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Varley/Japanese Culture

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Preface

MORE THAN A QUARTER of a century has passed since the publication of *Japanese Culture*. With each edition, it has expanded in size. Thus, whereas the first edition ended with World War II, the second edition included a postwar chapter (which remains the book's longest chapter). When the University of Hawai'i Press published the third edition in 1984, it reset the entire text and allowed me to add material throughout. Once again, in this fourth edition, the text has been reset and I have been able to add extensive new material on subjects such as samurai values, Zen Buddhism, the tea ceremony (*chanoyu*), Confucianism in the Tokugawa period, the story of the forty-seven *rōnin*, Mito scholarship in the early nineteenth century, and mass culture and the comics in the present age.

As stated in the preface to the first edition, *Japanese Culture* is intended as a survey, for the general reader, of Japanese culture, including religion, thought, the visual arts, literature, the theatre, the cinema, and those special arts, such as the tea ceremony and landscape gardening, that have been uniquely cherished in Japan. I have in particular sought to relate cultural developments to political, social, and institutional trends without burdening the text with an excess of the names, dates, and other details of those trends.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my editor at the University of Hawai'i Press, Patricia Crosby, who encouraged me to undertake the revision and expansion of *Japanese Culture* for this fourth edition and who has supported and assisted me in various projects for the press over the years.

Honolulu
February 1999

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