School of Humanities and Languages

ARTS2908, Premodern Japan Status, Sex and Power Semester 1, 2015

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1. **Course Staff and Contact Details**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Dr Hélène Bowen Raddeker</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Room</td>
<td>Morven Brown 361</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone</td>
<td>02 9385 2335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td><a href="mailto:hbowenr@unsw.edu.au">hbowenr@unsw.edu.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultation Time</td>
<td>THURS 11-12 am &amp; 3-4 pm</td>
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</tbody>
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1. **Course Details**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Units of Credit (UoC)</th>
<th>6</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course Description</td>
<td>This course offers a thematic overview of Japanese history from prehistory to the Meiji Imperial Restoration of 1868. Since the course features a special focus on women’s and gender history (which includes social constructions of both femininity and masculinity), it may be counted towards a minor in Women’s and Gender Studies, as well as majors in History and Japanese and Asian Studies. The course includes a focus on historiography—a consideration of issues in women’s and gender history, as well as different approaches to other aspects of Japan’s history. Since it is mostly a cultural and social history, we will not only discuss the ideas and social practices of ruling ‘classes’ (civil aristocrats and then bushi/warriors), but also look at popular Buddhism, folk religion, peasant rebellion and commoner resistance, and aspects of popular culture. In other words, we pay a lot of attention to differences between the different ‘classes’ or, rather, status groups in society. Study Kit readings often include translated primary sources such as plays, diaries, satirical fiction, legends, treatises, and so on, not only because they can be more entertaining. Often they are more revealing than secondary sources such as textbooks, and also help to refine students’ interpretative skills. The weekly topics are more varied than the subtitle of ‘Status, Sex &amp; Power’ would suggest, though central themes in the course include the situation(s) and role(s) of Japanese women of different classes from ancient times; gender constructs of femininity and masculinity in the literature of different ‘classes’ and in scripture; and sexualities (sexual practices/norms and also the nature of the ‘Meiji Restoration’/revolution.</td>
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1. **Course Aims**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Aims</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. In this course I aim to encourage students’ recognition both of cultural difference and traditional Japan’s cultural heterogeneity: that is, differences in the cultural practices, ideas and identities of different ‘classes’ or status groups, particularly but not only in connection with gender relations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Another central aim is to help students refine their skills in gender analysis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I also seek to encourage a critical or ‘reflective’ (theorized and more sophisticated) approach to interpretation in the discipline of history</td>
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</table>

1. **Student Learning Outcomes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Learning Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. By the conclusion of this course students will have refined the following academic skills through completing assigned</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Learning and Teaching Rationale

In my history courses I seek to instill in students a more reflective and critical understanding of the discipline of history through attention to historiography—differing approaches to history—and some of the epistemological problems associated with history as a knowledge. A familiarity with critical history and different styles and paradigms of history serves students well, especially those who seek to do Honours in history or become history teachers in high schools. However, my approach in this course reflects desirable graduate attributes also with regard its interdisciplinary focus on gender and Asian studies; as well as its attention to ‘diversity’ or difference, as well as historical change and continuities.

I try to assist students in refining their scholarly skills and ability to work independently through making the research project central to the course’s assignment tasks. The research component requires that early in the course each student decide on a research topic, question and approach and submit a research proposal. I then give detailed written feedback on sources, potential approaches and problems, and so on.

4. Teaching Strategies

I aim for effective tutorial participation through treating student learning as derived partly from a student’s peer group, not just from teachers. One thing that I resist is too much recourse to a common mode of operation in classes (especially when students haven’t done the preparatory reading!) whereby students ask questions and teachers supply ‘the’ answers in omniscient style. I often encourage students to work first in small discussion groups so that everyone can get involved, and students learn from each other. This is designed to encourage those who do not yet have the confidence to speak out in large groups.

The content of my lectures both reflects the above concern with a critical approach to history and is also based on a belief in the conceptual maturity of university students. I assume that students want to be challenged intellectually (and do not, for example, expect a history course to be merely an exercise in rote...
learning—of ‘the facts’). Whilst I do of course hope that students find my lectures interesting, they are designed less to entertain than to teach critical thinking, to acquaint students with pertinent historiographical debates and issues and, by extension, enable them to assess historical documents, arguments, interpretations and approaches more critically.

5. Course Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Task</th>
<th>Length</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Learning Outcomes Assessed</th>
<th>Graduate Attributes Assessed</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facilitation</td>
<td></td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Especially 1 &amp; 3</td>
<td>Especially 4</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiz (3 @ 5% ea.)</td>
<td></td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Especially 1 &amp; 3</td>
<td>Especially 2 and 4 to 7</td>
<td>In the tutorials in weeks 5, 8 and 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Proposal &amp; Bibliography</td>
<td>500 words</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>26 March</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Essay</td>
<td>2000 words</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>7 May</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please Note: The Arts and Social Sciences Protocols and Guidelines state:

A student who attends less than 80% of the classes/activities and has not submitted appropriate supporting documentation to the Course Authority to explain their absence may be awarded a grade of UF (Unsatisfactory Fail).

The Attendance Guidelines can be found in full at:
https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/current-students/academic-information/Protocols-Guidelines/

ASSESSMENT DETAILS:

Tutorial Facilitation (10%):

You will be assessed on the basis of your preparation and participation—i.e., not just on the frequency of your contributions to discussion but also their quality, which of course includes a familiarity with lectures and set readings. You are expected to help facilitate small group and class discussion by raising issues or questions you feel are important or interesting—i.e., not just participating by answering questions put to the class by the lecturer. Each week, you should read the Guide’s introduction to that tutorial’s topic and the key questions before you begin reading.

Quizzes (3 @ 5% each):

In the tutorials in weeks 5, 8 and 11 you will be expected to complete a quiz on the content particularly of lectures, though at times questions may be drawn from Study Kit readings. Each quiz will be comprised of 3 multiple choice questions (1% each) and a final question (2%) requiring a brief answer. I don't go out of my way to make these quizzes difficult—for e.g., I try to avoid too many questions that rely on your memory of Japanese names—but there’s no doubt that those who fail to attend lectures (or keep up with lecture
ppts) and don’t do tute reading generally do poorly in them. Of course this can make quite a difference to final course marks.

Those who miss a quiz tutorial due to illness will have the opportunity to do the quiz the following Thursday during my first consultation time (11-12am) IF they can provide a medical certificate.

Research Proposal (30%):

To help you develop your research skills, you are first expected to submit a tentative title, essay plan and bibliography (on the Thursday of week 4, 26 Mar). The research essay is worth a considerable part of the assessment, and doing a proposal early in the course will encourage you to begin researching it well in advance of the due date (the Thursday of week 9). Your submission of a written plan will enable your lecturer/tutor to give you written feedback on the feasibility of the research project of your choice—concerning the availability of sources, workable approaches, and so on. Of course, submitting a plan that makes sense will require that you read a little in advance on the topic of your choice. Note that while my readings lists are extensive, I give extra marks to students who have done good library searches (comprised of respected academic sources, either books or refereed journals, not Internet drive!!).

The plan itself should be no longer than 500 words (up to about 2 pages of double-line spacing). You may do it partly but not entirely in point-form, if you wish. You may set your own research essay question, or choose one already set for weekly tutorial discussions in this Outline. (Note, however, that some questions may be a bit narrow in focus for a research essay—focused just on one reading in the Kit, for example.) Feel free to ask your lecturer for advice, verbally or by email, if you are uncertain about your topic, but remember that the point of submitting a research plan is partly so that I can give each of you written feedback.

In the proposal you should:
1) give the essay a tentative title (a real title, not an undergrad sort of question)
set out your general topic (e.g. peasant protest);
2) state the issue or question you will address (e.g., How political and/or religious was Tokugawa peasant protest?);
3) comment on the historiographical significance of the topic/issue (e.g., Japan had a significant tradition of peasant protest yet this was long ignored in English sources because....?);
4) ideally, also refer to available sources and their approach (and perhaps to how your own approach will differ: e.g., Marxist and other historians have too often worked within a politics/religion binary as if the two were so easily separable in peasant protest.....)
5) append a tentative bibliography of sources compiled not only from this Guide (to demonstrate that you have put some effort into doing a search of library sources, journal articles etc).
6) and, finally, remember that this is an academic paper that must be referenced properly (with either in-text(parenthetical references or footnotes, as well as a bibliography). Assignments that fail to do this will be penalized.

Research Essay (45%)

This is due on the Thursday of week 9 (7 May). Since research and academic writing skills constitute a central part of your tertiary training, the research project (research proposal and essay) represents well over half of the assessment for the course. Apart from having to reference and set out the essay properly (see the guidelines below under assignment submission), remember that the essay should be critical: that is, problem-oriented or analytical. This means that it should present an argument or interpretation, not merely a descriptive narrative (or ‘story’). Apart from taking care to acknowledge your sources properly (i.e., avoid plagiarism), to do well you should try to:

1) research your essay widely;
2) demonstrate in it a good critical awareness of the issue at hand;
3) structure your argument clearly and well; and
4) express yourself with clarity and polish. Note that reading works on theory (see list below)—whether women’s history and gender analysis; or other historiography (e.g., the historiography of Japan’s peasant protest, if on the above topic); helps to add conceptual depth or sophistication to your work.

RETURN OF ASSIGNMENTS

The proposals will be handed back in class with detailed feedback. I will try to return assignments within a few weeks from the due date. Assignments should not be enclosed in any sort of folder.

Requirements for ALL essays (referencing, format etc):

First, please note that:
- Two assignment copies must be submitted for every written assessment: one paper copy and one ‘soft/electronic copy. The hardcopy should be posted into the Assignment Drop Boxes at the School of Humanities, level 2, Morven Brown Building by 4pm on the due date. A completed and signed cover sheet must be securely attached to assignments.
- A soft/electronic copy must also be uploaded to Moodle/Turnitin by 4pm on the due date. Note, however, that hardcopies not submitted on time will be subject to penalties for lateness. It is the hardcopy that is marked, but since Turnitin is used only to check for plagiarism the hardcopy will not be marked if the paper has not been uploaded to Moodle>Turnitin.
- The coordinator will NOT accept assignments sent by email.

