

Edwin O. Reischauer and the American Discovery of Japan

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(Paula Gutkowski)

EDWIN O. REISCHAUER AND THE AMERICAN DISCOVERY OF JAPAN



Columbia Univ. Press. 1 Cloth(s), 2010. hard. Book Condition: New. In 1961, President Kennedy named Edwin Reischauer the U.S. Ambassador to Japan. Already deeply familiar with the country, Reischauer hoped to establish a more equal partnership with Japan, which had long been maligned in the American imagination. Reischauer pushed his fellow citizens to abandon caricature and stereotype and recognize Japan as a peace-loving democracy. Though his efforts were often condemned for being "too soft," the immensity of his influence (and the truth of his arguments) can be felt today. Having worked as Reischauer's special assistant in Tokyo, George Packard writes a superb biography of this rare and charismatic man who reset the balance between two powerful nations and helped steer Japan toward democracy. Reischauer's scholarship supplied the foundations for future East Asian disciplines, and his prescient research foretold America's missteps with China and involvement in Vietnam. At the time of his death in 1990, Reischauer warned the U.S. against adopting an attitude toward Asia that was too narrow and self-centered. India, Pakistan, and North Korea are now nuclear powers, and Reischauer's political brilliance has become more necessary and trenchant than ever."A lively account, written with panache, that excels in describing Reischauer's foreign policy ideas and his conflicted views of the Vietnam War."Journal of Asian Studies"This is more than a well-researched and highly entertaining account of legendary scholar and diplomat Edwin O. Reischauer. It is also a story of modern Japan and the evolution of the U.S. Japan relationship. From his own vast intellectual, diplomatic, and media experience and personal friendship with Reischauer, George R. Packard provides unusually rich context and deep analytical insight into a fascinating man and the story of two great nations. I have no doubt this will stand as the definitive treatment of Reischauer's life and an enormous...

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