Winter 2006 • ASIAN 152 / HIST 152

Introduction to Japanese Civilization

Lec: M•W 1-2:30 pm  
MLB Lecture Room 1

Rec: F 9-10am 3520 Frieze  
F 10-11am 3518 Frieze  
F 11am-12pm 3508 Frieze

Instructor: Jeremy Robinson  
jjrobins@umich.edu  
Office: M•W 3-4 pm  
1098 Frieze  
Phone: 647-9842

GSI: Matty Wegehaupt  
omatty@umich.edu  
Office: W 9:30-11:30am  
Beanster’s (Michigan League 1F)  
AIM: omattybul

Japan is often characterized as a country which is simultaneously ultra-modern and extremely traditional. Over the course of Japan’s history, the country has undergone many upheavals in which contact with foreign cultures and mass adoption of foreign elements has led to a deliberate rethinking of the nature of Japanese culture, yet ancient traditions and beliefs still retain power in the Japan of today. This class will examine the course of Japan’s culture from its prehistory to the present day through its history, religion, literature, theater, and art. Through attention to both cultural continuity and cultural change, we will attempt to gain an understanding of Japan and its ability to constantly recreate itself for new circumstances while retaining elements of its earlier self. At the same time, we will look for change within seeming continuity and continuity that underlies times of great change, in order to question the notions of national identity, unchanging tradition, and adaptive brilliance which have characterized stereotypes of Japan, both by the West and by the Japanese themselves.

This course makes extensive use of the University of Michigan’s online CTools (formerly CourseTools), both to distribute readings and as a forum for submitting and responding to reaction papers, so becoming comfortable using CTools on a daily basis is vital to your success in this course. You can access CTools using any web browser at http://ctools.umich.edu, click on the login button in the upper right hand corner, and login using your University of Michigan uniqname and password. You should see a set of tabs for the courses in which you are enrolled, including one for the lecture section and one for your recitation section of this course. The lecture section can be accessed by students in all recitation sections and will be used to distribute readings and videos, while the recitation sections will be used for online discussion forums for students in each individual recitation. The interface is fairly straightforward, but if you have no experience using the system or are uncomfortable with computers, let the instructor or GSI know immediately and we can help you get started. Sometime before your second recitation section, you should submit a self-introduction as your first posting to the discussion groups. Let me and your classmates know a little bit about yourself and your past experiences, why you are taking this course, and what you hope to get out of the class.

Evaluation will be on the basis of class attendance and participation, online reaction papers and responses, a midterm exam, and a final exam. You can think of the class as divided into two half-terms, with half of your requirements fulfilled in each half and an exam at the end of each one.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance and Participation (In Recitation)</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Six Online Reaction Papers</td>
<td>6 x 5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ten Online Responses</td>
<td>10 x 2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>20%</td>
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Most important, both to your grade and to the success of the class, is keeping up on the readings, being prepared to discuss them in recitation, and regularly posting online. Participation in the online forums makes up fully half of your grade; if you keep up on them it is very difficult to fail, but if you don’t keep up it is very difficult to do well. Over the course of the semester you will be required to post at least six
reaction papers and at least ten online responses to the CTools online discussion group. A reaction paper should be approximately 1.5 to 2 pages long (if it were printed out, double-spaced) and should articulate your reaction to that day’s readings. It does not need to be a formal argumentative essay, but it should be more substantive than mere summary. It is intended to present your reaction to the material in light of your own experience and the issues previously discussed in class, and should show an active engagement with the text. Because they are intended to reflect your reaction to the readings prior to hearing the instructor lecture on them, reaction papers must be posted online prior to lecture class. Three of these papers are required in each half of the semester and you may choose any of the readings to which you wish to respond, but you may not write more than one in any given week. Most weeks, there will also be a video to watch (available via the lecture section in CTools) before your Friday recitation, and you may also write reaction papers on these videos. If you choose to do this, you must post your reaction paper prior to 10pm on Thursday, the night before your recitation, in order to give other students time to read and respond to it. Other students’ reaction papers for each week should be considered the required readings for your recitation section, so make a point of reading all reaction papers, and perhaps writing an online response to them, before coming to class on Friday. The online responses are less formal than the reaction papers and there is no set length, but they should show a willingness to engage with other students’ ideas rather than relying only on one’s own interpretation of the text. A minimum of five of these responses are required in each half of the semester, but you are encouraged to write more. In order to be sure your reactions and responses are credited properly, begin the title of each post with “Reaction #” or “Response #.” Friday recitation sections will use the online discussions as a starting point for further discussion of the issues raised that week, and responses posted after the recitation will not count toward your required minimum total, though you are welcome to continue online discussion if you wish.

