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Edward J. Drea

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JAPAN'S IMPERIAL ARMY

Its Rise and Fall, 1853–1945

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Edward J. Drea : Japan's Imperial Army: Its Rise and Fall (Modern War Studies (Paperback)) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Japan's Imperial Army: Its Rise and Fall (Modern War Studies (Paperback)):

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Everything you want to know about the Japanese Imperial Army

(IJA)By Carrosio RobertoI could begin this review saying that reading this book you will be able to understand why Japan has been able to win the first Sino-Japanese War (1894-95) and the Russo - Japanese War (1904-05) and to lose WWII, but this book gives you much more , indeed it gives the IJA's most complete history that you can possibly find.The author explains how happened the transition from the samurai's time to the imperial army, he gives you a complete account of all the rebellions and the attempted coups happened in the Japan's history since 1853.At the same time the author follows the IJA's technological and tactical evolutions.He explains how Japan got involved in the first Sino-Japanese War and how he won it, then he follows the birth and the development of the causes of the Russian-Japanese War and he shows all the problems and the failures met by the IJA before to effectively win this conflict.Then coming near to WWII, he is able to show how the IJA and the IJN (Imperial Japanese Navy) were not able to agree which would have been to be considered the next Japan's "true" enemy, indeed the IJA was thinking about Soviet Union, and the IJN was thinking about the USA, and because of the fact that in Japan it had never existed a political or military control about both IJA and IJN, this question has never been solved , bringing to the absurd situation that both of them wanted an huge budget to fight, each, their own "true" enemy.So, Japan has been able to unify, even before the WWII's beginning in Europe, two groups very different groups of nations, as Soviet Union and USA and the British Empire, in an undeclared coalition against itself, when Japan began the long war against China (1931-1945).The book is full of first hand accounts, because of the author's access to a lot of diaries; the maps are detailed and relevant.The author brings to the discovery of an entire world, with its traditions, legends and myths.Very, very interesting and charming.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. The japanese army's destruction lay within itself.By CustomerThis very informative book, follows parallel paths to tell its story. It not only traces the army's formative years, but at the same time, traces the seeds of its demise. The army's creation, mirrors the history of Japan itself. The rigidity of the culture, the dangerous samurai class, the rigid caste system in force. In my opinion these factors and probably many more contributed to the modern Japanese army's destruction. When faced with a nation like America, where ideas were given a chance to be tried out. Where new methods of warfare were embraced, after some trials, the Japanese system utterly failed to keep up. As I said, its demise lay within itself and the Japanese nation. JRV7 of 8 people found the following review helpful. Scratching A Very Old ItchBy HighlanderLet me take a slightly different approach to this review. I have long pondered how the Japanese Army and the Japanese nation got themselves into a do or die war with the United States. Folly, ignorance, arrogance, internal issues what caused Japan to decide to duke it out with the most powerful economic force on earth?Drea is able to address my curiosity, scratching a long irritating itch.Drea is able to condense and summarize the historical and cultural currents that began with the Meiji Restoration and which ended with Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Yet he is still able to develop the more complex issues that resulted in the creation of an army whose reputation exceeded its capability and whose accomplishments were as much the result of debilitating Western unpreparedness as they were of military prowess.Drea shows us a Japanese military and political establishment that was unable to coordinate and cooperate a coherent strategy -- an establishment that was shackled by an economy without the resources to create and sustain a truly modern Army. He traces the creation of a myth in order to link an ancient and idealized samurai history to a 20th century army. He is able to reveal how educated and motivated military professionals blinded themselves to the reality of their material inferiority and confused overcommitment. And who actually considered simultaneous victorious wars with the US, Russia, and China.Command and control, chains of authority, strategic and operational planning are all examined in light of attempts to model the Army to compare with contemporary Western examples -- while unable to shed itself of its samurai antecedents and the convoluted nature of the Meiji (and later) state.The equipment, tactics, structure, and operations of the Japanese Army are traced and connected to wider economic and political issues within the Japanese state. The experiences of the Army in its conflicts outside Japan -- wars with China and Russia and several interventions -- are related to the further development of the Army. Lessons learned and, more importantly, lessons ignored contributed to an Army that optimized for conflict with poor Chinese forces but quite unsuited for battle with the United States.Although not a major theme, the Army is contrasted with the Imperial Navy and additional insight is provided into the Army itself. In addition, the poisonous results of an Army independent of the civil government are evaluated.Relatively short for such a complex ambition, this book is as fine a broad military history as I have ever read.

