

THE WARRIOR TRADITION IN JAPAN
Kyoto Consortium for Japanese Studies
Spring 2019

Tuesday and Thursday 2:55 – 4:25 p.m.

Mark Lincicome
Email: ml3837@columbia.edu

OBJECTIVES AND CONTENT

One of the most popular and durable Japanese icons is the *samurai* warrior. Like all traditions, that of the Japanese warrior has evolved over time through a combination of fact and fiction, reality and myth. That is, the warrior class and the warrior tradition each have their own history, and while the two histories often overlap, they are not identical. This course will examine both of these histories: the rise and fall of the warrior class between about the tenth century and the 1870s; and the evolution of the warrior tradition, which arguably originated even earlier and persists today. Each of these histories has, in its own way, contributed to the larger political, social, economic and cultural history of Japan.

Kyoto's reputation as Japan's former imperial capital obscures its place in the history of the samurai. They fought ruthless battles in the city's streets and palace precincts, but they also sponsored the construction of grand villas, temples and shrines. Kyoto was the scene of samurai political plots and intrigue, but also a major center for their practice of the peaceful arts and Zen meditation. One scholar has even dubbed Kyoto the country's first "castle town." Thus, through our study of the samurai, students in this course will also survey the history of Japan and Kyoto.

Approximately half of the required readings are primary sources (in English translation), including an 8th-century gazetteer, excerpts from medieval-era war tales, domain precepts and "house laws," and works of fiction. We will consider the value, and the challenges, of using such sources for the study of history.

FORMAT

Class meetings will alternate between lectures, student-led discussions, eight mandatory field trips and one optional field trip (for extra credit) to relevant sites in Kyoto.

REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING POLICY

1. **READING AND FILM ASSIGNMENTS** The following books (listed in alphabetical order by author) are required for the course. Copies of these texts are available for purchase through KCJS. Reserve copies will also be placed in the KCJS staff office.

- a. Oleg Benesch, *Inventing the Way of the Samurai: Nationalism, Internationalism and Bushido in Modern Japan*, Oxford University Press, 2014 (ISBN978-0198754251)
- b. Hiroaki Sato, *Legends of the Samurai*, Overlook Press, 2012 (ISBN 978-1590207307)
- c. Conrad Totman, *Japan Before Perry: A Short History*, University of California Press, 2008 (ISBN 978-0520254077)

A number of additional required readings will be distributed by the professor in pdf format for you to read on a computer and/or print out on your own. Weekly reading assignments are listed below (see "Class Schedule"), along with a few short documentary films that can be viewed on YouTube.

2. **ATTENDANCE** counts for 10% of the course grade. Regular attendance at all scheduled class meetings and field trips is required. Unexcused absences will lower your attendance grade, as follows: 1 = 92/A; 2 = 83/B; 3 = 70/C-; 4 = F.

Once class has started, please turn off and put away cell phones, and refrain from exiting and re-entering the classroom to use the restroom. Use of laptop computers during class is restricted to course-related activities such as taking notes, referring to reserve readings under discussion, etc.

3. CLASS PARTICIPATION is a vital component of this course: active student involvement in discussions and other planned activities is essential to its success. Both the students and the instructor will be learning from each other's interpretations of the material. Therefore, it is essential that you have all reading and documentary film viewing assignments prepared on time (see "Class Schedule" below for due dates).

You will be graded on three types of class participation:

- (a) Oral comments and questions during class discussions and field trips count for 12% of the course grade.
- (b) Serving as discussion leader for one class (see 4c. below) counts for 5% of the course grade.
- (c) Oral PowerPoint Presentation portion of your Final Project (see 4d. below) counts for 10% of the course grade.

4. WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

- (a) Essay #1 (5 pages) on an assigned topic is due in class on February 5 and counts for 10% of the course grade.
- (b) Essay #2 (5 pages) based on field trips to Nijo and Hikone Castles is due in class on April 2 and counts for 10% of the course grade.
- (c) One discussion paper (3 pages) based on an assigned reading, which you will present in class to lead that day's class discussion (see 3b. above). Due dates to be determined. This paper counts for 8% of the course grade.
- (d) Final Project Write-Up (7-8 pages) (see 3c. above) must be emailed to the professor no later than 4:00 pm on April 23. It counts for 15% of the course grade.

5. EXAM

- (a) A Mid-Term Exam will take place in class on February 28, which counts for 20% of the course grade. A study guide will be distributed in advance.

6. OPTIONAL EXTRA CREDIT ASSIGNMENT

Extra credit may be earned by participating in an optional field trip to the Nogi Shrine, Emperor Meiji's mausoleum and "Fushimi Castle" on Saturday, April 6 AND submitting a 3-page ethnography of the Nogi Shrine on April 11.

Policy on Late Assignment Submissions. Papers will be penalized one letter grade (e.g., from "A" to "B,") for each day they are late. Final Project Write-Ups submitted after the deadline will not be accepted.

Academic Honesty. Plagiarism—the deliberate act of taking the words, ideas, data, illustrative material or statements of someone else, without full and proper acknowledgement, and presenting them as one's own—is a serious offense. It is your responsibility to become familiar with the details of how plagiarism is to be avoided, and the proper forms for quoting, summarizing, and paraphrasing, which are presented in books such as the *Chicago Manual of Style*. Please see the instructor if you have any questions.

