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Sommario/riassunto

American culture has been one of the most controversial exports of the United States: greeted with enthusiasm by some, with hostility by others. Yet, few societies escape its influence. However, not all changes should be interpreted simply as "Americanization." The shaping of the postwar world has been much more complex than this term implies as is shown in this volume that explores the links between Americanization and modernity in Western Europe and Japan. In considering the impact of products and images ranging from movies and music to fashion and architecture, a multi-disciplinary group of contributors asks how American culture has been employed internationally in the articulation of postwar identities - be they national or subnational, socially sanctioned or socially transgressive. Their essays on France, Italy, Germany and Japan move beyond the simple paradigms of colonization and democratic modernization, yet retain a sensitivity to the asymmetries in the postwar power relationships between these countries and the United States. An extensive introduction historically locates changing interpretations of American influences abroad and suggests the problems and promises of "Americanization" as an analytical tool. Its comparative focus and interdisciplinary scope will appeal to a wide range of students and scholars of cold war and post-cold war history.