Otherwise:
- Please include a word-count on your cover-sheet or elsewhere in your assignment.
- Written work should be typed in double line-spacing.
- Written work must include references and a bibliography. Essays without references (parenthetical in-text references or footnotes) will be penalized because this constitutes plagiarism. You must use either footnotes or parenthetical in-text references, but not both. If your references consistently fail to include the page number of the text being quoted or referred to, you will incur a penalty.
- Internet sites that are not legitimate academic ones should NOT be used unless they are the focus of a research project—i.e., if there is a special reason to consult online public opinion. Otherwise, if you are doing an essay on ‘bushidô’, for e.g., you cannot rely on websites by martial arts enthusiasts.
- Work must not be plagiarized. That is, your work must be in your own words except where you (occasionally) quote the exact words of an author using quotation marks and acknowledging your source with a reference. When you draw on another author for information or an argument but do not quote them, you must paraphrase or change the author’s words substantially (express the information or point in your own words) whilst still acknowledging your source with a reference. Plagiarizing (presenting someone else’s words or ideas as your own) the first time will mean loss of marks (or failing the essay if it is extensive); you risk failing the course if you plagiarize a second time after a warning. For more on plagiarism, see the University’s statement below.
- Papers that are significantly longer (or a lot shorter) than required will be penalized.

Grades

All results are reviewed at the end of each semester and may be adjusted to ensure equitable marking across the School.

The proportion of marks lying in each grading range is determined not by any formula or quota system, but by the way that students respond to assessment tasks and how well they meet the objectives of the course. Nevertheless, since higher grades imply performance that is well above average, the number of distinctions and high distinctions awarded in a typical course is relatively small. At the other extreme, on
average 6.1% of students do not meet minimum standards and a little more (8.6%) in first year courses. For more information on the grading categories see: https://student.unsw.edu.au/grades

The following is a guide to marking compiled by History staff, which may prove helpful.

**High Distinction 85% +**
An outstanding essay, excellent in every regard. A High Distinction essay shows flair, originality and creativity in its analysis. Based on extensive research and reading, it engages with complex historiographical issues, demonstrates theoretical acumen and involves both the critical analysis of argument and innovative interpretation of evidence. This essay is a delight to read and the prose is of exceptionally high standard. A High Distinction essay shows the potential to undertake post-graduate studies in History.

**Distinction 75%-84%**
An essay of a superior standard. Well written, closely argued and based on wide, thoughtful and critical reading, a distinction essay answers the question convincingly and shows an understanding of complex historiographical issues. At its best, it is elegantly expressed and pursues an argument with subtlety and imagination. Distinction students are encouraged to progress to Honours in History.

**Credit 65%-74%**
A credit essay is work of a high degree of competence. It answers the question well, demonstrating a sound grasp of subject matter, and arguing its case with clarity and confidence. It engages critically and creatively with the question, attempts to critique historical interpretations and positions itself within the relevant historiography. A credit essay demonstrates the potential to complete honours work in history.

**Pass  50%-64%**
A pass essay is work of a satisfactory standard. It answers the question but does not do so fully or particularly well. It has a coherent argument, and is grounded in the relevant reading but the research is not extensive and the argument fails to engage important historiographical issues. The prose is capable but could be much improved. A pass grade suggests that the student can (with application) complete a satisfactory pass degree; it does not qualify a student for admission to honours. There is a world of difference between a bare and a high pass essay. The latter signals far more reading and a much deeper understanding of the question. With work, a high pass essay can achieve credit standard.

**Fail Under 50%**
This is work of unacceptable standard for university study. It fails to answer the question and/or is based on inadequate reading. A failed essay usually has serious faults in terms of prose, presentation and structure.

**Submission of Assessment Tasks**

Assignments which are submitted to the School Assignment Box must have a properly completed School Assessment Coversheet, with the declaration signed and dated by hand. The Coversheet can be downloaded from https://hal.arts.unsw.edu.au/students/courses/course-outlines/. It is your responsibility to make a backup copy of the assignment prior to submission and retain it.

Assignments must be submitted before 4:00pm on the due date. Assignments received after this time will be marked as having been received late.
Late Submission of Assignments

The Arts and Social Sciences late submissions guidelines state the following:

- An assessed task is deemed late if it is submitted after the specified time and date as set out in the course Learning Management System (LMS).
- The late penalty is the loss of 3% of the total possible marks for the task for each day or part thereof the work is late.
- Work submitted 14 days after the due date will be marked and feedback provided but no mark will be recorded. If the work would have received a pass mark but for the lateness and the work is a compulsory course component a student will be deemed to have met that requirement. This does not apply to a task that is assessed but no mark is awarded.
- Work submitted 21 days after the due date will not be accepted for marking or feedback and will receive no mark or grade. If the assessment task is a compulsory component of the course a student will automatically fail the course.

The Late Submissions Guidelines can be found in full at:
https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/current-students/academic-information/Protocols-Guidelines/

The penalty may not apply where students are able to provide documentary evidence of illness or serious misadventure. Time pressure resulting from undertaking assignments for other courses does not constitute an acceptable excuse for lateness.

6. Extension of Time for Submission of Assessment Tasks

The Arts and Social Sciences Extension Guidelines apply to all assessed tasks regardless of whether or not a grade is awarded, except the following:

1. any form of test/examination/assessed activity undertaken during regular class contact hours
2. any task specifically identified by the Course Authority (the academic in charge of the course) in the Course Outline or Learning Management System (LMS), for example, Moodle, as not available for extension requests.

A student who missed an assessment activity held within class contact hours should apply for Special Consideration via myUNSW.

The Arts and Social Sciences Extension Guidelines state the following:

- A student seeking an extension should apply through the Faculty’s online extension tool available in LMS.
- A request for an extension should be submitted before the due time/date for the assessment task.
- The Course Authority should respond to the request within two working days of the request.
- The Course Authority can only approve an extension up to five days. A student requesting an extension greater than five days should complete an application for Special Consideration.
- The Course Authority advises their decision through the online extension tool.
- If a student is granted an extension, failure to comply will result in a penalty. The penalty will be invoked one minute past the approved extension time.
7. Attendance

The Arts and Social Sciences Attendance Guidelines state the following:

- A student is expected to attend all class contact hours for a face-to-face or blended course and complete all activities for a blended or fully online course.

- If a student is unable to attend all classes for a course due to timetable clashes, the student must complete the Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences Permitted Timetable Clash form (see information at Item 8 below). A student unable to attend lectures in a course conducted by the School of Education can apply for “Permission to Participate in Lectures Online”.

- Where practical, a student’s attendance will be recorded. Individual course outlines/LMS will set out the conditions under which attendance will be measured.

- A student who arrives more than 15 minutes late may be penalised for non-attendance. If such a penalty is imposed, the student must be informed verbally at the end of class and advised in writing within 24 hours.

- If a student experiences illness, misadventure or other occurrence that makes absence from a class/activity unavoidable, or expects to be absent from a forthcoming class/activity, they should seek permission from the Course Authority, and where applicable, should be accompanied by an original or certified copy of a medical certificate or other form of appropriate evidence.

- Reserve members of the Australian Defence Force who require absences of more than two weeks due to full-time service may be provided an exemption. The student may also be permitted to discontinue enrolment without academic or financial penalty.

- If a Course Authority rejects a student’s request for absence from a class or activity the student must be advised in writing of the grounds for the rejection.

- A Course Authority may excuse a student from classes or activities for up to one month. However, they may assign additional and/or alternative tasks to ensure compliance.

- A Course Authority considering the granting of absence must be satisfied a student will still be able to meet the course's learning outcomes and/or volume of learning.

- A student seeking approval to be absent for more than one month must apply in writing to the Dean and provide all original or certified supporting documentation.

- The Dean will only grant such a request after consultation with the Course Authority to ensure that measures can be organised that will allow the student to meet the course's learning outcomes and volume of learning.

- A student who attends less than 80% of the classes/activities and has not submitted appropriate supporting documentation to the Course Authority to explain their absence may be awarded a final grade of UF (Unsatisfactory Fail).

- A student who has submitted the appropriate documentation but attends less than 66% of the classes/activities will be asked by the Course Authority to apply to discontinue the course without failure rather than be awarded a final grade of UF. The final decision as to whether a student can be withdrawn without fail is made by Student Administration and Records.

Students who falsify their attendance or falsify attendance on behalf of another student will be dealt with under the Student Misconduct Policy.
8. Class Clash

Students who are enrolled in an Arts and Social Sciences program (single or dual) and have an unavoidable timetable clash can apply for permissible timetable clash by completing an online application form. Students must meet the rules and conditions in order to apply for permissible clash. The rules and conditions can be accessed online in full at: https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/media/FASSFile/Permissible_Clash_Policy.pdf

For students who are enrolled in a non-Arts and Social Sciences program, they must seek advice from their home faculty on permissible clash approval.

9. Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Plagiarism is presenting someone else’s thoughts or work as your own. It can take many forms, from not having appropriate academic referencing to deliberate cheating.

In many cases plagiarism is the result of inexperience about academic conventions. The University has resources and information to assist you to avoid plagiarism.

The Learning Centre assists students with understanding academic integrity and how to not plagiarise. Information is available on their website: https://student.unsw.edu.au/plagiarism/. They also hold workshops and can help students one-on-one.

If plagiarism is found in your work when you are in first year, your lecturer will offer you assistance to improve your academic skills. They may ask you to look at some online resources, attend the Learning Centre, or sometimes resubmit your work with the problem fixed. However, more serious instances in first year, such as stealing another student’s work or paying someone to do your work, may be investigated under the Student Misconduct Procedures.

