Dogs and Demons - Tales From the Dark Side of Modern Japan

The crises--and failures--of modernization in Japan, as seen up close by a resident expert Japan is a nation in crisis, and the crisis goes far beyond its well-known economic plight. In Dogs and Demons, Alex Kerr chronicles the crisis on a broad scale, from the failure of Japan's banks and pension funds to the decline of its once magnificent modern cinema. The book takes up for the first time in the Western press subjects such as the nation's endangered environment--its seashores lined with concrete, its roads leading to nowhere in the mountains. It describes Japan's "monument frenzy," the destruction of old cities such as Kyoto and construction of drab new cities, and the attendant collapse of the tourist industry. All these unhealthy developments are, Kerr argues, the devastating boomerang effect of an educational and bureaucratic system designed to produce manufactured goods--and little else. A mere upturn in economic growth will not quickly remedy these severe internal problems, which Kerr calls a "failure of modernism." He assails the foreign experts who, often dependent on Japanese government and business support, fail to address these issues. Meanwhile, what of the Japanese people themselves? Kerr, a resident of Japan for thirty-five years, writes of them with humor and passion, for "passion," he says, "is part of the story. Millions of Japanese feel as heartbroken at what is going on as I do. My Japanese friends tell me, 'Please write this--for us.'"

Dogs and Demons - The Fall of Modern Japan

The decades of Western adulation for the Japanese 'economic miracle' failed to notice a key point: that in the pursuit of this miracle the Japanese had turned their country into a degraded, concrete shambles - a wilderness of bad planning, corruption and crowding. Now that the miracle is at an end and Japan seems set to remain in the economic doldrums it must become apparent to everyone that one of the world's greatest cultures has ruined itself almost beyond repair. Alex Kerr's wonderful book conveys vividly and furiously both the dazzling nature of Japanese culture and how the bureaucrats of a country he loves have poisoned and ruined it.

Another Bangkok - Reflections on the City

From the author of Another Kyoto and Lost Japan, a rich, personal exploration of the culture and history of Bangkok, and an essential guide for anyone visiting the city Alex Kerr has spent over thirty years of his life living in Bangkok. As with his bestselling books on Japan, this evocative personal meditation explores the city's secret corners. Here is the huge, traffic-choked metropolis of concrete high-rises, slums and sky trains; but also a place of peace and grace. Looking afresh at everything from ceramics to Thai dance, flower patterns to old houses, Kerr reveals one of Asia's most kaleidoscopically complex cities. Another Bangkok will delight both those who think they know the city well and those visiting for the first time.

Hirohito And The Making Of Modern Japan
Winner of the Pulitzer Prize In this groundbreaking biography of the Japanese emperor Hirohito, Herbert P. Bix offers the first complete, unvarnished look at the enigmatic leader whose sixty-three-year reign ushered Japan into the modern world. Never before has the full life of this controversial figure been revealed with such clarity and vividness. Bix shows what it was like to be trained from birth for a lone position at the apex of the nation's political hierarchy and as a revered symbol of divine status. Influenced by an unusual combination of the Japanese imperial tradition and a modern scientific worldview, the young emperor gradually evolves into his preeminent role, aligning himself with the growing ultranationalist movement, perpetuating a cult of religious emperor worship, resisting attempts to curb his power, and all the while burnishing his image as a reluctant, passive monarch. Here we see Hirohito as he truly was: a man of strong will and real authority. Supported by a vast array of previously untapped primary documents, Hirohito and the Making of Modern Japan is perhaps most illuminating in lifting the veil on the mythology surrounding the emperor's impact on the world stage. Focusing closely on Hirohito's interactions with his advisers and successive Japanese governments, Bix sheds new light on the causes of the China War in 1937 and the start of the Asia-Pacific War in 1941. And while conventional wisdom has had it that the nation's increasing foreign aggression was driven and maintained not by the emperor but by an elite group of Japanese militarists, the reality, as witnessed here, is quite different. Bix documents in detail the strong, decisive role Hirohito played in wartime operations, from the takeover of Manchuria in 1931 through the attack on Pearl Harbor and ultimately the fateful decision in 1945 to accede to an unconditional surrender. In fact, the emperor stubbornly prolonged the war effort and then used the horrifying bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, together with the Soviet entrance into the war, as his exit strategy from a no-win situation. From the moment of capitulation, we see how American and Japanese leaders moved to justify the retention of Hirohito as emperor by whitewashing his wartime role and reshaping the historical consciousness of the Japanese people. The key to this strategy was Hirohito's alliance with General MacArthur, who helped him maintain his stature and shed his militaristic image, while MacArthur used the emperor as a figurehead to assist him in converting Japan into a peaceful nation. Their partnership ensured that the emperor's image would loom large over the postwar years and later decades, as Japan began to make its way in the modern age and struggled -- as it still does -- to come to terms with its past. Until the very end of a career that embodied the conflicting aims of Japan's development as a nation, Hirohito remained preoccupied with politics and with his place in history. Hirohito and the Making of Modern Japan provides the definitive account of his rich life and legacy. Meticulously researched and utterly engaging, this book is proof that the history of twentieth-century Japan cannot be understood apart from the life of its most remarkable and enduring leader.

