

# ARISTOCRATIC AND FEUDAL JAPAN

History 194A  
Outline for Fall 1982

[BACK](#)

## Description

This course surveys the cultural, social, religious and political aspects of Japanese life from mythological times through the seventeenth century. Readings are translations from writing by Japanese who lived during the era they describe.

## Prerequisites

None. No previous knowledge of Japanese language or culture is assumed.

## Texts

Conrad Totman, **Japan Before Perry**.

Murasaki Shikibu, **The Tale of Genji**, trans. Arthur Wayley.

Donald Keene, trans., **Chushingura**.

Howard Hibbett, trans., **The Floating World in Japanese Fiction**.

These items are available in the local bookstores. Some supplementary materials are on reserve in Shields Library.

## Instructor

Earl H. Kinmonth, 154 Voorhies Hall, Office phone - 752-1636

Office hours - Monday 9:00 - 12:00 (regular) and Friday 9:00 - 12:00 (optional). Other times can be arranged.

## Format

Two meetings each week on Tuesday and Thursday in 233 Wellman from 9:30 - 11:00 am.

The lectures will frequently present material not found in the readings. If you know in advance that you will miss a lecture, ask the instructor to tape it for you. Many lectures will be supplemented by slides. Questions can be raised at any time; there are no separate discussion sections.

## Required Work

Three papers of 5-7 pages length based on the assigned readings. The last of these serves as the final examination.

## Topical Outline

The dates given below are very tentative. Adjustments may be necessary. You should not expect a close correlation between reading assignments and lectures.

### THE BEGINNINGS (1-2)

September 23, 28--The Modern Significance of 'Ancient' Japanese History

Readings:

Totman, **Japan**, chap 1.

Lu, **Sources**, chap 1.

David Lu, *Sources of Japanese History* (vol. 1), was to have been a text for this course. It is now out of print and must be read on reserve. For that reason it is not a required reading, only highly recommended.

### ARISTOCRATIC JAPAN

(3-7) September 30 - October 14--The World of Genji, The 'Shining' Prince

Readings:

Totman, **Japan**, chap. 2.

Murasaki Shikibu, **The Tale of Genji**.

Lu, **Sources**, chap. 2, 3.

Those with a long term interest in Japanese history or literature may prefer the Seidensticker translation of Genji. If so, read the first one-sixth as equivalent to the Wayley version.

For a well-written summary of Heian high culture, see Ivan Morris, *The World of the Shining Prince*. (on reserve)

Film *World of the Heike Monogatari* (Earmark 27).

(\* ) October 19--FIRST ESSAY DUE

(\* ) October 27 is the last day to drop.

## MEDIEVAL JAPAN

(8-13) October 19 - November 4--The Rise of the Warriors

Readings: Totman, **Japan**, chap. 3.

Lu, **Sources**, chaps. 4, 5, 6.

E. Kinmonth, ed., "Warrior Romances and Household Instructions." (on reserve)

Some may find Peter Duus, **Feudalism in Japan**, to be a helpful, lucid treatment of this period.

(\* ) November 9--SECOND ESSAY DUE

## EARLY MODERN JAPAN

(14-20) November 9 - December 2--Life in the Age of Shogun

Readings:

Totman, **Japan**, chap. 4.

Lu, **Sources**, chaps. 7, 8, 9.

Keene, **Chushingura**.

Hibbett, **Floating World**.

Film *Kabuki* (JC 30)

**Learning from Shogun** by Henry de Witt Smith is not only an excellent work for those who have read *Shogun* and need help separating 'fact' from 'fiction.' It is a good summary of social history for seventeenth century Japan. (on reserve)

(\* ) December 6--FINAL EXAMINATION

Any student wishing to turn in a final paper on December 6th may do so. You may, however, present your course work as late as 13 December (by 12:00) without special permission.

[Top of Page](#)

[BACK](#)