

Giving Up the Gun

Noel Perrin

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Japan's Reversion to the Sword, 1543-1879



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著者:Noel Perrin

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Was there ever a time when a civilization, technically sophisticated, and in full possession of its senses, reverted in an earlier, less advanced technology? You bet - Japan, 1543-1879. During this period Japan effectively prohibited all manufacture of

firearms and gunpowder, and isolated itself from the rest of the world with a blockade that remained successful until Commodore Perry's celebrated "opening of Japan" in 1854. An altogether fascinating book - because Perrin is a consistently good storyteller, because even his footnotes are a delight to read, and because this is the story that really has few parallels in modern history.

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