

**Courtier & Samurai in Early Japan**  
**History 270**

Spring 2009  
SCCT G042  
WF 1:00-2:15

Prof. Thomas A. Wilson  
Office: Elihu Root House 219  
Office hours: WF 2:30-3:30

Texts for purchase

Conrad Schirokauer, *A Brief History of Japanese Civilization*  
*The Diary of Lady Murasaki* trans. Richard Bowring (Penguin)  
Paul Varley, *Warriors of Japan as Portrayed in the War Tales* (Hawaii)

† available on Blackboard under Assignments

\* available on E-reserve (Burke Library course reserves)

All other readings will be on electronic reserve available on the Burke Library webpage under reserves

This course covers the culture, politics, and society of early Japan during the reign of the emperors and courtiers and the medieval period under the shoguns and the samurai. The course examines mytho-historical accounts of the Japanese people in early times; the consolidation of the power of the emperor and courtier clans in Kyōto, the formation of native religious traditions and their interactions with Buddhism introduced from the continent; gender and sexuality; and the emergence of the samurai and military culture in medieval times.

**I. Introduction** to the course (1/21)

**II. Prehistoric Japan** (1/23)

Schirokauer, *A Brief History of Japanese Civilization*, 1-18

**JŌMON Culture** 縄文, ca. 10,000-ca. 300 BCE

Rope Pattern pottery

**YAYOI Culture** 彌生, ca. 300-BCE ca. 250 CE

rice cultivation, occupational specialization, social stratification

**Tomb Culture** (Kofun 古墳), 250-552

haniwa figures 埴輪

**III. Early Japan** (1/28-30)

Schirokauer, *A Brief History of Japanese Civilization*, 18-47

**YAMATO** 大和, 552-710

**NARA** 奈良, 710-794

State and Society

aristocratic families (*uji* 氏), *Tennōke* 天皇家; occupational groups (*be* 部), special ranks (*kabane* 姓), Prince **Shōtoku** 聖德大使, 17 Article Constitution (573-622), Taika Reforms

大改 (645)

- \* “Prince **Shōtoku** and His Constitution,” deBary, *Sources of Japanese Tradition*, 40-62  
1/30: Film: “Shinto: Nature, Gods, and Man in Japan” 48 mins.

#### IV. Classical Japan (2/4-2/13)

HEIAN 平安, 794-1185

Schirokauer, *A Brief History of Japanese Civilization*, 47-76

##### A. Emperor and Court

divine emperor (*Tennō* 天皇) and unbroken succession (*bansei ikkei* 萬世一系)

Shinto 神道 and the “problem of religion”: kami (deities 神); Politics and Society: Taihō Code 大寶 (702), courtier clan (kugyo 公卿), estates (*shōen* 莊園), estate managers (*keishi* 家司), Buddhism, Fujiwara clan, regency (*sesshō* 攝政), cloistered emperor (*in* 院), Minamoto clan

- \* “Grain Petitioning Festival,” *Norito*, Donald Philippi, tr. (Princeton), 5, 17-22, Glossary
- \* “Great Exorcism of the Last Day of the Sixth Month,” *Norito*, 7, 45-49, Glossary
- † “White Peak,” from *Tales of Moonlight and Rain* (*Ugetsu Monogatari*), 98-108  
2/11: Film: Kobayashi Masaki, “Kwaidan” (strange tales)

2/11 Quiz based on Schirokauer, 1-76

##### B. Mythical Histories and the formation of the Way of the Gods (Shinto) 2/13

*Kojiki* 古事記 & *Nihongi* 日本記 (Record of Japan), Izanami & Izanagi, Amaterasu, Ninigi, Jimmu, genealogy and history

[Schirokauer, *A Brief History of Japanese Civilization*, 13-15]

- \* “The Earliest Records of Japan,” “Early Shinto,” *Sources of Japanese Tradition*, 13-31
- † James Boyd and Ron Williams, “Artful Means: An Aesthetic View of Shinto Purification Rituals,” *Journal of Ritual Studies* 13.1 (Summer 1999): 37-52

Shinto Purification Rituals <<http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/JHTI/shinto/project1.html>>

- \* Nelly Naumann, “The State Cult of the Nara and Early Heian Periods,” *Shinto in History: Ways of the Kami*, eds. John Breen and Mak Teeuwen (Hawaii, 2000), 47-67

#### First essay due 2/22

900-1000 word essay on *Shinto* belief or practice (if this distinction is even viable) based on an original analysis of at least two primary sources listed under section iv of the syllabus; no outside sources may be used unless by instructor’s prior consent. State your thesis clearly and develop your argument on the basis of specific passages in the sources; use Schirokauer’s *A Brief History of Japanese Civilization* and class notes for historical background as needed and cite those sources wherever you draw information from them even when not quoting them directly. Submit to <[twilson@hamilton.edu](mailto:twilson@hamilton.edu)> as email attachment with doc name: “lastname1.doc”