Society for Military History Distinguished Book AwardPopular impressions of the imperial Japanese army still promote images of suicidal banzai charges and fanatical leaders blindly devoted to their emperor. Edward Drea looks well past those stereotypes to unfold the more complex story of how that army came to power and extended its influence at home and abroad to become one of the world's dominant fighting forces.This first comprehensive English-language history of the Japanese army traces its origins, evolution, and impact as an engine of the country's regional and global ambitions and as a catalyst for the militarization of the Japanese homeland from mid-nineteenth-century incursions through the end of World War II. Demonstrating his mastery of Japanese-language sources, Drea explains how the Japanese style of warfare, burnished by samurai legends, shaped the army, narrowed its options, influenced its decisions, and made it the institution that conquered most of Asia. He also tells how the army's intellectual foundations

shifted as it reinvented itself to fulfill the changing imperatives of Japanese society—and how the army in turn decisively shaped the nation's political, social, cultural, and strategic course. Drea recounts how Japan devoted an inordinate amount of its treasury toward modernizing, professionalizing, and training its army—which grew larger, more powerful, and politically more influential with each passing decade. Along the way, it produced an efficient military schooling system, a well-organized active duty and reserve force, a professional officer corps that thought in terms of regional threat, and well-trained soldiers armed with appropriate weapons. Encompassing doctrine, strategy, weaponry, and civil-military relations, Drea's expert study also captures the dominant personalities who shaped the imperial army, from Yamagata Aritomo, an incisive geopolitical strategist, to Anami Korechika, who exhorted the troops to fight to the death during the final days of World War II. Summing up, Drea also suggests that an army that places itself above its nation's interests is doomed to failure.

"Far exceeds the expectations for 'reference works' in the sophistication of its historical argumentation. . . . For anyone considering the historiography of Japan's road to war in the 1930s, Drea's work will become required reading."—Historian "An impressive and important piece of scholarship that addresses the first modern U.S. enemy to institutionalize suicide tactics as a mechanism to exhaust the will of the American people and to obtain a less-severe peace. . . . Highly recommended for command and staff students, undergraduate survey courses on modern Japan, and anyone interested in the pathology of militarism and how it can derail national policymaking."—Military "This is the perfect meeting of author and subject: Edward J. Drea, the preeminent American authority on the Japanese Imperial Army, provides what is by far the most incisive English-language examination of that force. Drawing upon decades of his own work and recent Japanese scholarship, he dissects the tortured history of an institution that evolved from servant to master of an emerging modern Japan. . . . What Drea delivers is an intricate institutional history of clashing visions embodied by an array of diverse personalities. . . . In short, Drea's rich book is not just a brilliant piece of military history; it is of enduring value for understanding Japan's modern history."—World War II "A magisterial inside history of the army. Edward Drea explains in language easily accessible to scholars, students, or general readers, and always maintaining a sure balance between detail and analysis, the army's institutions, personalities, policies, strategy and tactics, its values in peace and its performance in battle, its relation to the emperor and the public, the education and training of its officers, as well as the conscription system and life in the barracks. . . . Anyone wishing to understand the Japanese army, or simply with an interest in following the entire life course of a nation's army, should read this outstanding (and handsomely produced) book: I have seen nothing to rival it for authority, comprehensiveness, and readability, either in English or Japanese."—Journal of Military History "This publication is meaningful as the first English-language source to analyze [many topics] from a Western viewpoint. Highly recommended."—Choice "A persuasive, well balanced, and readable history that makes an important contribution to understanding not only prewar and wartime Japanese militarism but also its residues since the war."—Akira Iriye, author of *Power and Culture: The Japanese-American War, 1941–1945* "A sweeping survey, written in a forceful yet simple style, that will become the standard reference work in English for years to come."—Theodore F. Cook, coauthor of *Japan at War: An Oral History* "Drea deserves his place as the chronicler and analyst of one of the most feared military forces of modern times."—Mark R. Peattie, author of *Sunburst: The Rise of Japanese Naval Air Power* "An impressive synthesis of the best Japanese and western scholarship on the Imperial Army over the past half century, Drea's survey, from the army's controversial origins to its gripping demise, will be indispensable to students of modern militaries and Imperial Japan alike."—Michael A. Barnhart, author of *Japan Prepares for Total War: The Search for Economic Security, 1919–1941* "Drea's fluency in Japanese, enabling him to tap original Japanese-language sources to a far greater extent than any other Western writer on the subject, makes this impressive book a unique work of lasting value."—Stanley L. Falk, former Chief Historian, U.S. Air Force, and author of *Bataan: The March of Death* "Destined to be the standard volume on the history of the Imperial Japanese army for generations of scholars and students to come."—Roger Jeans, author of *Democracy and Socialism in Republican China* About the Author Edward J. Drea, recipient of the Society for Military History's Samuel Eliot Morison Award for lifetime achievement, is the author of *MacArthur's ULTRA: Codebreaking and the War against Japan* and *In the Service of the Emperor: Essays on the Japanese Imperial Army*.