There are three required texts for this course, available at Shaman Drum Bookshop:
Conrad Schirokauer, et al., *A Brief History of Japanese Civilization* (2nd ed.) *BHJC*
William deBary, et al., *Sources of Japanese Tradition* vol. 1 (2nd ed.) *SJT*
Donald Keene, ed., *Modern Japanese Literature: An Anthology* *MJL*

Additional readings will be made available in pdf format under “Resources” in the lecture section of CTools (and marked “online” on the syllabus). Frequently used additional readings are listed below, and the books are available in Course Reserves at the library (with the exception of the 2nd volume of *Sources of Japanese Tradition*.) Given the number of students and the limitations of time, however, students are encouraged to use the online versions of the texts rather than relying on library reserves.

Helen McCullough, *Classical Japanese Prose* *CJP*
Stephen D. Carter, *Traditional Japanese Poetry* *TJP*
William deBary, et al., *Sources of Japanese Tradition* vol. 2 (2nd ed.) *SJT2*
Karen Brazell, ed. *Traditional Japanese Theater* *TJT*
Haruo Shirane, ed. *Early Modern Japanese Literature* *EMJL*

It should go without saying that plagiarism is a serious offense and will not be tolerated. It is assumed that all work submitted by students is their own and appropriate acknowledgement of material from outside sources must be observed in all written assignments.

This course fulfills Humanities Distribution.
Course Schedule

Week One
Friday, January 6  Syllabus & Introduction

Week Two
Monday, January 9  Prehistoric and Ancient Japan
  Readings:  * BHJC pp. 3-26
             * SJT pp. 3-23

Wednesday, January 11  The Nara Period
  Readings:  * BHJC pp. 26-46
             * SJT pp. 40-42, 50-59, 75-83

Friday, January 13  Recitation
  Assignment:  * Introduce yourself in CTools discussion groups *
  Video:  No video this week

Week Three
Monday, January 16  Martin Luther King Jr. Day – No Class

Wednesday, January 18  The *Man’yôshû*
  Readings:  * TJP pp. 17-71 (online)

Friday, January 20  Recitation
  Video:  * Shintô: nature, gods and man* (online)

Week Four
Monday, January 23  The Heian Period
  Readings:  * BHJC pp. 49-61
             * SJT pp. 123-137, 140, 150-157, 165-170

Wednesday, January 25  Heian Art and Literature
  Readings:  * BHJC pp. 61-77
             * CJP pp. 38-55, 70-75, 102-109 (online)

Friday, January 27  Recitation
  Video:  * Japanese History and Literature, vol. 1* (online)

Week Five
Monday, January 30  Heian Literature
  Readings:  * SJT pp. 197-204
             * *Tale of Genji* (Tyler trans.), pp. 1-18 (online)
             * CJP pp. 156-179 (online)
Wednesday, February 1       The Kamakura Period
  Readings:  \textit{BHJC} pp. 79-99
              \textit{SJT} pp. 205-222, 292-295, 302-305

Friday, February 3          Recitation
  Video:  \textit{The Tale of Genji} animated film (online)

\textbf{Week Six}

Monday, February 6         Kamakura Literature
  Readings:  \textit{SJT} pp. 364-369, 387-388
              \textit{TJP} pp. 145-167 (online)
              \textit{CJP} pp. 377-392 (online)

Wednesday, February 8      Military Tales
  Readings:  \textit{SJT} pp. 265-291
              \textit{Tale of Heike} (McCullough trans.), episodes: 4.11, 5.7, 6.7, 7.8,
              7.16, 9.4, 11.4, 11.7, 11.8, 11.9 (online)