#### V. Buddhism 佛道 (2/18-3/4)

Therevada 小乘 & Mahāyāna 大乘

Gautama Sakyamuni, samsara/seishi 生死, karma/inga 因果, nirvana/nehān 涅槃; Four

Noble Truths, Eight-fold path, dharma/ho 法

† “Nara Buddhism,” deBary, *Sources of Japanese Tradition*, 100-121

Tendai 天台

Saichō (767-822), *Lotus Sutra*, “skillful means,” Genshin (942-1017)

† “Saichō and Mount Hiei,” deBary, *Sources of Japanese Tradition*, 124-142 (top)

Pure Land 淨土

True Dharma 正法, Reflected Dharma 像法, Degenerate Dharma 末法; **Hōnen**  
(1133-1212), Shinran (1173-1263), one calling

† “Genshin’s Deathbed Nembutsu Ritual in Pure Land Buddhism,” *Religions of Japan in Practice*, 166-175

Shingon 真言 and Tantric/Esoteric Buddhism

Kūkai (774-835), mandala, Three Mysteries

† “Kūkai and Esoteric Buddhism,” deBary, *Sources of Japanese Tradition*, 153-170

Nichiren (1222-82)

*honzon* 本尊, three bodies

† “Nichiren: The Sun and the Lotus,” deBary, *Sources of Japanese Tradition*, 292-305

Zen 禪 (Meditation)

four sentences, Eisai (1141-1215), Rinzai School 臨濟, *kōan* 公案, *Mumonkan*; **Dōgen**  
(1200-53) and the Soto School 曹洞

† “Eisai’s Promotion of Zen for the Protection of the Country,” *Religions of Japan in Practice*,  
63-70

### Second essay due 3/14

900-1000 word essay on *Buddhism* (sec v) or *sexuality* (sec vi) based on an original analysis of at least two primary sources listed on the syllabus; no outside sources may be used unless by instructor’s prior consent. State your thesis clearly and develop your argument on the basis of specific passages in the sources; use Schirokauer’s *A Brief History of Japanese Civilization* and class notes for historical background as needed and cite those sources wherever you draw information from them even when not quoting them directly. Submit to <twilson@hamilton.edu> as email attachment with doc name: “lastname2.doc”

## VI. Gender and Sexuality (3/6-3/13)

- Murasaki Shikibu (978-ca. 1016), *The Diary of Lady Murasaki*, (including “Introduction,” ix-xxxix)

[Schirokauer, *A Brief History of Japanese Civilization*, 61-68]

† Shirasugi Etsuo, “Envisioning the Inner Body in Edo Japan: The Inshoku Yōjō Kagami 飲食養生鑑 (Rule of Dietary Life) and Bōji yōjō Kagami 房事養生鑑 (Rules of Sexual Life),” *The Imagination of the Body and the History of Bodily Experience*, 31-49

**Spring Break:** begin reading *Warriors of Japan*

## VII. Medieval Japan: Shogun and Samurai 征夷大將軍と侍士 (4/1-4/10)

## KAMAKURA 鎌倉, 1185-1333

Gempei War (1180-85) & shogunate: Taira Kiyomori (1118-81), “tent government” (bakufu 幕府), Minamoto no Yoritomo (1147-99), shogun (barbarian suppressing general), three bureaus; emergence of the samurai: warriors (*bushi* 武士), warrior regiment (*bushidan* 武士團), military land stewards (*jitō* 地頭), Jōei code, 1232

Varley, *Warriors of Japan* (begin reading)

Schirokauer, *A Brief History of Japanese Civilization*, 78-100

Film: Mizoguchi Kenji, “Shin Heike monogatari: Tales of the Two Courts”

Imperial Court under the Shoguns

Kemmu Restoration (1333-36): Emperor Go-Daigo (1288-1339), Kitabatake Chikafusa (1293-1354), *Jinnō Shōtōki* 神皇正統記 (1339)

† “Kitabatake Chikafusa and the Southern Court,” *Sources of Japanese Tradition*, 257-264

## ASHIKAGA/MUROMACHI 足利/室町, 1336-1600

Onin War (1467-77), Warring States (Sengoku, 1467-1568); daimyo 大名

Schirokauer, *A Brief History of Japanese Civilization*, 100-130

## VIII. Samurai Culture 武士道 (4/15-4/24)

Varley, *Warriors of Japan* (finish reading)

