

Fall 2013

History 159
EAS 131
Japan from Earliest Times to 1868

MWF 1:30-2:20
King 337

Professor Emer O'Dwyer
Rice 308, Tel. 5-6708

This course examines the origins of Japanese civilization and surveys the classical, medieval, and early modern periods. From the emergence of a court-centered state through the rise and fall of a warrior-dominated society, Japan's premodern history is explored through a focus on political, social, cultural, and intellectual developments. Early interactions with Asia and the West will be considered as a means of questioning the "opening" of Japan in the mid-nineteenth century. Enrollment Limit: 40.

Students are encouraged to keep in mind the following goals for maximizing learning throughout the semester:

- Looking for patterns and themes in history. Students are encouraged to draw connections between major events and ideas in Japan's history and those encountered in other history courses.
- Thinking about how historians practice their craft. In particular, students will learn to read and interpret a variety of primary sources as a way of understanding the creation of multiple perspectives on the past.
- Understanding how history-writing is shaped by contemporary concerns.
- Improving expository writing about historical events; learning to posit an argument and develop it in a clear and logical progression.
- Polishing the verbal articulation of ideas before an audience of one's peers.

Required texts: Required texts have been ordered in paperback at the Oberlin Bookstore (basement) as well as placed on reserve at Mudd Library.

1. Mason and Caiger. *A History of Japan*. Rutland: Tuttle, revised edition, 1997.
2. Katsu Kokichi. *Musui's Story: The Autobiography of a Tokugawa Samurai*. Translated by Teruko Craig. Phoenix: University of Arizona Press, 1988.
3. *Sources of Japanese Tradition*, Volume 1. *From Earliest Times to 1600*. Eds., De Bary, Keene, Tanabe & Varley. Columbia University Press, second edition. 2001.

Recommended text:

Gordon, Andrew. *A Modern History of Japan: From Tokugawa Times to the Present*. Third Edition. Oxford: Oxford University, 2013.

All other readings are available on Blackboard.

ASSESSMENT:

The course grade will be based on the following:

- Mid-term (hour) exam: 20%
- Short papers: 20% each
- Final exam: 25%
- Attendance/Participation: 15%

All grading is based on the following scale: A+ 100-97; A 96-93; A- 92-90; B+ 89-87; B 86-83; B- 82-80; C+ 79-77; C 76-73; C- 72-70; D 69-65. A grade below 65 is a failing grade.

Note: Failure to submit any single written assignment for the class will result in a failing final grade and no credit will be granted.

EXPECTATIONS:

- Lectures are an integral part of the course, and attendance is mandatory. Absences will be recorded. (In the case of personal or family emergency, students should contact the instructor to make arrangements for completing missed work.) Additionally, students are expected to be ready to begin promptly at 1:30pm for each class meeting.
- Students are expected to come well-prepared for Friday discussion sections by which time all readings *must* be completed. (It is advised that students complete all *non*-primary document readings by the Monday class meeting each week.)
 - Always bring assigned readings to class.
 - Be responsible for both your own and your fellow students' learning. Together, you can ensure that all class time is spent in a productive discussion of ideas—an endeavor dependent on the *timely and thorough completion of all readings by all*.
- Honor Code: Students are expected to adhere to the Oberlin Honor Code on all written assignments, concluding each with the handwritten pledge: *"I affirm that I have adhered to the Honor Code on this assignment."* Infractions of the Honor Code will be referred to the College Honor Committee. Questions regarding the citation of sources and proper attribution of information should be directed to the instructor. For more information on the Oberlin Honor Code, please refer to the "Student Policies" section of the Oberlin College website.

ASSIGNMENTS:

Exams: The **Midterm Examination**, covering the lectures and all assigned readings to date will be given in class on **Monday, Oct. 7**. The **Final Examination** is scheduled for **Thursday, December 19, 7-9pm**.

Papers: Students will write two essays (1,400 words each), due in class on **Friday, Nov. 8**, and **Monday, Dec. 9**.

Reading Assignments: Students are asked to complete the assigned reading by Monday for each week listed (except for week 1 when the reading must be completed by Friday.) There are two basic types of readings in the course. The first are those from Mason and Caiger, *A History of Japan*. These readings are useful for reinforcing the chronological narrative presented in lecture. The second are literary and other primary source texts. Both types of readings require careful attention to detail and presentation, though strategies for reading both differ. Discussions of reading strategies for all types of readings will be discussed in the first weeks of class.