Accommodating Students with Disabilities. If you are a student with a disability and have a DS-certified 'Accommodation Letter' please come to my office to confirm your accommodation needs. If you believe that you have a disability that requires accommodation, you can contact your home school's Disability Services or Columbia's Disability Services at disability@columbia.edu. The Office of Global Programs (OGP) can also assist you to connect with Columbia's Disability Services if you wish.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Section I. Early and Classical Periods (5th – 12th Centuries)

- January 15 (1) Course Overview; (2) Early Japan: Historical Background
Reading: *Japan Before Perry*, pp. 1-17; excerpt from the *Kojiki* (pdf.)
- January 17 Early Warrior Legends
Records of Wind and Earth (pdf); Sato, *Legends of the Samurai*, pp. 3-15
- January 22 Political, Social and Cultural Currents in the Classical Period
Reading: *Japan Before Perry*, pp. 18-69
- January 24 The Warrior in Classical Japan
Field Trip to Rokuharamitsuji
Reading: Sato, *Legends of the Samurai*, pp. 16-21, 34-51, 59-87

Section II. The Medieval Period (13th – mid-15th Centuries)

- January 29 Political, Social and Cultural Currents in the Medieval Period
Reading: *Japan Before Perry*, pp. 70-132; “Laws and Precepts of Warrior Houses,” pp. 413-427 (pdf)
Film: “Samurai Warrior” (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yt-190vzfSo>)
- January 31 Buddhism and *Bushido* I
Reading: King, *Zen and the Way of the Sword* (pdf)
- February 5 Buddhism and *Bushido* II
Walking Tour around Doshisha
Printed copy of Essay #1 due in class
Reading: Stavros, “Warriors in the Capital” (pdf); Adolphson, “Religious Elites and the Ashikawa Bakufu” (pdf)
- February 7 Early Literary Representations of the Warrior Tradition
Reading: Sato, *Legends of the Samurai*, pp. 95-109; “The Way of the Warrior” (pdf)
- February 8-9 KCJS Spring Trip
- February 12 *Tale of the Heike (Heike Monogatari)* and Minamoto Yoshitsune
Reading: excerpt from *Tale of the Heike* (pdf); Sato, *Legends of the Samurai*, pp. 110-156
- February 14 *Tale of Great Peace (Taiheiki)* and Kusunoki Masashige
Reading: Sato, *Legends of the Samurai*, pp. 157-203

Section III. The Warring States Period (1460s - 1570s)

- February 19 Bushido in the Age of *Gekokujo*
Film: “Daimyo” (shown in class)
Reading: Sato, *Legends of the Samurai*, pp. 204-251; “Laws and Precepts of Warrior Houses,” pp. 427-432 (pdf)
- February 21 Samurai, Traders and Missionaries during Japan’s “Christian Century”
Reading: “The Evangelic Furnace” (pdf)
- February 26 NO CLASS (make-up class on March 21)
- February 28 **Mid-Term Exam**

March 4-8 NO CLASSES (Spring Break)

Section IV. The Early Modern Period (1580s – 1867)

- March 12 Pacifying the Realm (I): Political Innovation and Consolidation
Field Trip to Hokoji, Toyokuni Jinja, Mimizuka, Rokujogahara
 Reading: Totman, *Japan Before Perry*, pp. 133-144; Stavros, “Castle-town Kyoto” (pdf)
- March 14 Political, Social and Cultural Currents in the Early Modern Period
Field Trip to Konchi-in
 Totman, *Japan Before Perry*, pp. 145-164; “Ieyasu and the Founding of the Tokugawa Shogunate” (pdf)
- March 19 Redefining Samurai Authority, Reinventing Samurai Tradition
Field Trip to Nijojo
 Reading: Sato, *Legends of the Samurai*, pp. 254-304
- March 21 **Field Trip to Hikone Castle**
 Meet at Kyoto Station (schedule TBA)
- March 26 Samurai Influences on Art and Culture
 Reading: Totman, *Japan Before Perry*, pp. 164-199; short stories from Ihara Saikaku, *Great Mirror of Male Love* (pdf)
- March 28 Challenges to Samurai Authority and Tradition
Field Trip to Ryozen Gokoku Jinja
 Reading: Totman, *Japan Before Perry*, pp. 199-232; excerpt from *Musui’s Story* (pdf)

Section V. The Modern Period

- April 2 The Meiji Revolution
Printed copy of Essay #2 due in class
 Film: “Meiji Revolution” (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gURiHVTJX4A&t=1265s>)
 Reading: Benesch, *Inventing the Way of the Samurai*, pp. Introduction and Chapters 1-2
- April 4 Nationalism, Internationalism and the Way of the Warrior
 Reading: *Inventing the Way of the Samurai*, Chapters 3-4; excerpt from Nitobe, *Bushido: The Soul of Japan* (pdf)
- April 6 (Saturday) **Optional Extra Credit Field Trip to Nogi Shrine, Emperor Meiji Mausoleum and “Fushimi Castle”**
 Meet at Momoyama Station (JR Nara Line) (schedule TBA)
- April 9 Imperialism and the Way of the Warrior
 Reading: Benesch, *Inventing the Way of the Samurai*, Chapters 5-6, Benesch, “Castles and the Militarisation of Urban Society in Imperial Japan” (pdf)
- April 11 Competing Legacies in Postwar Japan
Field Trip to Kyoto Museum for World Peace (Ritsumeikan University)
Electronic Copy of Optional Extra Credit Paper due
 Reading: Benesch, *Inventing the Way of the Samurai*, Chapter 7 and Conclusion; excerpt from Mishima, *The Way of the Samurai* (pdf); Plough, “Meiji Restoration Vacation: Heritage Tourism in Contemporary Kyoto” (pdf)
- April 16-18 PowerPoint Presentations of Student Final Projects
- April 23 **Final Project Write-Ups due by 4:00 pm**