Repeated plagiarism (even in first year), plagiarism after first year, or serious instances, may also be investigated under the Student Misconduct Procedures. The penalties under the procedures can include a reduction in marks, failing a course or for the most serious matters (like plagiarism in an Honours thesis) or even suspension from the university. The Student Misconduct Procedures are available here: http://www.gs.unsw.edu.au/policy/documents/studentmisconductprocedures.pdf
10. Course Schedule

*Classes*: Lecture Thurs 1-3pm, CLB2; Tutorials 4-5 and 5-6 in MB G4

*To check course timetable, please visit*: [http://www.timetable.unsw.edu.au/](http://www.timetable.unsw.edu.au/)

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<tr>
<th>Wk</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Lecture &amp; Tutorial Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>5 Mar</td>
<td>No lecture nor tutorials</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>12 Mar</td>
<td>Origins of ‘Japan’ &amp; the ‘Japanese’</td>
<td>See the</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>26 Mar</td>
<td>State Formation: His- and Her-stories</td>
<td>detailed</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2 Apr</td>
<td>Reforming &amp; Performing Buddhism</td>
<td>weekly</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Mid-Semester Break</em></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>16 Apr</td>
<td>Heian: The Classical World in Women’s Diaries</td>
<td>guide to</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>23 Apr</td>
<td>Zen Culture/Warrior Culture</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>30 Apr</td>
<td>16th-Century Revolution &amp; the ‘Christian Century’</td>
<td>topics,</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>7 May</td>
<td>Bushidō, Masculinities, Women</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>14 May</td>
<td>Urban Popular Culture: The ‘Pleasure’ Quarters?</td>
<td>Issues &amp;</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>21 May</td>
<td>Riotous Pilgrimages &amp; Peasant Protest</td>
<td>readings</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>28 May</td>
<td>Tokugawa Ideology: Toward Restoration</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>4 Jun</td>
<td>The Meiji Restoration/Revolution</td>
<td></td>
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11. Course Resources

*Moodle, Lectures, Library etc*

Important: the School no longer provides printed hardcopies of course outlines, so you must consult Moodle before the first lecture. I will upload a full Course Outline for downloading for those who prefer to keep in on their desktop or print a hardcopy.

Lecture recordings will be available to students, and both recordings and lecture powerpoints can be accessed via Moodle.

By going to the library homepage ([www.info.library.unsw.edu.au/web/services/services.html](http://www.info.library.unsw.edu.au/web/services/services.html)) you can access a list of books in the HUC and get online access to some extra book chapter or journal articles simply by typing in the course number. This might be useful for further reading for essays. (It includes some important, high demand sources such as Ackroyd on women’s declining status, rights and autonomy in warrior society, or sources on the samurai and Bushidō.) Library staff have also prepared “Subject Guides” on East Asian History and Japanese Studies and Gender Studies to help you find further sources for essays.

**Sources/Reading**

A study kit will be made available for students to buy from the bookshop. It contains primary documents as well as essays/book chapters on specialized topics, so I recommend that students supplement their kit reading with some general reading from a good textbook. I recommend Anne Walthall’s *Japan: A Cultural, Social and Political History*, 2006, multiple copies of which are both in the bookshop and library (one in the HUC).

Almost all readings listed in the guide are available from the library. Apart from the further readings listed each week, many general textbooks on Japanese history are readily
available and some sections will be useful even for specialized essay topics. A list is included below.

**Textbooks & Reference Works**

**General Overviews:**


From the 15th-16th centuries:


Women’s or Gender history (Japan):

The Cambridge histories are comprehensive,, quite recent and useful for research on a broad range of topics. Check them if you’re having trouble finding sources; also other collections of essays such as *Japan Before Tokugawa*; or *Warlords, Artists and Commoners; Studies in the Institutional History of Early Modern Japan*; and, of course, journals.

**Reference Works & Documentary Collections:**
*Kodansha Encyclopedia of Japan*, Tokyo, Kodansha, 1983 (probably avail online)


The documentary collections are most important, for they would be useful for short
supplementary reading on various topics. They contain translations of primary sources with brief editorial essays about the historical context and significance of the sources and their authors.

**Historiography or History Theory:**  
All tertiary students of History should be familiar with historiography—debates on the changing philosophy and practice of History, and different approaches to writing History. This means History in general and also with regard to specific cultural areas, in this case Japan, and to specific topic areas, say, Japan peasant studies or gender studies. This is particularly important for History majors, especially those intending to do Honours in History or teach History in high schools. The following are just some of the historiographical essays or works available. (cf. journals of history theory below)

On the historiography of Japan:
- Adriana Boscaro *et al* (eds), *Rethinking Japan, II*, 1990. [contains short reflective essays on various aspects of the historiography of Japan].

Also Review articles such as:
- Barrington Moore Jr, ‘Japanese Peasant Protests and Revolts in Comparative Historical Perspective’ (review essay on works by Bix, Kelly, Vlastos & Walthall; old but good on peasant studies; copy available from lecturer)

And on feminist (women's/gender) history in Japan:
- Andrea Germer, ‘Feminist History in Japan: National and International Perspectives’, *Intersections: Gender, History and Culture in the Asian Context*, Issue 9, August 2003 (e-journal, easily accessed for downloading; article is on Takamure Itsue, Japan’s founder of women’s history, who did pioneering research into ancient to
medieval women’s history in Japan)
Ueno Chizuko, ‘The Politics of Memory’, *History and Memory*, vol. 11, no. 2 (1999) (or other works by Ueno, eg., in *Multicultural Japan*; she is one of Japan’s leading feminist scholars)

Check journals for more recent review essays, too. Reading these is one of the best ways to survey historiographical trends (in general or in peasant studies, women’s/gender studies, and so on).

Cultural theory & Japan:
Peter Dale, *The Myth of Japanese Uniqueness*....
Donald Denoon et al (eds), *Multicultural Japan: Palaeolithic to Postmodern*, Cambridge University Press, 1996 [a good collection of essays on cultural heterogeneity: class differences, women, minorities etc]

David Suzuki’s book on marginalized groups in Japan such as the Ainu—*The Japan We Never Knew*—would also be useful for research essays on status/class and other differences or traditional heterogeneity, as would works on the outcaste groups known in modern times as ‘burakumin’ (‘hamlet people’) and in Tokugawa (pejoratively) as ‘eta’ (‘unclean/polluted’) or ‘hinin’ (‘non-people’ or ‘non-human’).

On History Theory, General:
T.K. Rabb & R.I. Rotberg, *The New History, The 1980s and Beyond: Studies in Interdisciplinary History*, Princeton University Press, 1982 (this and the next two are not recent but good on basic historiography, eg., re the different styles of political, intellectual, social and new cultural history etc)
Keith Jenkins and Alun Munslow (eds), *The Nature of History Reader*, Routledge, 2004

On History’s Androcentrism; feminism and history etc:
Mary Spongberg, *Writing Women’s History since the Renaissance*, U.K. and New York,
12. Course Evaluation and Development

Courses are periodically reviewed and students’ feedback is used to improve them. Feedback is gathered using various means including UNSW’s Course and Teaching Evaluation and Improvement (CATEI) process.

13. Student Support

The Learning Centre is available for individual consultation and workshops on academic skills. Find out more by visiting the Centre’s website at: http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au
14. **Grievances**

All students should be treated fairly in the course of their studies at UNSW. Students who feel they have not been dealt with fairly should, in the first instance, attempt to resolve any issues with their tutor or the course convenors.

If such an approach fails to resolve the matter, the School of Humanities and Languages has an academic member of staff who acts as a Grievance Officer for the School. This staff member is identified on the notice board in the School of Humanities and Languages. Further information about UNSW grievance procedures is available at: [https://student.unsw.edu.au/complaints](https://student.unsw.edu.au/complaints)

15. **Other Information**

**myUNSW**

myUNSW is the online access point for UNSW services and information, integrating online services for applicants, commencing and current students and UNSW staff. To visit myUNSW please visit either of the below links:

https://my.unsw.edu.au

https://my.unsw.edu.au/student/atoz/ABC.html

**OHS**

UNSW's Occupational Health and Safety Policy requires each person to work safely and responsibly, in order to avoid personal injury and to protect the safety of others. For all matters relating to Occupational Health, Safety and environment, see [https://www.ohs.unsw.edu.au/](https://www.ohs.unsw.edu.au/)

**Special Consideration**

In cases where illness or other circumstances produce repeated or sustained absence, students should apply for Special Consideration as soon as possible.

The application must be made via Online Services in myUNSW. Log into myUNSW and go to My Student Profile tab > My Student Services channel > Online Services > Special Consideration.

Applications on the grounds of illness must be filled in by a medical practitioner. Further information is available at:

[https://student.unsw.edu.au/special-consideration](https://student.unsw.edu.au/special-consideration)

**Student Equity and Disabilities Unit**

Students who have a disability that requires some adjustment in their learning and teaching environment are encouraged to discuss their study needs with the course convener prior to or at the commencement of the course, or with the Student Equity Officers (Disability) in the Student Equity and Disabilities Unit (9385 4734). Information for students with disabilities is available at:

[http://www.studentequity.unsw.edu.au/](http://www.studentequity.unsw.edu.au/)

Issues that can be discussed may include access to materials, signers or note-takers, the provision of services and additional examination and assessment arrangements. Early notification is essential to enable any necessary adjustments to be made.
16. Japanese Eras

(Terms used by historians to denote different ages or periods)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Era</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jōmon</td>
<td>To 200 BCE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yayoi</td>
<td>200 BCE–250 CE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kofun (Tumulus)</td>
<td>250–552 CE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asuka/Suiko</td>
<td>552–645</td>
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[or ‘Yamato’; c.300–710]

[Borrowing from China & Korea: 552–866]

Imperial age
(ancient to early medieval)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Era</th>
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<tr>
<td>early Nara</td>
<td>645–710</td>
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<tr>
<td>late Nara</td>
<td>710–794</td>
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<tr>
<td>early Heian</td>
<td>794–898</td>
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<tr>
<td>late Heian (Fujiwara)</td>
<td>898–1185</td>
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Warrior rule
(medieval to early modern)

<table>
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<th>Era</th>
<th>Dates</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kamakura</td>
<td>1185–1333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashikaga (or Muromachi)</td>
<td>1392–1573</td>
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<tr>
<td>1482–1558: ‘Warring States’ period</td>
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<td>1540s–1640s: ‘Christian Century’</td>
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[Azuchi-]Momoyama 1573–1603
Tokugawa (or Edo) 1603–1867

‘Imperial’ & Postwar Japan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Era</th>
<th>Dates</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meiji</td>
<td>1868–1912</td>
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<td>Taishô</td>
<td>1912–1926</td>
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<td>Shôwa</td>
<td>1926–1989</td>
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<tr>
<td>Heisei</td>
<td>1989–</td>
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</tbody>
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JAPANESE TERMS AND NAMES

It can be hard at first to become familiarized with all the Japanese terms used in classes and sources, but the same would be true of unfamiliar European languages. However, students soon become familiar with many of the terms that are commonly used in works of Japanese history. It is difficult to do much about this, though I do hand out a quite extensive glossary at the beginning of the course and also try to restrict my use of Japanese terminology to commonly encountered words or phrases.