4/15 Quiz based on Schirokauer, 78-130

## IX. Reunification under the Tokugawa Bakufu (4/29-5/8)

TOKUGAWA 德川, 1600-1868

A. Ideology, conquest and reunification under Tokugawa 德川

Oda Nobunaga (1534-82), Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1536-98), Tokugawa Ieyasu (1542-1616)

Schirokauer, *A Brief History of Japanese Civilization*, 142-163

† “Toyotomi Hideyoshi,” deBary, *Sources of Japanese Tradition*, 458-472

B. Culture and society of early-modern Japan

Confucianism, Kabuki 歌舞伎 and Bunraku 文楽, chōnin 町人 culture

† “Neo-Confucian Orthodoxy,” deBary, *Sources of Japanese Tradition*, 335-363

† Chikamatsu Monzaemon (1653-1725), “The Love Suicides at Amijima”

Film: “Double Suicide,” Shinoda, dir. (105 mins.); based on Chikamatsu’s play

C. Nativism & Restorationism

Schirokauer, *A Brief History of Japanese Civilization*, 167-183

† “Motoori Norinaga on the Two Shrines at Ise,” Tanabe, *Religions of Japan in Practice*, 435-450

† “**Shintō** in the History of Japanese Religion: An Essay by Kuroda Toshio,” Tanabe, *Religions of Japan in Practice*, 451-467

4/29 Quiz based on Schirokauer, 142-183

Third essay due 5/2

900-1000 word essay on life in medieval Japan based on an original analysis of at least two primary sources listed on the syllabus; no outside sources may be used unless by instructor's prior consent. State your thesis clearly and develop your argument on the basis of specific passages in the sources; use Schirokauer's *A Brief History of Japanese Civilization* and class notes for historical background as needed and cite those sources wherever you draw information from them even when not quoting them directly. Submit to <twilson@hamilton.edu> as email attachment with doc name: "lastname3.doc"

final course grade determined on the basis of the following:

Quizzes	15% (5% each)
essay #1	25%
essay #2	25%
essay #3	25%
class participation	10%

Papers are graded on four broad criteria:

1. **Argument:** formulation of a *thesis*, *support* of the thesis on the basis of a compelling *argument* and effective *interpretation, analysis* of pertinent *primary-source evidence*. A *compelling argument* comprises a clearly formulated *thesis* – the broadest, most general point of the essay – that is consistently evident at the beginning, middle, and end of the essay and effective, persuasive interpretation of sources. Be sure to develop your ideas fully and summarize the content of your sources only very sparingly, if at all. A thesis or argument should be based on your own interpretation of the sources, but be sure to acknowledge points that are not your own in notes or in the text (e.g., “according to Paul Varley early tales about the samurai portray a very different image of the warrior in classical times...”). Raise your own critique of the sources, consider how you think the author might respond to these criticisms. A *thoughtful interpretation* requires digging beneath the surface meaning of the texts to a subtler understanding of their connections to broader (social, political, etc.) contexts.

2. **Written expression:** clarity and persuasiveness of prose and effective integration of evidence (e.g., quotations) into your own prose. A well-written paper requires thorough reading and precise written expression. A thorough understanding of your sources depends upon close reading, careful reflection, and *re-reading*. The most important ideas of the essay should be clearly stated, explicated, and documented. Explain passages that you quote with transitional sentences that help the reader understand what exactly in the quotation you believe is pertinent to your argument and how exactly it connects with your thesis. Precise written expression requires writing, editing, and *re-writing*.

A “*prose*” grade of C– (i.e., slightly less than “satisfactory”) is assigned to grammatically correct but informal and stylistically weak writing; and D+ or below for repeated infractions of basic rules of writing, depending upon frequency and egregiousness of such errors.

3. **Documentation:** cite all sources of information that you use, *even if you do not quote a source directly* in your essay. If you do not cite the sources from which you derive information, or

on which you base your description of an event, or interpretation of an idea, etc., the implication is that the idea is your own, or that it is based on your own primary research. Failure to cite such sources is *plagiarism*. Be sure to cite exact page numbers of any source from which you quote directly, although it is rarely necessary to cite the same source more than once in the same paragraph. Use proper citation forms (i.e., footnotes, end notes, in-text parenthetical notes) as described in the *Hamilton College Style Sheet*. Be consistent in the citation format used.

4. **Mechanics:** correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation.

An “excellent” (i.e., A) essay presents a *compelling argument* for a thoughtful and imaginative *interpretation* of the sources that is evident only upon thoroughly reading and re-reading the sources and careful reflection on the problems raised.

A “good” (i.e., B) essay is *clearly written* and *logically sound*.

A “satisfactory” (i.e., C) essay meets the basic expectations of the assignment.