Post-WWII democratic Japan pursued a stable path, recovered, and became a leading world economy and a major Asian power. Bearing that in mind, this book goes back to the country’s occupation days, when it was under the pressure of contradicting American directives, and poses a rarely asked question: what were Japan’s own aspirations for its postwar future? It answers this query through the broadened visions – regarding such matters as regime, socio-economic structure, international status, and security – of Japan’s main political parties, in the government and the opposition: The Liberal party, the Progressive/Democratic party, Japan Socialist party, and the Japanese Communist party, all of which were structured on prewar pro-democratic legacies. It relies on a “dynamic analysis approach” that looks at the whole period of occupied Japan, and a comprehensive search of contemporaneous documents, including an extensive use of parliamentary speeches. The book shows the strong determination of the Japanese to influence their own fate, presenting a variety of unique, and often conflicting, visions that, whether accepting American views or not, had struggled for a “Japanese Japan,” that strives for democracy and a peaceful approach. We suggest that this conclusion contributes to an understanding of Japan’s postwar path, and even to processes in other “new democracies” outside the “classic West.”