A knowledge of the Japanese language is not necessary to do well in this course, but to avoid confusion remember that in English-language Japanese history texts Japanese people’s names are usually given in the East Asian order with surnames first. (Publishers, however, like to confuse the issue by sometimes using the English order on book covers, etc.) Japanese surnames come first
traditionally: e.g., if ‘Tanaka Etsuko’, the surname, ‘Tanaka’ (unlike ‘Smith’), would come first in footnotes; like ‘Smith’ it would also come first in a bibliography.

Generally, it is the surname you should use when referring to authors or historical actors in the text of an essay. There are exceptions, however, for e.g., people with literary pen-names such as (Ihara) ‘Saikaku’ or (Ejima) ‘Kiseki’. Famous historical personages such as (Minamoto) ‘Yoritomo’, (Tokugawa) ‘Ieyasu’, or (Toyotomi) ‘Hideyoshi’ are also often referred to in academic texts by their given names. But, in general, in order to avoid confusion, please use full names in the text of an essay, footnotes and bibliographies, not initials for given names; it is common for students to mix up the names and give only a given name).
17. Weekly Tutorial Guide

Students should note that below I include some questions each week to help guide discussion of topics/issues for the week and your understanding of sources in the Study Kit. Questions that are broader in focus than, say, just interpreting one particular document can also be used as research essay questions.

Note that below an asterisk (*) denotes study kit readings.

Week One (5 March)
No lecture, nor tutorials

Week Two (12 March)
Origins of ‘Japan’ & the ‘Japanese’

Since in the first tutorial a fair bit of time is likely to be taken up with introductions and ensuring that students understand what’s required of them, the set reading is only the first chapter of the recommended textbook, Anne Walthall’s *Japan: A Cultural, Social, and Political History* (Boston & New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 2006, Chap. 1, pp. 1–29). Unlike in later weeks where extra textbook reading is advised, this chapter has been included in the Study Kit.

The chapter will provide a good introduction to topics over the next few weeks. You may read all 29 pages for this week, or leave the section on state formation (pp. 12–23) to week four and the material on Buddhism (pp. 18–19 & 24–29) to week five.

You should note that Walthall’s text represents an exception amongst English-language textbooks, in that it does not ignore women or gender issues. In this early chapter she at least refers to early female rulers a number of times, and also refuses to attribute important innovations only to male rulers or administrators (an example being Prince Shôtoku and not his aunt, Emperor Suiko, as well).

To understand the questions posed below we should also be aware that the emphasis by conservative scholars and Japanese nationalists alike has been on Japan’s unusual degree of racial and cultural ‘homogeneity’. Of course, this has had it’s political uses, as a description not only of what (supposedly) is (and has always been), but what *should* be: i.e., it’s long been a political strategy used to enforce obedience and conformism, and to marginalize those who differ.

Note that Sugimoto Yoshio and others listed above under ‘Cultural Theory’ have been leading critics of the ‘homogeneity’ thesis, and should be consulted for research essays on this or other expressions of cultural essentialism. We see one example of cultural essentialism at work in Week 7 where, since ‘the Japanese’ must necessarily be groupist and hierarchical, samurai codes of ethics and heroism could not possibly have been individualistic in any significant way (individualism being the possession, it would seem, solely of ‘the West’). Another example is the common representation of ‘Shinto’ as central to ‘the’ religio-spiritual identity of ‘the’ Japanese, which is problematic not only for its cultural essentialism, but also its ahistoricity (as seen in the week on Buddhism).

Questions (for discussion or, possibly, research essays)

a) How does Walthall’s description of early ‘Japan’ underline its heterogeneity?

b) Around what time and due to what factors did the archipelago we now know as ‘Nihon’ (Japan) begin to take on some semblance of political and cultural unity?
c) One often encounters the assumption that from the beginning of time patriarchies have been universal (ubiquitous). Does Walthall’s account of early ‘Japan’ suggest this? (Note that ‘matriarchy’ or rule by mothers/women is not the only alternative to patriarchy; & that there’s a question on matriarchy in week 4.)

Readings
(see under next week’s list: e.g., by Amino and Befu, as well as Multicultural Japan, and works on Okinawa. The famous environmentalist, David Suzuki, by the way, is amongst the authors who have published on marginalized groups in Japan such as the Ainu— in The Japan We Never Knew. For works on women, see the list for the next two weeks.

[Research proposal due Wk4, 26 March]

Week Three (19 March)

Themes:
This week we start with a selection of origin myths and heroic legends from what is now known as ‘Japan’, from both the Yamato people and the Ainu who now live in the northern island of Hokkaido. The Ainu have only recently been officially recognized in Japan as its indigenous people—that is, as the earliest immigrants to the islands (though somehow the former are often assumed to be the ancestors of ‘the’ Japanese).

Over time, the hunter-gatherer Ainu in the main island of Honshu were pushed north by the (mostly rice agriculturalist) Yamato and other later immigrants, becoming subjugated in the main island of Honshu by the classical era. The Ainu have remained a marginalized group in modern Japan. Partly for political reasons, therefore, modern sources emphasize the cultural differences between the two. This week, however, we see some of the cultural similarities in areas such as language; the importance of both female and male ‘gods’ (kami in Japanese); and the important role played historically in both cultures by female shamans. Ancient Chinese chronicles (from about 200AD/CE and later) about the ‘land of Wa’ (probably in Kyushu) mention shaman queens/chieftans, Pimiko and Iyo; but women continued to play an important spiritual-secular role in the pre-Heian imperial court as influential shamans (miko), as Carmen Blacker indicates in her chapter on the ancient ‘sibyl’. Shamans were the ‘mouthpieces’ of deities, oracles who through prophecy might gain considerable influence. Typically, around the world, shamans were also often responsible for performing, and handing down the tribe’s myths and legends. Female shamans retained an influential role both in Okinawa and amongst the Ainu in the north till modern times.

Yamato’s oral myths concerning ‘Japan’’s founding kami and so-called origins were taken down by scribes who by the early eighth century (Nara period) were putting into writing, in Chinese, Japan’s ‘imperial’ chronicles. The surviving ones are the Nihongi and Kojiki. Recording the ‘history’ of the imperial line was one of many ways in which the early ‘Japanese’ modeled themselves on Chinese state models. What differed, however, was that it was under the orders of a female emperor, Gemmei/Gemmyô, that such ‘official histories’ were put into writing (and, paradoxically, in order to legitimate an increasingly patriarchal system of rule). These origin myths concerned the ancestral gods of the leading clan whose claim to imperial status meant that their ancestors purportedly became the founding and most powerful kami of ‘Japan’ but, interestingly, the most important of these ancestral deities continued to be the female sun god, Amaterasu,
a) What do the imperial ‘myth-histories’ (Kojiki and Nihongi) suggest about politics and power in prehistorical and ancient Japan? [Note that this question could cover a number of issues: not just changing gender roles and relations.]

b) Does the material this week about female gods and shaman-priestesses (and even early female emperors) reveal much about women’s status in ancient ‘Japan’?

c) Reflect upon the contrasts and/or parallels between the Chinese ‘chronicles’ (in Tsunoda, pp. 3-12, also cited in Totman, 2000) and the Japanese imperial histories or ‘legends’. Is the first ‘History’ and the other ‘myth’, the one unproblematically ‘factual’ and the other entirely ‘fictive’?

d) What do Ainu epic legends suggest about real historical beliefs and practices in Ainu society and their similarities and/or differences to Yamato history and culture?

d) Did the ‘new religions’ of the 19th and 20th centuries involve any apparent historical continuities from ancient Japanese shamanism? (cf. other chapters by Blacker, Hori etc)

Key Readings


Amino Yoshihiko, ‘Deconstructing ‘Japan’,’ East Asian History, no. 3 (June 1992), pp. 121-42.

Further Reading


Donald L. Philippi (trans.), Kojiki, University of Tokyo Press, 1969.


On folk religion/folklore:


Yanagita Kunio, Japanese Manners and Customs in the Meiji Era, Tokyo, Ôbunsha, 1957 (very famous, a ‘classic’: Chap. 13 on folklore, in my possession).

On the ‘new religions’:

(works by Helen Hardacre, other than her book on Shintō, such as an article in Senri Ethnological Studies, vol. 11, 1984, on ‘gender-bending’ by the founder of the modern ‘new’ religion, Ômotokyô, and her male
successor; if you can access the journal there’s an article on spirit possession as a supposedly ‘indigenous’ religion in Japan by Sasaki Kokan)


On the Ainu, and Okinawan religion/shamanism:


Honda Katsuichi, Harukor: An Ainu Woman’s Tale, (Kyoko Selden (trans.), University of California Press, 2000 [may not be in the library. . .]


Also:

Befu Harumi, Hegemony of Homogeneity: An Anthropological Analysis of Nihonjinron, Melbourne, Trans Pacific Press, 2001 [useful for research essays, if on the situation of marginalized groups such as Ainu, Okinawans & the (outcaste) Burakumin in this ostensibly ‘homogeneous’ culture]

Week Four (26 March)

(Imperial) State Formation: His- and Her-stories

Themes:

The focus this week is on the transition from the 6th-7th centuries from loose tribal/chieftan rule to a more centralized form of ‘imperial’ rule modeled on China’s. In general terms, this paralleled world patterns with the rise of settled agriculture leading to state formation, ie., struggles over property/resources and the rise of ruling classes and religions/philosophies that legitimated their control and privileges. Just as ‘class’ or status inequalities accompanied this process, it is clear that patriarchies also emerged or were strengthened. Accompanying this process or before long, patriarchal religions arose that reinforced male-domination (in the case of early Japan, Buddhism and Confucianism). In this period, for example, laws were first introduced to limit the succession/inheritance and property rights of women; and after the 8th century women did not become emperors (only one special exception many centuries later).
Thus, we consider the role of existing and imported religion/philosophy in legitimizing the new system, whilst also looking at the (related) diminishing role of women in the new ‘imperial’ court. The myths about ‘Japan’s’ founding gods in the Nihongi and Kojiki, extracts from which we read in week three, were themselves methods of legitimating the rule of one particular clan/lineage. However, Buddhism (as ‘protector’ of the state) and, to a lesser extent, Confucianism were also used to safeguard and further Japanese ‘imperial’ power.

