



# Japan Transformed: Political Change and Economic Restructuring

*Frances McCall Rosenbluth, Michael F. Thies*

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With little domestic fanfare and even less attention internationally, Japan has been reinventing itself since the 1990s, dramatically changing its political economy, from one managed by regulations to one with a neoliberal orientation. Rebuilding from the economic misfortunes of its recent past, the country retains a formidable economy and its political system is healthier than at any time in its history. *Japan Transformed* explores the historical, political, and economic forces that led to the country's recent evolution, and looks at the consequences for Japan's citizens and global neighbors.

The book examines Japanese history, illustrating the country's multiple transformations over the centuries, and then focuses on the critical and inexorable advance of economic globalization. It describes how global economic integration and urbanization destabilized Japan's postwar policy coalition, undercut the ruling Liberal Democratic Party's ability to buy votes, and paved the way for new electoral rules that emphasized competing visions of the public good. In contrast to the previous system that pitted candidates from the same party against each other, the new rules tether policymaking to the vast swath of voters in the middle of the political spectrum. Regardless of ruling party, Japan's politics, economics, and foreign policy are on a neoliberal path.

*Japan Transformed* combines broad context and comparative analysis to provide an accurate understanding of Japan's past, present, and future.

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