Note: if it appears that even a small minority of students are not completing weekly reading assignments in preparation for the Friday discussion period, the instructor reserves the right to give pop quizzes.

Discussion Board: Each week, students will be required to post one reading question on the online discussion board in Blackboard by **Thursday, 10pm**. Good reading questions are not quizzes on factual content (In what year did Murasaki Shikibu write *The Tale of Genji*?). Rather, they stimulate ways of thinking about processes, patterns and trends in the historical record, and getting a feel for lived experience (What can we learn about the values and belief systems of the Heian aristocracy from the *Yūgao* chapter of *Genji*?). Good questions have multiple answers and help readers frame a larger context for any given reading.

Short Assignments: Students will complete two writing assignments of 500 words each. The first will analyze a primary document and be due in-class on **Monday, Sept. 24**. The second will focus on an object from visual culture and be due on **Monday, Nov. 26**. Details to be explained in class.

Assignments are due on (or before) the due date noted in the syllabus. Only one extension will be granted per semester and must be requested during office hours **at least 2 days before the due date of the paper**. (Note: Requests for extensions may not be granted in all cases.) Late assignments will be reduced by one grade step per day. A paper due on Friday, November 8 which is turned in on Saturday, November 9, for example, will get a “B-” rather than the “B” it merited. A “B” paper turned in on Monday, November 11 will earn a “C+”, etc.

In-Class Contributions: In certain weeks, students will be asked to present a map or image related to the week’s reading, to focus in groups on specific passages from a given reading, and/or to perform a short writing exercise in class. All such exercises will presume timely completion of that week’s readings, so come prepared!

CULTURAL PROGRAMMING

Film Screenings: Two films will be shown during the course of the semester in Wilder 101. The first, “*Ran*” by Director Kurosawa Akira will be screened on **Tuesday, October 1 at 7pm**. The second film, “*Twilight Samurai*” (*Tasogare Seibei*) by Director Yamada Yōji will be screened on **Tuesday, December 3 at 7pm**. Films will be discussed during lecture in conjunction with the week’s readings.

Thinking about History with Art: Examination of works of art from Oberlin's Allen Memorial Art Museum will form an integral part of the course curriculum. Students will visit the museum during class hours in weeks three, six and nine for discussion of the week's themes in the context of material objects. Students will also be given an opportunity to write one of the two required papers on a topic related to objects from the museum's collection.

OTHER COURSE POLICIES/INFO:

Writing Assistance: Students are encouraged to use the Drop-In Writing Center located in Mudd 101A (the Academic Commons) as well as other services offered by Oberlin's Writing Associates Program.

Accommodations for Disabilities: Students requiring accommodation for a disability must present a note from Jane Boomer (Director, Office of Disability Services, Peters Hall G-27) by **Wed. Sept. 11**. The note should include a detailed description of the type of accommodation required.

Office Hours: Students are encouraged to come see the instructor with questions about any aspect of the course:

Wed. 2:30 - 4pm and Thurs. 2:45 – 4:15pm
Rice Hall, Room 308

LECTURE SCHEDULE:

I. PRE-MODERN TRADITIONS

Week 1: Origins

- Sept. 4 (W) Introduction and Maps
Sept. 6 (F) Earliest Times: 11,000 to 300 B.C.E.
Peopling the Archipelago

Readings:

Mason & Caiger, *A History of Japan*, pp. 19-24.
Hall, John W., *Japan from Prehistory to Modern Times*, 1-23.

Primary documents: *Sources of Japanese Tradition (SJT)*

“History of the Kingdom of Wei,” pp. 6-8.

Week 2: The Early Japanese State

- Sept. 9 (M) Conquering the Islands: The Rise of the Yamato Kings
Sept. 11* (W) The Asuka Enlightenment
Sept. 13 (F) Discussion

Readings:

Mason & Caiger, pp. 25-63.

Primary documents: *SJT*

- “The Earliest Japanese Chronicles,” pp. 13-16.
“Legends concerning Shintō Deities,” pp. 19-23.
“Descent of the Divine Grandson with the Three Imperial Regalia,” pp. 27-28.
“The Reign of Suiko and Rule of Shōtoku,” pp. 46-54.
“The Reform Era;” “Inauguration of the Great Reform Era,” pp. 75-84.