As my subtitle suggests, we will also discuss the androcentrism (ie., lit. ‘male-centredness’: gender-blindness or bias) of most historians of early Japan, since they continue to perpetuate the silence about (elite) women’s important roles in ancient Japanese history. A comparison of Piggott’s essay or book with works by others, for example Kitagawa or Morton, reveals glaring omissions with such women being mentioned only in passing, if at all.

Questions

a) Reflect upon the various means (practical and philosophical/ideological) used to legitimize and strengthen Japan’s new imperial system.

b) Japan’s process of state formation might be seen to conform broadly to common world models. How so? And are there ways in which it differed. [a world history or two would be helpful here, ones that do not ignore women and gender issues: such as Peter Stearns' Gender in World History]

c) Consider how and why Morton’s and/or Kitagawa’s accounts represent good examples of androcentric ‘his-story’.

d) Could Japan have once been a ‘matriarchy’? [apart from Piggott’s article and/or her book on early ‘kingship’ (sic), for this question sources from week two, and some listed under the Heian week re aristocratic women’s diminishing legal rights etc would be useful, eg., Ackroyd., Tonomura or Wakita. Wakita questions the thesis of Takamure Itsue, Japan’s founder of women’s history, that it was, but nevertheless argues that Japanese women’s public roles and social status lessened significantly over the centuries. This was especially true for the upper classes, but she does give other examples.]

Key Readings

Textbook (Walthall), especially pp. 12–23, in Kit for first tutorial (for a less male-centred account than is usual in textbooks, ie., most if not all of those listed below)

* Joan Piggott, ‘Chieftan Pairs and Corulers: Female Sovereignty in Early Japan’, in Tonomura Hitomi et al (eds), Women and Class in Japanese History, Ann Arbor, Center for Japanese Studies, The University of Michigan, 1999, pp. 17-26, 40-43 (note that the whole essay could not be included in the Kit for copyright reasons & some important info had to be excluded; the whole article can be downloaded from the library catalogue, however).


Further Reading

Kenneth Henshall, A History of Japan: From Stone Age to Superpower, Macmillan 1999 (Parts 1.5 and 2.1)

**Week Five (2 Apr)**

**Reforming & Performing Buddhism**

**Themes:**

This week we look at the differences between early aristocratic Buddhism and medieval (Kamakura) popular Buddhism—medieval schools being the ‘Jōdo’/Pure Land and ‘Shinshū’/True Pure Land; Nichiren; and Zen. (The two main Zen denominations have been Rinzai and Sōtō.) These were all founded between the late 1100s and early 1200s, and ultimately became the most influential schools in Japan. Also of interest is the issue of whether all forms of Buddhism are as different from, say, Christianity as is often supposed (Zen certainly is, but the Pure Land is another matter.)

In the area of gender, representations of women in Mahayana Buddhism are pertinent, both in scripture and in Nō theatre (a medieval Japanese art-form that was essentially Buddhist in inspiration). We saw last week, moreover, how women’s diminishing role in public life extended further in medieval times into areas such as the performing arts (Wakita).

Whilst there was no space for a reading on it in the Kit (and it is covered also in my modern Japan course), another important topic for discussion is the intimate (inter-) relationship by this time between Buddhism and what is normally termed (erroneously) ‘Shintō’. Mahayana Buddhism is known for its syncretistic style, and thus from the time it was embraced as the state religion Buddhism came to absorb existing folk religious beliefs and practices. These were disparate and unsystematized, taking various forms and deriving from various geographical (Chinese, continental, Pacific etc) origins. They included shamanism and the worship of ancestral ‘kami’ of families/clans and protective deities of villages. (Note that the term ‘kami’ has a broader meaning than ‘god/s’, covering spirits, ghosts, and just about anything or anyone with an apparently supernatural mystique or power/s.) As Kuroda’s seminal article shows, it was only in modern times that all kami-related beliefs and practices ‘were lumped together by the State, called ‘Shintō’, and represented as a ‘purely Japanese’ ancient-national state religion that, supposedly, had always been distinct from Buddhism. However, the myth of ‘indigenous Shintō’ continues to be propagated in most standard history texts (as other readings in the Kit reveal).

Students doing research essays on this are urged to read critiques by Kuroda and/or Hardacre carefully and use the arguments therein to deconstruct ahistorical treatments of ‘Shintō’ (this being what most sources are). Conventional sources (such as by Ono, Hori etc) should be treated with the critical awareness that they use anachronistic language (referring to ‘Shinto’ as the traditional folk ‘religion’ or even Japan’s own indigenous religion), reflecting a modern invention of ‘tradition’ or ‘history’ for political/nationalistic ends.

**Questions**

a) Why did Amidist and Nichiren Buddhism become so popular, especially amongst commoners in medieval and later Japan?

b) Discuss the differences and similarities between popular Buddhism, particularly the Pure Land schools, and Christianity.
c) In what ways is Nô theatre Buddhist? [Apart from reading more Nô plays, LaFleur is essential reading for this question, particularly Chap. 6 on Zeami and Nô.]

d) Diana Paul’s book is about the ambivalence (lit., a coexistence of love and hate) in Mahayana Buddhism toward women. Do the primary texts and other readings this week reveal such an ambivalence? (if for a research essay you might read some of this; otherwise, also works by Pandey on Japan)

e) In what ways are Nô plays gendered? (this need not concern only women/femininity, but also constructs of masculinity, for e.g. in the warrior genre of plays)

f) What does the issue of ‘Shintô’s’ questionable antiquity suggest about the present-past relation in representations of History? [For this historiographical question, you would be expected to reflect upon how the present (context of writing History) commonly determines how the past is mis/represented.]

Key Readings
Textbook (Walthall), pp. 18-19 and pp. 24-29 (included in Study Kit for week two)


Thomas Hoover, *Zen Culture*, Arkana, 1977 (chapter on Nô)

Raj Pandey, *Women, Sexuality and Enlightenment: Kankyo no Tomo*, *Monumenta Nipponica*, vol. 50, no. 3 (Autumn 1995), pp. 325-56 (or other works by her listed next week).


Karen Brazell (trans.), *The Confessions of Lady Nijô*, Stanford Calif., Stanford University Press, 1973 [autobiography of a court lady who became a nun written about 1300; cf. works by Pandey & the article on this listed next week]


(note that there are a few articles on women and medieval Buddhism in the *Journal of Japanese Studies*, volume 10, 1983)


Further Reading:

Conventional (i.e., problematic) sources on Shintô:


On folk religion/folklore:


General:


Ian Reader *et al*, *Japanese Religions, Past and Present*, Kent, Japan Library, 1993


Week Six (16 April)
Heian: The Classical World in Women's Diaries

Themes:
It is not often that we find works by women taking pride of place in a culture’s classical literature, yet, in Japan, Lady Murasaki’s Tale of Genji, Sei Shônagon’s Pillow Book, and poetic diaries such as Izumi Shikibu’s are now counted amongst its greatest classics. Interestingly, however, that they achieved this status has much to do with gender constructs that held that real writing (in Chinese), the language of scholarship, was the preserve of men; clearly, works in pure Japanese (in the simple phonetic script, kana: known then as onnade or ‘women’s writing’) were more likely to become Japanese classics.

The picture of Heian society that has been pieced together by historians would be even more hazy than it currently is, if not for these literary works by women. In this tutorial, therefore, we look particularly at the diarists, and at what their works suggest about the world in which they lived around a thousand years ago. Centred on the imperial court in Heian-kyô (Kyôto), this was a world that was not, comparatively speaking, very large nor populous, yet is notable for its highly developed sense of aesthetics and general refinement. Needless to say, notions of what constituted an ideal man at this time and in this (aristocratic) class (eg., Murasaki’s ‘Prince Genji’) differed greatly from gender constructs in warrior society later. What also differed considerably was the fact that, whilst Heian society was clearly patriarchal in some respects, aristocratic women at that time had more rights and more autonomy than upper-class women in later times could claim. One should note in this connection that Confucianism, which Morris rightly notes was waning in influence by mid-Heian, had clearly had little impact on marriage, the family system and general status of women. The diaries themselves illustrate this (though indications of the influence of Buddhism abound).

Questions:
a) Drawing on Heian literature, discuss the aesthetics of personal taste, accomplishments and charm in Heian aristocratic society.
b) Using sources such as Heian diaries for historical understanding or interpretation is clearly useful in some respects, but limited in others. Reflect upon their historiographical uses and limits.

c) What do Heian diaries suggest about gendered roles and identities in Heian aristocratic society? [refer to two or more of the diaries, and bear in mind that ‘gender constructs’ include masculinity/s; if the focus is on masculinity/s, the Tale of Genji would certainly be useful since he exemplified the ideal aristocratic male; Morris’ chapter on male-female relations is a lot more useful for this question than the one in the Kit]

d) Compare the narrative styles of different diaries, including The Tosa Diary written by a man, reflecting upon the impact of social constructions of gender on Heian literary forms. [on the Tosa diary see Bowring, Miner’s intro., and/or Miller’s book]

Key Readings
Textbook: Walthall, Ch.2 ‘Heian Japan (794–ca.1180)’, pp. 30–45


William N. Porter (trans), The Tosa Diary [by Ki no Tsurayuki], London, Frowde, 1912 [another translation is in Miner’s book above].

