PAAS 180
Aspects of Japanese Culture I

Instructor: Timothy Iles
Office: CLC 212
email: timiles@uvic.ca
Office hours: Tuesday, Friday 12:30-1:30 PM; Wednesday, 2:30-3:30 PM

Objectives
This course will introduce the history and culture of Japan to students with little or no prior knowledge of that country. It will cover the period from pre-historic antiquity to the Meiji Restoration of 1868 (the start of so-called Modern Japan.) This is a huge time-period, and so of course the materials presented in class will by no means exhaust the possibilities of further study. Class topics will be selective and introductory, and will concentrate on cultural reflections of historical developments—we will explore the philosophies, religions, arts, and literature of a range of eras, with particular emphasis on the differences between the idealised view of Japan, and its realities. Regular attendance in class and completion of all required readings (which will be assigned in class) before they are discussed are politely but strongly recommended. Don’t like to read or to pay attention? Don’t take this class!

In accordance with the policies of the Department of Pacific and Asian Studies, students who miss more than 10% of classes (in this case, three classes) will not be permitted to write the final exam.

Many of the issues we will discuss have the potential to be controversial. I am committed to creating an equitable, inclusive, and safe educational space. Intolerant or abusive comments or behaviour will be dealt with appropriately.

Tentative Schedule
(Subject to Change as Necessary)

Friday, September 10: Introduction—who are we and what will we do?
  • Overview of the course, assignments, goals.

Tuesday, September 14: Geography and culture
  • the relationship between land and people

Friday, September 17: Are the Japanese Japanese?
  • pre-Japanese people of Japan—paleolithic and early Jomon
  • Main historical periods in Japan

Tuesday, September 21: What was Japan? I
  • introducing the sources of Japanese culture: "pre-Japanese” beliefs
  • Discussion of themes in Ainu folk tales

Friday, September 24: The Japanese Language
• the relationship between social structure and language
• introducing Feudalism, Yayoi and Kofun periods

Tuesday, September 28: What was Japan? II
• introducing the sources of Japanese culture: creation myths, Kofun and Nara periods

Friday, October 1: Early World Views: the religions of Japan
• Shinto and the Other World—gods walk with us
• Comparison with Ainu folk tales

Tuesday, October 5: Shinto rituals and community
• Annotated Bibliography Assignment Due

Friday, October 8: Modern Reflections of Early World Views
• Shinto in a modern world: screening portions of My Neighbour Totoro
• Midterm Essay Topics Assigned

Tuesday, October 12: Introduction to Buddhism
• Main concepts, historical developments, arrival in Japan

Friday, October 15: Buddhism, continued.
• Affinities and differences between Buddhism and Shinto

Tuesday, October 19: Developments in Japanese Aesthetics
• Zen Buddhism, practice, and the Tea Ceremony

Friday, October 22: Court life in Japan
• the aesthetics of the Japanese aristocracy—what is beauty?

Tuesday, October 26: Midterm Exam, in class
• Midterm essay assignment due.

Friday, October 29: Literary expressions of World Views:
• poetry in Japanese literature—simplicity, brevity, evanescence; Hôjôki

Tuesday, November 2: Developments in Japanese Aesthetics, II
• Japanese theatre—Noh

Friday, November 5: Japanese Theatre, continued
• from noh to kabuki, Japanese dance
• Term Essay Outlines Due

Tuesday, November 9: Reading Break, no class

Friday, November 12: Reading Break, no class

Tuesday, November 16: Aesthetics, continued
• The puppet theatre: bunraku

Friday, November 19: The Wages of Stability—250 years of peace
• The rise of the Japanese bourgeoisie: woodblock prints and the ukiyo

Tuesday, November 23: Encountering the West
• The end of isolation
• Term Essays are Due
Friday, November 26: Encountering the West, II
  • total transformation.

Tuesday, November 30: **Final Exam**

Friday, December 3: Last Day of Class
  • exams and term papers returned

## Required Texts

There is no textbook for this course. Many of the readings are available online. Refer to the separate Reading List. Additionally, selected PAAS 180 readings will be on reserve in MacPherson Library.

## Recommended

Schirokauer, Conrad: *A Brief History of Japanese Civilization*

Miller, Roy Andrew: *The Origins of the Japanese Language*

Samson, George: *The History of Japan* (two volumes)

Varley, Paul: *Japanese Culture*


## Grading

Attendance is mandatory. Students who miss more than 10% of classes may not be permitted to write the final exam.