Friday, February 10         Recitation
  Video:  “Hôichi the Earless” from \textit{Kwaidan} (online)

\textbf{Week Seven}

Monday, February 13        The Muromachi Period
  Readings:  \textit{BHJC} pp. 101-119
              \textit{SJT} pp. 306-313, 319-325, 388-398

Wednesday, February 15     \textit{Renga} and \textit{Nô}
  Readings:  \textit{SJT} pp. 369-383
              \textit{TJP} pp. 275-279, 303-309 (online)
              \textit{TJT} pp. 115-157 (online)

Friday, February 17         Recitation
  Video:  \textit{The Tradition of Performing Arts in Japan} (online)

\textbf{Week Eight}

Monday, February 20        The Unifiers
  Readings:  \textit{BHJC} pp. 123-139
              \textit{SJT} pp. 433-467

Wednesday, February 22     Midterm Exam – Bring a Blue Book

Friday, February 24         No Recitation this Week

\begin{itemize}
  \item Spring Break – No Classes 2/25 – 3/5
\end{itemize}
Week Nine

Monday, March 6  
Readings:  
* BHJC pp. 143-164  
* SJT2 pp. 1-14, 29-34, 49-52, 57-67, 186-194 (online)

Wednesday, March 8  
Readings:  
* TJT pp. 303-313 (online)  
* SJT2 pp. 331-338 (online)  
* EMJL pp. 233-242, 313-347 (online)

Friday, March 10  
Video:  
Recitation  
* Bunraku (online)

Week Ten

Monday, March 13  
Readings:  
* EMJL pp. 42-50, 60-66, 131-146 (online)  
* TJP pp. 347-356 (online)  
* CJP pp. 510-513, 522-530 (online)

Wednesday, March 15  
Readings:  
* BHJC pp. 169-189  
* SJT2 pp. 616-638, 661-664, 671-676, 688-690 (online)

Friday, March 17  
Video:  
Recitation  
* Ee ja nai ka (online)

Week Eleven

Monday, March 20  
Readings:  
* BHJC pp. 193-213  
* SJT2 pp. 694-707, 727-734, 745-749 (online)

Wednesday, March 22  
Readings:  
* BHJC pp. 217-239  
* SJT2 pp. 790-795, 811-815, 821-827, 859-863, 886-889, 948-951, 967-975 (online)

Friday, March 24  
Video:  
Recitation  
* The Story of the Last Chrysanthemum (online)

Week Twelve

Monday, March 27  
Readings:  
* Mjl pp. 55-69, 124-133, 159-200, 232-242

Wednesday, March 29  
Readings:  
* Mjl pp. 134-158, 261-277  
* Akutagawa Ryûnosuke: “In a Grove” and “Rashômon” (online)
Week Thirteen

Monday, April 3  Meiji and Taishō literature
Readings: MJL pp. 333-374

Wednesday, April 5  WWII and the Occupation
Readings: BHJC pp. 241-267
SJT2 pp. 980-983, 1006-1013, 1021-1034, 1065-1066, 1070-1072 (online)

Friday, April 7  Recitation
Video: Black Rain (online)

Week Fourteen

Monday, April 10  Postwar Literature
Readings: MJL pp. 383-386, 398-438
Hara Tamiki: “Summer Flower” (online)
Hirabayashi Taiko: “Blind Chinese Soldiers” (online)

Wednesday, April 12  Japan to the present
Readings: BHJC pp. 267-297
SJT2 pp. 1094-1100, 1281-1285, 1288-1298, 1302-1305 (online)

Friday, April 14  Recitation
Video: Mononoke Hime (online)

Week Fifteen

Monday, April 17  Contemporary Literature
Readings: MJL pp. 429-438
Abe Kōbō: “The Magic Chalk” (online)
Ōe Kenzaburō: “Aghwee the Sky Monster” (online)
Murakami Haruki: “The Last Lawn of the Afternoon” (online)

Thursday, April 20  4-6pm  Final Exam – Bring a Blue Book