



# Japan's Whaling: The Politics of Culture in Historical Perspective (Japanese Society Series)

By *Hiroyuki Watanabe*

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Is Japanese whaling based on national culture and tradition? Sociologist Hiroyuki Watanabe challenges this question by examining the history of whaling in modern Japan and looking at the wide range of arguments within the country over the decades. The book provides a detailed account of anti-whaling disturbances organized by fishermen in the early 20th century, presents successful attempts to designate whales as protected species in pre-war years, and shows regional differences in whale-meat eating practices. Through a sober and critical analysis of the 'cultural' defense of Japan's whaling industry, the book reveals that whaling has often been linked with Japanese expansionist policies overseas. Watanabe also explores the relations between human beings and whales and offers practical proposals.

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