu In The Meiji Restoration

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this volume examines the meiji restoration through a global history lens to re interpret the formation of a globally cast japanese nation state

first there are questions concerning the role and relative importance of internal and external factors in the pattern of events did the activities of the western powers prompt changes in japan that would not otherwise have taken place or did they merely hasten a process that had already begun similarly did western civilization give a new direction to japanese development or do no more than provide the

outward forms through which indigenous change could manifest itself was it a matrix or only a shopping list second how far was the evolution of modern japan in some sense inevitable were the main features of meiji society already implicit in the tempo reforms only awaiting an appropriate trigger to bring them into being more narrowly was the character of meiji institutions determined by the social composition of the anti tokugawa movement or did it derive from a situation that took shape only after the bakufu was overthrown this is to pose the problem of the relationship between day to day politics and long term socioeconomic change one can argue paraphrasing toyama that the political controversy about foreign affairs provided the means by which basic socioeconomic factors became effective or one can say with sakata that the relevance of socioeconomic change is that it helped to decide the manner in which the fundamentally political ramifications of the foreign question were worked out the difference of emphasis is significant finally have recent historians in their preoccupation with other issues lost sight of something important in their relative neglect of ideas qua ideas ought we perhaps to stop treating loyalty to the emperor as simply a manifestation of something else after all the men whose actions are the object of our study took that loyalty seriously enough certainly as an instrument of politics if not as an article of faith

the tokugawa shogunate which had ruled japan for over two and a half centuries was a symbol of stability and order established in 1603 by tokugawa ieyasu the shogunate brought an end to the sengoku period a time of civil war and unrest under tokugawa rule japan experienced relative peace the development of a strict social hierarchy and the establishment of a centralized feudal system however by the mid 19th century a series of internal and external pressures began to undermine this system leading to the eventual collapse of the tokugawa regime and the rise of the meiji restoration internally the tokugawa government was facing growing dissatisfaction and instability the rigid class structure and the concentration of power in the hands of the samurai elite created discontent among other segments of society especially peasants and merchants economic challenges such as rising taxes and crop failures worsened the situation leading to widespread protests and unrest these internal problems were compounded by the inefficiency and corruption of the tokugawa bureaucracy which struggled to adapt to the changing circumstances externally japan s isolationist foreign policy known as sakoku which had been enforced for over 200 years came under pressure from western powers in 1853 the arrival of u s commodore matthew perry and his black ships marked a turning point in japan s history perry s mission to open japan to trade backed by the threat of military force exposed the vulnerability of the tokugawa government the subsequent signing of the unequal treaties with western nations such as the treaty

of kanagawa in 1854 further weakened the shogunate s authority and led to growing resentment among the japanese people

in world history the meiji restoration of 1868 ranks as a revolutionary watershed on a par with the american and french revolutions in this volume leading historians from north america europe and japan employ global history in novel ways to offer fresh economic social political cultural and military perspectives on the meiji restoration and the subsequent creation of the modern japanese nation state seamlessly mixing meta and micro history the authors examine how the japanese state and japanese people engaged with global trends of the early nineteenth century they also explore the internal military conflicts that marked the 1860s and the process of reconciliation after 1868 they conclude with discussions of how new political cultural and diplomatic institutions were created as japan emerged as a global nation defined in multiple ways by its place in the world

the arrival of commodore matthew perry s american fleet in edo bay on july 8 1853 marked the beginning of the end for japan s policy of national isolation and set in motion a series of events that would culminate in one of the most dramatic political and social transformations in world history for over two centuries the tokugawa shogunate had maintained strict control over japan s contact with the outside world permitting only limited trade with the dutch and chinese while successfully preserving domestic stability and cultural development within a carefully regulated feudal system perry s demand that japan open its ports to american trade and his demonstration of western military technology exposed the fundamental weaknesses of japan s isolation policy while revealing the urgent need for comprehensive reform to meet the challenges of the modern world the immediate crisis created by perry s arrival extended far beyond questions of foreign trade to encompass fundamental challenges to the legitimacy and effectiveness of tokugawa rule that had been building for decades beneath the surface of apparent stability the shogunate s inability to repel foreign ships or enforce its exclusion policies demonstrated military weakness that contradicted its basic claim to authority as the protector of japan against foreign threats the visible superiority of western technology particularly in naval and military spheres highlighted japan s technological backwardness and raised urgent questions about the country s ability to maintain independence in an increasingly connected and competitive world