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Students who do not complete all course assignments may receive an N. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that all course requirements are complete before their due dates. **Late assignments will not be accepted.**
Department of Pacific and Asian Studies

Plagiarism and Cheating

The Department of Pacific and Asian Studies upholds and enforces the University’s policies on plagiarism and cheating. These policies are described on pp. 33-34 of the current University Calendar (2010/11). All students are advised to read this section.

Practices that are not acceptable include:

- Persuading or paying someone else to write the student’s assignments, or otherwise presenting someone else’s work as the student’s own;
- Downloading essays or articles from the Internet, or copying passages from books or journals, and presenting them as the student’s own work;
- Citing only a portion of a quotation, and presenting the remainder as the student’s own work;
- Copying from another student or sharing information in examinations or tests;
- Bringing notes or other materials into an examination or test, except as authorised by the examiner or instructor.

In addition, the following kinds of behaviour, unless specifically authorised by the instructor, are unacceptable in an examination: talking or communicating by computer or other electronic device with another student; looking at the work of other students while writing an exam; consulting books, electronic materials or other sources of information.

In every course, the instructor may choose to conduct an additional oral examination, in the presence of another faculty member from the Department, so as to ascertain the level of a student’s knowledge or understanding of the course material.

Departmental Policy Regarding Penalties for Plagiarism and Cheating

The possible penalties for plagiarism and cheating are outlined in the Calendar. An instructor will notify the Chair of the Department of cases of a suspected violation and the Chair will contact the student to arrange an interview with the student and instructor to review the case. If it is determined that a violation of University policy has occurred, the Chair will notify the Director of Academic Advising of the case and a letter of reprimand will be issued to the student. Any repeat offenses will be dealt with directly by the Dean. In the Department of Pacific and Asian Studies, the minimum penalty for a first offence will be a grade of zero for the assignment, examination or test. Depending upon the seriousness of the offense and the weight of the assignment, the Chair may assign a grade of F (0 GPA) for the course. Students will not be permitted to rewrite an assignment, examination or test on which they have been found to be cheating. Records of any violation will be held by the Director of Academic Advising on behalf of the Dean of Humanities. Such records will be destroyed four years after a student graduates. A repeat offence may result in the additional penalty of Disciplinary Probation being placed on the student’s Official Transcript by the Dean; this notation is removed upon graduation.

If you have any doubts about the University’s policies, or want to know if a practice is acceptable or not, you should raise your concerns with your course instructor.
Required Web Resources:

- **Japanese (Pre)History:**
  <http://www.t-net.ne.jp/%7Ekeally/jpnarch.html>, read the sections on the Paleolithic, Jōmon, Yayoi, and Kofun periods.
  <http://www.sacred-texts.com/shi/aft/> Ainu Folk Tales. Sections to be assigned in class.

- **Japanese Poetry**
  http://www.temcauley.staff.shef.ac.uk/commentary.shtml

- **Japanese Religion/Philosophy:**
  <http://www.sacred-texts.com/bud/rosa/index.htm> on Zen Buddhism; sections to be assigned in class.
  <http://www.washburn.edu/reference/bridge24/Hojoki.html> “The Hôjôki” by Kamo no Chômei
  <http://www.anthropoetics.ucla.edu/ap0501/tea.htm> On the tea ceremony.

- **Japanese Theatre:**
  http://jguide.stanford.edu/site/traditional_theater_339.html
  http://www.nohmask21.com/eu/index.html (want to buy your own Noh mask?)
  http://etext.virginia.edu/japanese/Noh/
  http://www2.ntj.jac.go.jp/unesco/noh/en/
  http://www.kabuki21.com/
  http://www.theatrehistory.com/asian/kabuki001.html
  http://bunraku.or.jp/ebunraku/index.html

- **Japanese Art:**
  http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/ukiyo-e/

Required Journal Articles:


**Required Texts on Reserve:**

Morris, Ivan *The world of the Shining Prince: court life in ancient Japan* DS851 M6, Introduction and Chapter1, 2

Earhart, H. Byron *Religions of Japan: many traditions within one sacred way*, BL2202 E1823, Chapters 2, 3

Varley, Paul *Japanese Culture*, DS821 V36, Chapters 1, 2 (Chapter 3 is optional)

Saikaku, Ihara “The Travelling Salesman who Sold Advice,” from *Some Final Words of Advice*, tr. Peter Nosco, PL794 S25E5


**Recommended:**