**Stray Dog of Anime - The Films of Mamoru Oshii**

Upon its US release in the mid 1990s, Ghost in the Shell, directed by Mamoru Oshii, quickly became one of the most popular Japanese animated films in the country. Despite this, Oshii is known as a maverick within anime: a self-proclaimed 'stray dog'. This is the first book to take an in-depth look at his major films, from Urusei Yatsura to Avalon.

**Another Kyoto**
Another Kyoto is an insider's meditation on the hidden wonders of Japan's most enigmatic city. Drawing on decades living in Kyoto, and on lore gleaned from artists, Zen monks and Shinto priests, Alex Kerr illuminates the simplest things - a temple gate, a wall, a sliding door - in a new way. 'A rich book of intimate proportions ... In Kyoto, facts and meaning are often hidden in plain sight. Kerr's gift is to make us stop and cast our eyes upward to a temple plaque, or to squint into the gloom of an abbot's chamber' Japan Times 'Kerr and Sokol have performed a minor miracle by presenting that which is present in Kyoto as that which we have yet to see. I know that I will never pass a wall, or tread a floor, or sit on tatami the same way again' Kyoto Journal

Lost Japan

Once Japan was a place of primeval forest and pristine mountains. In recent decades, this ancient world has almost been destroyed. Alex Kerr's evocative, prize-winning Lost Japan ranges over Kabuki theatre, tea ceremonies, art, landscape, financial bubbles and his own childhood in Japan to explore a vanishing culture. 'Alex Kerr's book carries a powerful message applicable to all cultures. He is on a life-long quest for beauty.' Issey Miyake 'This deeply personal witness to Japan's wilful loss of its traditional culture is at the same time an immensely valuable evaluation of just what that culture was.' Donald Richie, author of The Japanese Film 'Alex Kerr loves Japan as much as anyone, but he knows more about it than most.' Stephen Hesse, Japan Times

Politics in Pacific Asia - An Introduction

This lively and accessible new edition provides a uniquely broad-ranging introduction to the governance and politics of Pacific Asia. Thematically structured around the key institutions and issues, it is genuinely comparative in its approach to the whole region. A range of representative countries (China, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, Vietnam and the Philippines) are used as key case examples throughout and each of them is subject to a detailed full-page country profile. Key features include: • 'Pacific Asia in Context' – comparisons with other parts of the world • 'Country Profiles' – essential facts on Pacific Asian countries • Boxed, on-page definitions for key terms • Annotated lists of further reading for each chapter • Study questions for each chapter This diverse region is a fascinating area for study. Politics in Pacific Asia provides a framework to form a coherent understanding of the region's politics; it balances persistent patterns with the latest developments and general characteristics with the differing cultures, histories and institutions of individual countries.

The Sushi Economy - Globalization and the Making of a Modern Delicacy

The highly acclaimed exploration of sushi's surprising history, global business, and international allure One generation ago, sushi's narrow reach ensured that sports fishermen who caught tuna in most of parts of the world sold the meat for pennies as cat food. Today, the fatty cuts of tuna known as toro are among the planet's most coveted luxury foods, worth hundreds of dollars a pound and capable of losing value more quickly than any other product on earth. So how did one of the world's most popular foods go from being practically unknown in the United States to being served in towns all across America, and in such a short span of time? A riveting
combination of culinary biography, behind-the-scenes restaurant detail, and a unique exploration of globalization’s dynamics, the book traces sushi’s journey from Japanese street snack to global delicacy. After traversing the pages of The Sushi Economy, you’ll never see the food on your plate—or the world around you—quite the same way again.

**United States Cultural Heritage Protection**

One of the untold stories of the American military occupation of Japan, from 1945 to 1952, is that of efforts by the Supreme Commander for the Allied Power's (SCAP) Arts and Monuments Division for the preservation of Japan's cultural heritage. While the role of Allies after WWII in salvaging the cultural heritage of Europe has recently become better known, not much is written of the extraordinary vision, planning and endeavors by the curators and art specialists embedded in the US military and later based in Tokyo, and their peers and political masters back in Washington D.C. -all of whom ensured that defeated Japan's cultural heritage was protected in the chaos and misery of post-war years.

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### Japan's Network Economy