**On Wednesday, Sept. 11, there will be a map quiz at the beginning of class.*

Week 3: The Classical Age

- Sept. 16 (M) Courtier Rulership in the Heian Period (794-1185)
Sept. 18 (W) Heian Refinements and Religions
Sept. 20 (F) **Meet at Allen Memorial Art Museum.** *The Tale of Genji* and the “Rule of Taste”

Reading:

Mason & Caiger, pp. 64-117.

Primary documents: *SJT*

“Saichō: Vow of Uninterrupted Study of the Lotus Sutra,” p. 140.

“Saichō: Explaining the Precepts,” pp. 141-42.
“Murasaki Shikibu: On the Art of Fiction,” pp. 201-03.

[Blackboard]:

Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji* [trans. Edward Seidensticker, 1976]: “The Paulownia Court,” 1-17.

Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji* [trans. Helen Craig McCullough, 1994]: “Yūgao,” 59-83.

Week 4: The Rise of the Warrior Class

Sept. 23* (M) The Rise of the Warrior Class

Sept. 25 (W) The Medieval Bakufu: Kamakura and Ashikaga

Sept. 27 (F) Civil War

Reading:

Mason & Caiger, pp. 121-43.

Primary documents: *SJT*

“The Tale of Heiji,” “Tale of the Heike,” pp. 274-77.

“The Jōei Code,” pp. 415-17.

“The Kenmu Code,” pp. 418-20.

[Blackboard]:

“Kusunoki Masashige: A Guerilla of Unflinching Loyalty” in Hiroaki Satō, *Legends of the Samurai* (1995): 157-88.

**Visual Culture Assignment due in class on Monday, Sept. 23.*

Week 5: Medieval Cultures

*Sept. 30 (M) Everyday Life in Medieval Japan

Oct. 2 (W) Religion

Oct. 4 (F) The Culture of War and the Southern Barbarians

Reading:

Mason & Caiger, pp. 144-70.

Primary documents: *SJT*

“Genshin: The Essentials of Salvation,” pp. 217-222;

“Eisai: Propagation of Zen for the Protection of the State,” pp. 311-17;

“Dōgen: How to Practice Buddhism,” pp. 319-28.

“Keisei: A Companion in Solitude,” pp. 404-06.

“Mujū Ichien: Mirror for Women,” pp. 406-12.

**Reminder: Screening of “Ran” by Kurosawa Akira at 7pm on Tuesday, Oct. 1.*

Week 6: Medieval Period in the Arts

- Oct. 7 (M) **In-Class Midterm**
Oct. 9 (W) Section #1: Allen Art Museum Visit*
Oct. 11 (F) Section #2: Allen Art Museum Visit*

Important: AMAM Museum Visit Information:

*Students should convene *at the museum* at 1:30pm on their scheduled day.

Readings:

Mason & Caiger, pp. 144-57.

Mason, Penelope. *History of Japanese Art*, pp. 147-48; 174-201; 211-12.

Week 7: Towards Unification

- Oct. 14 (M) The Mature Daimyo
Oct. 16 (W) The Unifiers
Oct. 18 (F) Discussion

Reading:

Mason & Caiger, pp. 173-89.

Primary documents: *SJT*:

“The Yūki House Code,” pp. 423-25.

“Oda Nobunaga: The Humiliation of the Shogun,” “The Assault on Mt. Hiei and the Blessings of Nobunaga,” pp. 441-47.

“The Free Market of Azuchi,” pp. 455-57.

“Toyotomi Hideyoshi: Domestic Policies,” “The Korean War: Letter to the King of Korea,” “Korea Day by Day,” pp. 458-72.

Fall Recess

II. EARLY MODERN JAPAN

Week 8: The Pax Tokugawa

- Oct. 28 (M) Political Unification
Oct. 30 (W) The Tokugawa Polity
Nov. 1 (F) The Shoguns

Readings:

Gordon, *A Modern History of Japan (MHJ)*, preface, intro, and Chapter 1, pp. xi-19.

Pitelka, Morgan. "The Early Modern Warrior." *Early Modern Japan*, Vol. 16 (2008): 43-55.

Primary documents: *SJT*, Vol. 2 [**Blackboard**]:

"Code for the Warrior Households," pp. 12-4;

"Code for the Imperial Court and Court Nobility," pp. 14-8.

"Anecdotes concerning Yamazaki Ansai," pp. 82-3.

"The Way of the Warrior II," (Akō Vendetta) pp. 353-64.