Rebecca L. Copeland & Esperanza Ramirez-Christensen (eds), The Father-Daughter Plot: Japanese Literary Women and the Law of the Father, Honolulu: Univ of Hawaii Press (online access to whole book through the library catalogue: of the first 4 chapters 3 are on Heian diarists/poets and one on the Kamakura Confessions of Lady Nijō: the first chapter is on the diary in the Kit)


Further Reading:
Other diaries etc:


[there’s also an interesting article on Prince ‘Genji as rapist?’ in the gender in Asian studies e-journal, Intersections; can’t recall the details but it’d be easy enough to find]

Commentaries:
[intros to each of the above]
[Literal collections would also be useful for this week: e.g., *Anthology of Japanese Literature.*]

On women’s changing status:
[Readings from earlier weeks on early religion and state, and under Bushidô week; also essays in *Women and Class in Japanese History & Recreating Japanese Women*]
Joyce Ackroyd, ‘Women in Feudal Japan’, *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan*, 3rd Series, vol. 7 (November 1959), pp. 37-68 (old but good; online access from library catalogue)

**Week Seven (23 April)**

**Zen Culture/Warrior Culture**

**Themes:**

The bushi and ‘Bushidô’ (‘the way of the warrior’) have long been romanticized—by scholars, Japanese militarists and political activists especially of the extreme right; also, of course, by non-Japanese Eastern mysticism, aesthetics or martial arts enthusiasts, macho types, fans of manga and animé, and so on. The same goes for Zen, in general and with regard to its strong influence on warrior culture. Students of history should be wary of popular enthusiasms and myths, however, and subject readings (such as Suzuki) to critical scrutiny.

Potentially, there are various topics this week for discussion and essays: the transition to shogunal rule; warrior culture in general, from medieval to Tokugawa Japan; Zen’s influence upon artistic culture; and the intimate connection between Zen and samurai (the nature and reasons for Zen’s influence and how the relation affected each). Without a doubt, one effect was a tension between Buddhist (including, in theory, Zen) pacifism and the warrior’s violent profession, which arguably resulted in a marked ambivalence toward violence in Zen.

Both Zen and Confucianism had a profound impact on samurai spirituality and ethics, and also political action and notions of heroism. Warrior codes always combined indigenous warrior traditions with both Zen spirituality and Confucian ethics, though the Zen influence was predominant before Tokugawa. This notwithstanding, authors (e.g., Bellah) have long argued that ‘the’ (singular?) samurai code of
action was centred on Confucian notions of duty and loyalty to lord or clan, and therefore self-sacrifice or denial; and this has led to rather ‘orientalist’ and essentialistic assumptions that it (like Buddhism or, indeed, Japanese culture in general) was not at all individualistic. Arguably, however, warrior codes of practice also involved other commitments, loyalties or duties—for example, to oneself or to one’s own integrity or honour, involving self-cultivation, completion and assertion. Concerning the external loyalties (say, to lord, clan or family) and ‘grand Causes’ that samurai supposedly always sacrificed themselves for, the views of the highly influential Zen master, Dōgen (founder of Sōtō Zen) are thought-provoking. His views on the oneness of practice and realization (means and end) appear to have influenced both spiritual and secular action amongst samurai. In samurai and samurai-influenced heroic traditions, medieval and modern, there has been a strong tendency to glorify action as an end in itself: the ‘sincerity’ of the act is all-important regardless of the nature of worldly ideals and end-goals or whether the latter happen to be achieved.

Questions

a) How and why did Zen become so popular with samurai? [start with Suzuki…]

b) The sort of ideas found in Daidôji’s teachings on bushidô were not simply a spontaneous moral code that all samurai felt they should live up to, but (political) ‘ideology’. Discuss (e.g., whose interests did such texts serve?)

c) Artistic culture in medieval and later Japan was influenced by Zen to the extent that arts ranging from Nô theatre and the tea ceremony to poetry, ink painting, architecture and garden design are commonly called the ‘Zen arts’. What was the nature of this influence?

d) Not surprisingly, given its close historical connection with a warrior class, Zen has long been ambivalent toward violence. Discuss its contradictory stance, drawing on examples from writings by Zen priests or practitioners. [e.g., Takuan, Musashi, Yamamoto Tsunetomo, Suzuki Shôsan, Wilson’s translation of Ideals of the Samurai etc…]

e) What part did individualism (or ‘egoism’) play in warrior ethical codes and secular practice—ie., despite the doctrinal emphasis in Zen of ‘ego-annihilation’, and selflessness, altruism and loyalty in Confucianism)? [cf. sources by Ansart, Bowen Raddeker, Dōgen, Huber, Buruma, Morris, Mishima, etc.]

f) Compare Japan’s medieval ‘knightly’ culture with roughly contemporaneous ones in Europe. Was Japan’s period of classic ‘feudalism’ essentially different?

Key Readings

Textbook: Walthall, Ch. 3 ‘Kamakura Japan (1180–1333)’, pp. 46–62 & Ch. 4 ‘Japan’s Middle Ages (1330–1600), pp. 72–85 (ignore the documents)


Abe Masao, Zen and Western Thought, University of Hawaii Press, 1985, pp. 216-22 [essay by Dōgen referred to above, re ‘original purity’ in Mahayana Budhism].
Mukoh Takao (trans.), *The Hagakure: A Code to the Way of the Samurai* [by Yamamoto Tsunetomo, c.1716], Hokuseido Press, 1980 (known as the classic of Tokugawa bushidô, written by a former samurai Zen priest)


Further Readings
On shogunal rule, daimyô etc:

On Zen & Zen arts/culture:
(works by Brian Victoria on Zen and militarism, modern and predmodern: eg., *Zen at War*)
Winston L. King, *Zen and the Way of the Sword: Arming the Samurai Psyche*, Oxford University Press, 1993
Suzuki Daisetz, [same as above, 2 chaps on Zen and Swordsmanship].
George Elison & Bardwell L. Smith (eds), *Warlords, Artists, and Commoners: Japan in the Sixteenth Century*, University Press of Hawaii, 1981 (contains various essays on the culture of tea, the performing arts, poetry, etc)

On the samurai, their lives, moral codes, constructs of heroism etc:


E. Herbert Norman, ‘People Under Feudalism’, *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars*, vol. 9, no. 2 (1977), pp. 56-61 [and/or his monograph on Shôeki listed in the ideology wk].


Week Eight (30 Apr)
16th -Century Revolution & the ‘Christian Century’

Themes:
Revolution & ‘3 heroes’: Part one of this week’s topic is about the [re-]unification of the land toward the end of the sixteenth century and the legitimation of the new Tokugawa order after their victory in 1600. Possible topics for discussion include the sixteenth century ‘revolution’; representations of the three ‘great heroes’ (unifiers of Japan: Nobunaga, Hideyoshi & Tokugawa Ieyasu); the nature of the new state (methods of social control); and also the ‘closed country’ myth.

Firstly, there has long been a tendency in histories of Japan to treat these three generals as either great heroes or arch-villains, which amounts to much the same thing: the ‘great man’ as single-handed mover of history. Some scholars (such as McMullin), however, have pointed to significant structural (broader socio-economic and military) factors that led to this ‘revolution’—factors with more explanatory power than the personal brilliance or supposedly unique abilities of a few leaders.

Secondly, the Tokugawa system was both new in some respects and not in others. This can be seen when we consider the practical (ie., excluding ideological) measures taken to ensure continued Tokugawa supremacy amongst daimyō (lords); and to control the lower levels of society (both ordinary samurai and the lower classes). The topic of social control raises broader issues, moreover: for example, the question of whether the eurocentric notion of ‘oriental despotism’ is applicable to Tokugawa Japan. It is not if we reject views of the bakuhan system as entirely repressive, autocratic, or even absolutist. This assumption is tied to once-conventional, Eurocentric views of the era as static or rigid because it involved little historical ‘progress’. As Hall notes, the Tokugawa system had been seen to be counter-revolutionary, thus regressive. Hence, he seeks to counter views of Tokugawa Japan as still essentially feudal (even ‘re-feudalized’), as if its ‘natural’ progress to modernism had been held back by rulers with absolutist power. Hall would have done better, however, to distinguish between theory and practice, or ruler’s intentions versus actual results since there is no doubt that they tried in various ways to turn back the clock, seeking to control increasing social mobility, for example (the further development of capitalism and economic power of an emerging middle class) and to strengthen distinctions between the status groups in order to strengthen social control.

Finally, another important historiographical issue concerns the challenge mounted by Toby and Wakabayashi to the conventional assumption that Japan was deliberately ‘closed to the outside world’ and thus ‘isolated’ throughout Tokugawa. The (teleological) myth of ‘sakoku’ (closed country) contributed to earlier Eurocentric views of the period as static since there was little contact with ‘progressive’ (i.e., Western) influences. Like ‘Shintō’, ‘sakoku’ is an enduring myth in works of Japanese history, however.

‘Southern Barbarians’ & the ‘Evil Religion’ (Christianity): The so-called ‘Christian Century’ was between the mid-sixteenth and mid-seventeenth centuries. This topic concerns a first contact and ensuing cultural and/or political conflict. Of particular interest is how Europeans and Japanese perceived each other: How did ‘southern barbarians’ (especially Catholic, mainly Jesuit missionaries) see Japan and the Japanese, and why did Christianity come to be known amongst Japanese antagonists as the ‘evil religion’? One central question we will be considering is whether the ultimate proscription and violent suppression of Christianity by the Tokugawa authorities was due more to ‘cultural’ or to political differences. Undeniably, both were factors. Just one notable cultural difference was the acceptance in Japan of male same-sex relations. Homosexuality, the so-called ‘deadly sin’ (amongst priests and warriors), was something that the missionaries frequently referred to in a scandalized manner (see Cooper’s ‘anthology of European reports…’, chapter on Buddhism, for example; and Pflugfelder’s book).
Questions
a) Assess the relative contributions of the three ‘great unifiers’ to the establishment of a new socio-political order by 1600 with reference to the debate about which was the greatest innovator (or, indeed, whether any one of the three was all that original). [cf. Totman, McMullin, Wakita etc]

b) How would you characterize the period of unification from Momoyama to early Tokugawa: was it entirely progressive or ‘revolutionary’, as Hall indicates, or was it partly retrogressive? [cf., McMullin; Hall reading on the new status system; and something on peasants, e.g. Befu Harumi and/or Herb Bix]

c) Discuss the practical ways in which the new Tokugawa bakufu sought to control potential critics, rebels or enemies at the various status levels, including the ‘politics of compromise’ effected with other lords and the lower social classes (see Befu on the degree of autonomy permitted peasants, for example).

d) The term ‘sakoku’ (closed country) is still commonly used by historians to describe Bakufu foreign policy from the mid-17th century, which is why Tokugawa Japan is said to have been ‘isolated’. Assess the empirical accuracy of such terms [cf. Toby, Wakabayashi etc].

e) Discuss the various ways in which there was a culture clash between the missionaries and the Japanese, including attitudes to sexual morality.

f) Why did many Japanese, especially rulers and the ideologues who served them, come to see Christianity as a threat?

g) What does a close textual reading of the three anti-Christian documents—one each by the apostates, Fucan and Ferreira, and the third anonymous—suggest about the nature of Japanese critiques of Christianity OR political pressures on the authors (orchestration)

h) If ‘orientalism’ is a view of the ‘Other’ as fundamentally different, strange and inferior, to what degree and in what ways did this manifest itself in what the first Europeans in Japan had to say about Japan and the Japanese?

