

History and Culture of Modern Japan

The Japan Center for Michigan Universities
Michigan State University
Spring Semester 2009
Dr. P. B. Reagan

Mondays and Wednesdays 1:00- 3:00 P.M.
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Course Description and Objective

This course in the history of early modern Japan begins with an examination of the processes of political and military unification of Japan in the mid 16th century leading to the establishment of the rule of the Tokugawa Shoguns in the early 17th century. It was a dynasty which endured for more than two centuries and whose legacy survives even in the present day. We will study the reordering of Japanese society, economics, and culture. Topics include the transformation of the Samurai, Confucianism, Urban culture, drama, architecture and literature.

Course Prerequisites and Requirements

The student is expected to prepare for class by completing the reading assignments and preparing for selected discussion topics prior to attending class. Attendance, participation in discussions and submission of four writing assignments (5-7 pages) based on assigned topics constitute the core course requirements.

Writing Assignments: (Four@20%): 80%
(Topics and due dates are listed
In the class schedule below)

Attendance, Preparation and Participation: 20%

Required Reading

1. *The Making of Modern Japan*. Marius Jansen. Harvard.
2. *Japanese Culture*. Paul Varley. University of Hawaii.

Recommended Reading

3. *Tokugawa Religion*. Robert Bellah.
4. *Armed Martial Arts of Japan*. G. Cameron Hurst. Yale.
5. *Kaempfer's Japan*.
6. *The Samurai*. Endo Shusaku
7. *The Code of the Samurai*. Daidoji Yuzan.

Regarding basic study, research and writing skills, students are encouraged to refer to **A Student's Guide to History.** Jules Benjamin. Bedford/St. Martin's.

Field Trips and Recommended Places of Interest:

- Theater: Noh, Kabuki, or Bunraku

- Museums: Kyoto Museum of Art, Kyoto National Museum

- Hikone- Hikone Castle, Garden and Museum

- Nara
 - Tôdaiji
 - Shosoin
 - Kasuga Taisha

- Kyoto-
 - Imperial Palace
 - Katsura Rikkyu (Detached Palace)
 - Shugakuin
 - Kinkakuji
 - Ryuanji
 - Nijo-jo

Academic Honesty and Classroom Etiquette

The University's academic policy regarding academic integrity and honesty will be strictly upheld. Cheating, plagiarizing and failure to cite and properly document sources of information will be dealt with according to University Policy.

"The student shares with the faculty the responsibility for maintaining the integrity of scholarship, grades, and professional standards."

In addition, The Japan Center for Michigan Universities adheres to the policies on academic honesty specified in General Student Regulation 1.0, Protection of Scholarship and Grades; the all-University Policy on Integrity of Scholarship and Grades; and Ordinance 17.00, Examinations. (See Spartan Life: Student Handbook and Resource Guide and/or the MSU Web site www.msu.edu.)
(Article 2.3.3 of the Academic Freedom Report)

"Therefore, unless authorized by your instructor, you are expected to complete all course assignments, including homework, lab work, quizzes, tests and exams, without assistance from any source. You are expected to develop original work for this course; therefore, you may not submit course work you completed for another course to satisfy the

requirements for this course. Also, you are not authorized to use the www.allmsu.com Web site to complete any course work in this course. Students who violate MSU rules may receive a penalty grade, including but not limited to a failing grade on the assignment or in the course."
Office of the Ombudsman, Michigan State University

Cell phones, recording devices and other electronic equipment, food and beverages are forbidden in the classroom.

Grading

94-100= A
90-93= A
87-89= B+
84-86= B
80-83= B
77-79= C+
70-76= C
60-70= D

Class Schedule and Assignments

Please note that the student is expected to have read and studied the assigned reading and prepared for discussions prior to each class. Be sure to bring to class the texts under discussion.

Week One Introduction- Historical and geographical Background to Japan

Reading: Varley Chapter One, The Emergence of Japanese Civilization

Discussion: Examine the historical and Mythological origins of the Japanese Polity

Week Two

Readings: Varley Chapter two, The Introduction of Buddhism
Jansen, Chapter One.

Discussion: What were the enduring aspects of Buddhism in Japan in terms of its political and intellectual influence. Was there conflict with indigenous philosophies and religious traditions?

Week Three

Readings: Varley Chapter Six
Jansen, Chapter One. Unification and Pacification

Discussion: What were the greatest challenges facing the three unifiers, Oda, Hideyoshi and Tokugawa. How did each military strategist realize military and political success?

Week Four Paper I due 31 January

Reading: Jansen, Chapters Two and Three

Discussion; Define the Tokugawa State and its relations with Continental Asia.

Week Five

Tokugawa Society and the process of urbanization

Readings: Jansen, Chapters 4 and Five

Discussion: What was the significance of status groups on facilitating social control. How effective was the *sankin-kotai* system?

Week Six,

Readings: Jansen Chapters Six and Seven. The Development of Mass Culture

Varley, Chapter Seven

Discussion: What is meant by "Genroku Culture and how does it still seem to be a source of inspiration and identity in the study of modern Japanese culture?

Week Seven

Reading: Jansen, Chapter Nine

Varley, Chapter Nine, Encounter with the West.

Discussion: What were some of the internal weaknesses already present in the Tokugawa Polity that led to the collapse of the Tokugawa regime?

Week Eight Paper II due 28 February

Reading, Jansen, Chapter Chapter Ten, The Tokugawa Fall

Discussion: Did the opening of the ports inevitably lead to the overthrow of the Tokugawa Regime?

Week Nine

Reading: Jansen Chapter 11, The Meiji Restoration

Discussion: How did the Japanese accommodate the demands of political, social and industrial modernization with traditional core cultural values?

Week Ten

Reading: Jansen, Chapter Twelve, Building the Meiji State

Discussion: Provide a summary of the personal characteristics of the Meiji Leaders

Week Eleven Paper III DUE 18 March

Reading: Jansen, Chapter Thirteen Imperial Japan

Discussion: What were Japan's Imperial interests on the Asian Continent?

Week Twelve

Reading Jansen, Chapters 14 and 15
Varley, Chapter 10. The culture of modernity

Discussion: How would one interpret the "liberalism" of interwar Japan?

Week Thirteen

Reading: Jansen Chapter 17 The China War

Discussion: What factors led to Japan's advance in China?

Week Fourteen

Reading: Jansen, Chapter Eighteen The Pacific War

Discussion: Causes of the War and the effects of Hiroshima and Nagasaki

Week Fifteen Paper IV Due 15 April

Reading: Jansen, Chapter Nineteen and Twenty- Japan since Independence