Ihara Saikaku, "The Eternal Storehouse of Japan," [*Nippon Eitaigura*] (1688) in Donald Keene, ed. *Anthology of Japanese Literature* (1955): 357-62.

Week 9: Thinking about Tokugawa-era Women with Art

Nov. 4 (M) Section #1: Allen Art Museum Visit

Nov. 6 (W) Section #2: Allen Art Museum Visit

Nov. 8 (F) Paper #1 Due

Readings:

Gordon, *MHJ*, pp. 20-33.

Walthall, Anne. "The Life Cycle of Farm Women in Tokugawa Japan," in Gail Lee Bernstein, *Recreating Japanese Women, 1600-1945*, pp. 42-70.

Primary documents:

"The Greater Learning for Women," [trans. of *Onna daigaku*, ca. 1672], in Basil Hall Chamberlain, *Things Japanese* (1891 edition): 454-63.

Yamakawa Kikue, *Women of the Mito Domain: Recollections of Samurai Family Life*, pp. 86-115.

Week 10: Protests and Uprisings

Nov. 11 (M) Revolt!

Nov. 13 (W) Case Studies

Nov. 15 (F) "A Tale of a Dream from the Fox Woman Plain"

Readings:

Vlastos, Stephen. "Introduction," "New Causes of Conflict," *Peasant Protests and Uprisings in Tokugawa Japan*, pp. 1-20; 73-91.

Walthall, Ann. "Edo Riots" in McClain, et al. *Edo and Paris*, pp. 407-28.

Primary document:

"A Tale of a Dream from the Fox Woman Plain." [Trans. Anne Walthall] in *Peasant Uprisings in Japan*, pp. 176-92.

Week 11: A Closed Country? Foreign Relations in Tokugawa Japan

Nov. 18 (M) “*Sakoku*”
Nov. 20 (W) The Dutch on Dejima
Nov. 22 (F) Case Study: Engelbert Kaempfer (1651-1716)

Readings:

Gordon, *MHJ*, pp. 35-46.

Toby, Ronald. *State and Diplomacy in Early Modern Japan*, pp. 1-22.

Primary document:

Bodart-Bailey, Beatrice. *Kaempfer’s Japan: Tokugawa Culture Observed*, pp. 179-200.

Week 12: Black Ships and Red Beards

Nov. 25* (M) Troubles Within and Without
Nov. 27 (W) Perry’s Arrival
Nov. 29 (F) No Class: Happy Thanksgiving!

**Visual Culture Assignment due in class on Monday, Nov. 25.*

Use images from <http://asian.library.ucsf.edu/introduction> Assignment details to be discussed in class.

Readings:

Gordon, *MHJ*, pp. 47-59.

Bolitho, Harold. “The Tempō Crisis,” in Marius Jansen, ed. *The Emergence of Meiji Japan*, pp. 1-52.

Primary documents: *SJT*, Vol. 2 [Blackboard]:

“Aizawa Seishisai: Revere the Emperor, Repel the Barbarian,” “*New Theses*” pp. 520-29;
“Sakuma Shōzan: Eastern Ethics and Western Science,” pp. 530-40.
“The Harris Treaty of 1858,” In David Lu, *Japan: A Documentary History*, Vol. 2, pp. 288-292.

Thanksgiving Recess

Week 13: Narrating the Restoration

Dec. 2 (M) Who Gets to Tell the Story of Tokugawa Japan?
Dec. 4 (W) Imperial Loyalty
Dec. 6 (F) Collapse of the Bakufu

Reminder: Screening of “Twilight Samurai**” (*Tasogare Seibei*) at 7pm on Tuesday, December 4.

Primary documents: *SJT*, Vol. 2 [**Blackboard**]

“Sakamoto Ryōma: Eight-Point Proposal,” pp. 563-64.

“Letter from Saigo Takamori and Okubo Toshimichi on the Imperial Restoration,” pp. 564-65.

Week 14: From Tokugawa to Meiji

Dec. 9* (M) Commoner Political Consciousness during the Bakumatsu Period?

Dec. 11 (W) Abandoning the Old; Building the New

**Second papers are due by 4pm on Monday, Dec. 9.*

Primary documents: *SJT*, Vol. 2 [**Blackboard**]

“The Autobiography of Fukuzawa Yukichi,” pp. 100-12; 256-79.

Final Examination: Thurs., Dec. 19, 7-9pm.