in this book social scientists scrutinize the middle decades of the nineteenth century in japan that scrutiny is important and overdue for the period from the 1850s to the 1880s has usually been treated in terms of politics and foreign

relations yet those decades were also of pivotal importance in Japan's institutional modernization as the Japanese entered the world order they experienced a massive introduction of western style organizations sweeping reforms without the class violence or the utopian appeal of revolution created the foundation for a modern society the Meiji Restoration introduced a political transformation but these chapters address the more gradual social transition originally published in 1986 the Princeton Legacy Library uses the latest print on demand technology to again make available previously out of print books from the distinguished backlist of Princeton University Press these editions preserve the original texts of these important books while presenting them in durable paperback and hardcover editions the goal of the Princeton Legacy Library is to vastly increase access to the rich scholarly heritage found in the thousands of books published by Princeton University Press since its founding in 1905

this paperback edition brings together chapters from volume 5 of the Cambridge History of Japan Japan underwent momentous changes during the middle decades of the nineteenth century this book chronicles the hardships of the Tempo era in the 1830s the crisis of values and confidence during the last half century of Tokugawa rule and the political process that finally brought down the Tokugawa regime and ended centuries of warrior rule it goes on to discuss the samurai rebellions against the Meiji Restoration and national movements for constitutional government which indirectly resulted in the Meiji Constitution of 1889 the significance of Japan's Meiji transformation for the rest of the world is the subject of the final chapter in which Professor Akira Iriye discusses Japan's drive to great power status constitutional rule at home imperialism abroad became new goals for early twentieth century Japan

an introduction to the Japanese economy based on a comparative perspective and an analytic approach grounded in mainstream economics it compares Japan with the United States in terms of economic performances institutions and government policies and also scrutinizes the Japanese economy

this volume is a comprehensive collection of critical essays on the taming of the shrew and includes extensive discussions of the play's various printed versions and its theatrical productions Aspinall has included only those essays that offer the most influential and controversial arguments surrounding the play the issues discussed include gender authority female autonomy and unruliness courtship and marriage language and speech and performance and theatricality

this volume presents the reader with thirty one short chapters that capture an

exciting new moment in the study of the meiji restoration the chapters offer a kaleidoscope of approaches and interpretations of the restoration that showcase the strengths of the most recent interpretative trends in history writing on japan while simultaneously offering new research pathways on a scale probably never before seen in the study of the restoration outside japan the short chapters in this volume reveal unique aspects of the transformative event and process not previously explored in previous research they do this in three core ways through selecting and deploying different time frames in their historical analysis by creative experimentation with different spatial units through which to ascertain historical experience and by innovative selection of unique and highly original topics for analysis the volume offers students and teachers of japanese history modern history and east asian studies an important resource for coming to grips with the multifaceted nature of japan s nineteenth century transformation the volume will also have broader appeal to scholars working in fields such as early modern modern world history global history asian modernities gender studies economic history and postcolonial studies

the samurai radicals who overthrew the last shogun in 1868 promised to restore ancient and pure japanese ways foreign observers were terrified that japan would lapse into violent xenophobia but the new meiji government took an opposite course it copied best practices from around the world building a powerful and modern japanese nation with the help of european and american advisors while revering the japanese past the meiji government boldly embraced the foreign and the new what explains this paradox how could japan s 1868 revolution be both modern and traditional both xenophobic and cosmopolitan to stand with the nations of the world explains the paradox of the restoration through the forces of globalization the meiji restoration was part of the global long nineteenth century during which ambitious nation states like japan britain germany and the united states challenged the world s great multi ethnic empires ottoman qing romanov and hapsburg japan s leaders wanted to celebrate japanese uniqueness but they also sought international recognition rather than simply mimic world powers like britain they sought to make japan distinctly japanese in the same way that britain was distinctly british rather than sing god save the king they created a japanese national anthem with lyrics from ancient poetry but western style music the restoration also resonated with japan s ancient past in the 600s and 700s japan was threatened by the tang dynasty a dynasty as powerful as the roman empire in order to resist the tang japanese leaders borrowed tang methods building a centralized japanese state on tang models and learning continental science and technology as in the 1800s japan co opted international norms while insisting on japanese distinctiveness when