Key Readings

Primary Sources:

Textbook: Walthall, Ch. 5 ‘Edo Japan (1603–1800)’, pp. 95–103
Further Reading

On Christianity
Primary Sources:
Michael Cooper (ed.), The Southern Barbarians: the First Europeans in Japan, Tokyo, Kodansha, 1971

Secondary Sources:
Derek Massarella, A World Elsewhere: Europe's Encounter with Japan in the 16th and 17th Centuries, Yale University Press, 1990.

On the ‘3 heroes’/Unification:


Mary Berry, Hideyoshi, Harvard University Press, 1982.


Conrad Totman, Tokugawa Ieyasu: Shôgun, Heian International, 1983


Totman, Japan Before Perry, University of California Press, 1981, pp. 133-64 (or his new textbook).


Richard Tames, Servant of the Shôgun: being the true story of William Adams, pilot and samurai, the first Englishman in Japan, Kent, Paul Norbury, 1981.

On the Tokugawa State, political system & social control:


Marius B. Jansen & Gilbert Rozman, Japan in Transition: From Tokugawa to Meiji, Princeton University Press, 1986 (parts one and two)


On (the myth of) ‘sakoku’/closed country:


(Marius Jansen’s China in the Tokugawa World and the Cambridge history/s should also be useful)
Week Nine (7 May)
(Tokugawa) Bushidō, Masculinities, Women

Themes:

‘Gender Studies’ is often misunderstood to mean simply ‘women’s studies’ when it is has always been concerned with analysis of social constructions of femininity and masculinity—i.e., what different cultures at different times take to be an ideal woman or man, the ‘proper’ social roles for men and women prescribed by societies, the supposedly ‘natural’ identities they ascribe to males and females, and so on. Thus, the topic for this week focuses partly on samurai women’s changing role, status and situation; but also on gender constructs of femininity and (continuing from the first week on warrior culture and the week on Heian) masculinity, and the way in which gender constructs vary depending upon class (and era).

Notable in connection with changing masculinities is one particular samurai ideal that was popular in Tokugawa, termed ‘Shûdô’, literally, the ‘way of adolescent/younger men’. Adherents (such as Yamamoto Tsunetomo, the author of Hagakure, thought that ‘pure’ love (emotional and physical) could only occur between men. Historically, in patriarchal warrior cultures this has not been an unusual notion (cf. ancient Greece), one clearly based both on an idealization of the warrior/masculinity and denigration of women/the feminine (as well as, of course, simple same-sex desire). Hence, a commonly expressed idea was that wives only had one purpose, to provide male heirs. In Japan, what also contributed to this samurai ideal of comradeship and love was a Buddhist understanding of ‘celibacy’ that, for some priests and bushi, apparently only ruled out sex with women. In Buddhism, too (as elsewhere in the world), women were commonly seen to be essentially sexual, thus spiritually inferior creatures in line with typical gender binarisms that associated mind, soul/spiritual purity, ‘heaven’ etc with maleness, and body, earth, sexual>spiritual pollution etc with femaleness.

Through Tokugawa, Japan’s gender constructs came to be more strongly influenced by Confucianism. We see a classic example of that in Onna Daigaku, a famous early Tokugawa text that came to be a basic teaching text, particularly for samurai women. In the 19th century, however, the more privileged women amongst merchants and peasants were also likely to be familiar with it. It contains classic Confucian views of woman’s ‘nature’ and a long list of rules for ‘proper’ feminine deportment.

Questions

a) How would you explain the obvious deterioration in the status and treatment of samurai women over the centuries in Japan? Clearly, there was much more at work here than merely imported familial models and moral philosophy (i.e., Confucianism).

b) What constituted true (samurai) masculinity or the ideal man in Tokugawa? [Primary sources from the Zen/warrior week and by Tokugawa authors such as Yamamoto Tsunetomo, Saikaku and others would be useful. This is a broad question, so it could refer to Shûdô, as well as merely to Zen/Confucian-influenced notions of a good samurai. Note that the refinements once expected only of higher ranking bushi came to be demanded of lesser ones in Tokugawa’s more educated, ‘bureaucratic’ samurai culture.]

c) In Hagakure, the Tokugawa work that (problematically) has come to be treated in modern times as the classic Bushidō text, the author, Yamamoto Tsunetomo (a samurai retainer then Zen priest) expresses
very definite views on the proper place, morality and behaviour of samurai men and women. What were they, and what sorts of social changes and other factors would have influenced his views?

d) To what degree was samurai culture misogynistic? [Discuss the question with reference to philosophical and other influences upon samurai social practice with respect to women and to representations of gender roles and masculine/feminine nature.]

Key Readings
* Winston L. King, Zen and the Way of the Sword: Arming the Samurai Psyche, Oxford University Press, 1993, pp. 144-8 [section entitled ‘Sexual Mores’ in chapter on Bushidō].

Further Reading
On women, gender, sexuality etc:
Tonomura et al (eds), Women and Class in Japanese History, University of Michigan, 1999
Yamakawa Kikue, Women of the Mito Domain: Recollections of Samurai Family Life, Tokyo, University of Tokyo, 1992 [by 1920 or so, Yamakawa was a well-known Marxist-feminist].

[On differences between the lives, roles and status of samurai, peasant and chônin women, see Lehmann’s The Roots of Modern Japan, pp. 88–100, mostly good but for dubious material on prostitution.]
Week Ten (14 May)
Urban Popular Culture: The ‘Pleasure’ Quarters?

Themes:
This week we look at the popular culture of the chônin (‘townspeople’/urban commoners such as merchants, servants etc) through the eyes of famous authors: the satirical novelists, Ihara Saikaku and Ejima Kiseki; the author of tales of the supernatural, Ueda Akinari; and the famous Bunraku and Kabuki playwright, Chikamatsu Monzaemon (all Genroku era, late 17thC, except for Akinari, 18thC). The general topic for discussion is the ‘floating world’ culture of the new Tokugawa middle classes in the towns, a topic that again raises the issue of whether Tokugawa Japan was as ‘despotic’ or ‘absolutist’ as often represented.

Thus, we also consider the various forms that social/political resistance can take, including humour or satire. Some attention will also be paid to gender construction and roles in the various classes, to commoner sexuality, and to the growing ‘mercantile’ industry of prostitution.

Clearly, the standard name given to the centres of urban popular culture in the Edo era is rather phallocentric since it overlooks the question of how much ‘pleasure’ was to be had by the women involved—i.e., it has little to do with the realities of Tokugawa prostitution. Whilst Saikaku might at times suggest that one of his heroines was in the profession mainly because of an addiction to sex, both he and Chikamatsu were capable of expressing sympathy for prostitutes, most of whom were sold into contracts and treated like prisoners by their ‘owners’. (And the authorities helped out by outlawing prostitution outside of the quarters and returning runaways.) The common romanticization of the tayû (highest-ranking courtesans) aside, Saikaku’s famous work, ‘The Woman Who Spent Her Life in Love’, highlights the downward spiral that was inevitably suffered eventually even by women who began their careers as high-ranking courtesans. Few, after all, were ‘lucky’ enough to have their contracts bought out by admiring clients intent on buying a famous wife; and, unlike geisha, only high-ranking courtesans might receive enough training in the arts (music, dance, etc) to serve them in good stead for a post-contract career.

Questions
a) New eras and socio-economic systems tend to bring with them new cultural and artistic forms. Discuss the changing nature and social role of theatre in the Edo era.

b) With regard to authorship, audience and narrative content, what do these stories and plays (by Saikaku, Kiseki and/or Chikamatsu) reveal about the social values of chônin in early Tokugawa?

c) What patterns of gender construction (of femininity and masculinity) can you identify in Chikamatsu’s (and/or Saikaku’s and Kiseki’s) portraits of fictional heroes and villains?

d) In what ways does Saikaku seem cynical about the early Tokugawa (socio-political) status quo and conventional morality? [For this question you should also read other works by Saikaku and commentaries on them.]

e) In relation to Chikamatsu’s and Saikaku’s characterisation of prostitutes (‘amorous’ women who ‘spent their lives in love’), reflect upon questions of power, agency and victimization—both in such texts and in the everyday world of Tokugawa prostitution.

Key Readings


Ejima Kiseki, ‘Characters of Worldly Young Women’ (also in Hibbett)

Donald Keene (trans.), *Four Major Plays of Chikamatsu*, Columbia University Press, 1961 [or other kabuki/bunraku plays in translation; Chikamatsu plays often featured prostitutes as heroines].

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**Further Reading**

**General:**


J. Roberts, * Mitsui: Three Centuries of Japanese Business*, New York, Wetherhill, 1989 [also on merchant culture see relevant sections in textbooks such as Lehmann’s *The Roots of Modern Japan*].


Liza C. Dalby, *Geisha*, University of California Press, 1983/98 [Chap. 4].


Diana E. Wright, ‘Female Crime and State Punishment in Early Modern Japan’, *Journal of Women’s History*, vol. 16, no. 3 (2004), pp. 120–29

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**On Sex, Prostitution & Erotica:**


(also the essay above on earlier prostitution by Janet Goodwin)

On Theatre:

Andrew C. Gerstle, *18th Century Japan: Culture and Society*, (other chaps), Allen & Unwin, 1989 (Chap. 2 on onnagata)


[3rd Quiz in Wk11 tute]

**Week Eleven (21 May)**

**Riotous Pilgrimages & Peasant Protest**

**Themes:**
This week covers both Tokugawa peasant protest and the periodic mass frenzy of (‘religious’?) pilgrimages to Ise involving millions of people, not only peasants but mainly commoners: what the two phenomena had in common and how they differed. Some have suggested that these riotous pilgrimages, despite their partly religious or mystical nature, represented a ritual negation of the political and economic order.