confronting globalization in 1800s japan looked back to that ancient globalization of the 600s and 700s the ancient past was therefore not remote or distant but immediate and vital

originally published in 1940 by the institute of pacific relations ipr this classic work by a leading 20th century japanologist has an enduring value japan s emergence as a modern state examines the problems and accomplishments of the meiji period 1868 1912 this edition includes forewords by r gordon robertson a former member of the canadian department of external affairs len edwards the present canadian ambassador to japan and william l holland former secretary general of the ipr as well as a preface and introduction by lawrence woods also included are 10 short essays by leading canadian japanese and american scholars of japanese politics history and economics

the description for this book the culture of the meiji period will be forthcoming

when commodore perry arrived in japan to open the country to western trade in 1853 he found a medieval amalgam of sword bearing samurai castle towns confucian academies peasant villages rice paddies upstart merchants bath houses and kabuki fifteen years later japan was on its way to becoming the only non western nation in the nineteenth century with a modern centralized bureaucratic state and industrial economy this book is a study of the meiji restoration that changed the face of japan prominent historian albert m craig tells its story through that of the domain of choshu whose role in the formation of modern japan was not unlike that of prussia in germany during the fifteen crucial years between 1853 and 1868 whereas previous studies have stressed the role of discontented lower samurai and frustrated rich merchants and peasants in this transition claiming that they provided the motive power behind the political movements of the restoration period this work sharply challenges these earlier interpretations craig instead emphasizes the vitality of traditional values in japan s early reaction to the west and foregrounds the critical contribution of the old society to the formation of the new meiji state choshu in the meiji restoration is a seminal work for scholars and students of japanese history

like the french revolution the meiji restoration transformed a whole society japan was never the same after 1868 the meaning of the events that led to the restoration has therefore profoundly concerned historians but most western accounts probe only the dimension of political leadership largely ignoring the common people in this book george wilson argues that the restoration was a total national event a revolution to redeem the whole realm of japan accomplished by samurai and

commoners alike this study foregrounds the classic contest of agency versus structure focusing on the actors in meiji restoration history rather than the institutions through which they acted wilson argues that the samurai who triumphed sought not only the patriotic goal of defending the realm against the external threat of western imperialism but also the redemptive goal of rescuing the realm from the bakufu s failures the common people no less than the samurai elite wanted to save japan in its time of troubles according to wilson redemption complemented patriotism as a motive for both the elite and the general public contributing a double force to japan s rising nationalism

this first volume in a two part study examines the origins of south korean authoritarianism as personified by the militant political leader for south koreans the twenty years from the early 1960s to late 1970s were the best and worst of times a period of unprecedented economic growth and of political oppression that deepened as prosperity spread in this masterly account carter j eckert finds the roots of south korea s dramatic socioeconomic transformation in the country s long history of militarization a history personified in south korea s paramount leader park chung hee in park chung hee and modern korea eckert reveals how the foundations of park s leadership were established during the period of japanese occupation as a cadet in the manchurian military academy park and his fellow officers absorbed the imperial japanese army s ethos of victory at all costs and absolute obedience to authority when park seized power in 1961 he applied this ethos to the project of korean modernization korean society under park exuded a distinctively martial character eckert shows its hallmarks included the belief that the army should intervene in politics in times of crisis that a central authority should manage the country s economic system and that the state should maintain a strong disciplinary presence in society reserving the right to use violence to maintain order a milestone in the literature of modern east asia bruce cumings author of korea s place in the sun

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