Otherwise, re peasants, peasant tales of peasant heroism (such as the one included in the Kit) reveals how political resistance can take many forms, since the very act of narrating such tales, handing them down to future generations, and having them put into writing was itself a form of resistance. Such tales are often complex, however, since they are multi-authored and intertextual, drawing among other things upon samurai literary/heroic traditions, but for peasants’ own uses. The tale in the Kit features two heroes who are girls (unusually) and the story is quite revealing about various things: sex, courtship and marriage in peasant society (and how that differed from samurai society), the ways in which feminine heroism was gendered, partly through being sexualized, and so on.

We also consider works on the Tokugawa peasants by Walthall in particular, the translator of the peasant tale/s—how her historiographical approach (‘new cultural history’) differs from that of other historians, even other radical historians (e.g., more Marxist-style ones such as Bix and Vlastos).

**Questions:**

a) How applicable to Tokugawa Japan is Marx’s metaphor of religion as ‘the opiate of the masses’? Did it not (as Davis argues) ‘energize the masses for both toil [and obedience] and revolt’?
b) Did ‘class consciousness’ play an important part in peasant protest in Tokugawa? [Be careful to consider ‘class’ consciousness and conflict with the ruling class of samurai as well as within the villages—between peasants of different types.

c) Do a reading of gender construction in peasant tales (both femininity and masculinity) by comparing the one in the Kit with one or more of the others in Walthall’s book.

d) Compare Anne Walthall’s approach to peasant culture and protest with other works on the Tokugawa peasantry, for eg. by Scheiner, Bix, Vlastos, and Kelly. [Review articles by Bowen, Moore, Burton etc would be helpful for this question; and Walthall’s earlier book important, too.]

Key Readings


Walthall (trans., ed.), Peasant Uprisings in Japan (Chap. One: ‘The Sakura Sōgorō Story’), pp. 35-75 (Sakura was the most famous of peasant heroes in Tokugawa)

[Part Two of the article by Davis, in vol. 23, no. 3 (February 1984), pp. 197-221, is also interesting, and contains some different material, for e.g. on fake miracles; otherwise see his book].


Further Reading

On Pilgrimages/millonarianism:


Najita Tetsuo and J.V. Koschmann (eds), Conflict in Modern Japanese History: The Neglected Tradition, Princeton University Press, 1982 [articles on millenarianism and yonaoshi by Wilson and Vlastos; also Hashimoto one on peasant uprisings]


On Peasant Society & Protest:


Barrington Moore Jr, ‘Japanese Peasant Protests and Revolts in Comparative Historical Perspective’ (review essay on works by Bix, Kelly, Vlastos & Walthall; copy available from lecturer)


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**Week Twelve (28 May)**

**Tokugawa Ideology: Toward Restoration**

**Themes**

To maintain social control, rulers and scholars loyal to them developed and disseminated thought supportive of Tokugawa hegemony and the social status quo (‘ideology’). Bushidō’s partial function as ideology, which was tied to the wider political use of [neo-] Confucianism in Tokugawa, was discussed in an earlier week.

Against scholars such as Earl and Maruyama, Herman Ooms has critiqued the conventional view of (Shushigaku) neo-Confucianism as the exclusive hegemonic or State ideology throughout the period. Ooms argues that while there is no doubt that the Bakufu always viewed it positively, it was only by the end of the seventeenth century that this school of neo-Confucianism had gained in influence relative to other schools of thought, for example Buddhism, imperial Shintō and standard Confucianism. It gained what amounted to official Bakufu sanction, moreover, only at the end of the eighteenth century. Tokugawa thought, Ooms would say, was much more differentiated than has often been suggested.

Thus, here we look at the various streams of philosophical-political thought in Tokugawa, including some marginal schools such as Yômeigaku, Rangaku, Mitogaku and Kokugaku that were, or ultimately came to be, viewed by the Bakufu with suspicion. With hindsight we can see that this was for good reason as all contributed to the fall of the Tokugawa and Bakufu system, and its replacement by a ‘restored’ imperial state in 1868.

Also of interest are the ideas of one very radical samurai thinker, Ando Shôeki who, had his ideas been known to late eighteenth-century rulers, would doubtless have been executed. He might be referred to as Japan’s own ‘Marx’ or, better, ‘Kropotkin’ because of his anarchistic belief in village self-government, strong sympathy for the peasants, and outright rejection of all existing schools of thought as ‘mere ideology’ (‘excuses to rob the people’).

Kogaku —‘ancient/classical [ie., Chinese Confucian] studies’ (e.g., Ogyū Sorai)
Shushigaku — a school of neo-Confucianism (Chinese founder, Chu Hsi; Japanese founder, Hayashi Razan)

Yômeigaku — a more radical, less hierarchical school of neo-Confucianism (Chinese founder, Wang Yang Ming)

Mitogaku — school of learning from Mito han, mostly a mix of Shushigaku and imperial Shintô (it and Kokugaku influential in Meiji Restoration)

Kokugaku — ‘national learning/nativism’; classical Japanese studies (hence Close ties with imperial Shintô; like Mitogaku, thinkers such as Motoori Norinaga and Hirata Atsutane were increasingly nationalistic)

Rangaku — ‘Dutch [i.e., Western] learning’, permitted by Bakufu but always with caution (some Rangaku scholars repressed)

Questions:

a) Discuss the ways in which various schools of thought—particularly Mitogaku, (imperial-centred) ‘Shintô’ and Kokugaku, but also others like Rangaku—helped pave the way to the Meiji Restoration of 1868.

b) Discuss the historical significance of one school of thought in Tokugawa (e.g., Rangaku, Mitogaku or Kokugaku) or one general trend (e.g., restorationism).

c) Compare/contrast the degree to which Ishida Baigan (Shingaku) and Andô Shôeki each contested the existing political system and orthodox ideologies.

d) Evaluate Ooms’ ground-breaking critique of the view that neo-Confucianism was Tokugawa ideological orthodoxy throughout the period, comparing his historiographical approach with that of more conventional authors such as Earl, Maruyama, Bellah etc.

Key Readings

Textbook: Walthall, pp. 103–10, 120–34


Andrew Gordon, A Modern History of Japan: From Tokugawa Times to the Present, Oxford University Press, 2003 (Chap. 3: ‘The Intellectual World of Late Tokugawa’)

Further Reading
Week Thirteen (4 June)
The Meiji Restoration/Revolution

Themes
One Japan historian, Beasley, used a phrase traditionally used in China to refer to the sort of context in which ruling (in China’s case, imperial) dynasties were overthrown. The phrase was: ‘troubles at home, danger from abroad’. This pretty much sums up the situation in Bakumatsu (literally, ‘end’ or closing years of, ‘the Bakufu’) between 1853 when the American Commodore Perry demanded that the Bakufu open Japan up to trade and 1868, the year of the (supposed) restoration of emperors to power. Of course, by the 1850s the Tokugawa shogunate was under pressure not only from external threats, since it had faced substantial socio-economic and political problems and dissatisfaction even amongst samurai was rife.
We will spend this week discussing these general developments, and thinking about the context in which an event such as the Restoration could occur. In addition, the actual nature of the event is at issue. Japan historians have mainly agreed that the imperial restoration of 1868 represented ‘revolution’. What they haven’t agreed on is what sort of revolution it was. Smith saw it as an ‘aristocratic’ revolution, for example—which reveals little more than the truism that it was the ruling class of samurai who did most to bring it about—while Beasley regarded it as a ‘nationalist’ one, which accords the event a central cause. My own view is similar to Crump’s in that I see too much attention being paid to causes and, by extension, to the apparent motives or intentions of historical actors. With regard to the question of whether it was a revolution and what sort of revolution it is, what is more to the point is effects; for it is only when we look beyond the 1860s to the 1870s to 90s that we just how dramatic and far-reaching the effects of the Restoration were. Moreover, what is most telling is that most of the participants in the Restoration struggles did not plan (intend) such change; it was hardly the case, for example, that they were intent on abolishing the samurai as a class or status group.

Conservative historians (adherents of modernization theory) were long keen to discredit E. H. Norman’s thesis that the Restoration was mainly brought about by ‘lower samurai’ with merchant backing (the ‘lower samurai-merchant alliance’ thesis). Mainly, they quibbled about just how ‘lower’ in rank they were, and whether there were quite so many ‘rônin’ (roaming lordless samurai) involved as Norman suggested. One cannot deny, however, that most were lower to lower-middle in rank, far from being amongst the samurai elite and far from being well off. In short, most had much to gain materially from opposing the Tokugawa and (ultimately) seeking a new (imperial) system. Huber (in his 1981 book cited below) did detailed research on the material circumstances of participants, which puts the question of motives in a different light. It was hardly the case that the spirit of only ‘sonnô jôi’ (expel the barbarian, revere the emperor) or only ‘nationalism’ and imperial loyalty were at work here. Motives were doubtless more varied and complex than many historians have suggested…..

Questions

a) ‘Troubles at home, danger from abroad’? Was the western menace the only important factor in creating the conditions for major change in late Tokugawa?

b) Picture yourself as a fighter in the Restoration struggles. Describe yourself (your life, situation and work to date), and reflect on the (probably multiple) factors that motivated you to take up arms.

OR to put the question a slightly different way: ‘Men of high purpose’? Do you think that the motives of ‘shishi’ were always so noble or altruistic?

Key Readings


On motivation & constructs of heroism:
Hélène Bowen Raddeker, *Treachrrous Women of Imperial Japan: Patriarchal Fictions, Patricidal Fantasies*, London and New York: Routledge, 1997, pp. 117-30 (for the second question, part of the chapter on heroism, 'noble and nihirisuto' would be useful; also Morris and Buruma)


On the Meiji Restoration/Revolution debate:


Other sources related to the Restoration/Revolution:


