Japan in the Age of the Samurai

History and Film

Image removed due to copyright restrictions. Image from anime, *Samurai Champloo*.

Course Description

- ✓ Intro to History of Japan's Medieval Period, 1185-1867
 - ✓ Pre-1185: Rule by emperor and aristocrats
 - Japan ruled by warrior class(samurai)
 - Feudal Society/Period of war and fragmentation, then peace and unification
 - Flourishing of Buddhist values and arts
- Experiences of warriors, courtiers, clerics, peasants, and merchants
- Films: How is Medieval Japan Viewed Today?

Unit 1

- Ways of the Warriors
 - What was the warrior ideal and how did it evolve and change over time?
 - Why was such an ideal necessary? What function did it serve?
 - What types of warriors were there? How did they really act?

Unit 2



- Spiritual and Supernatural Worlds
 - ✓ What is Japanese "spirituality"?
 - How did it operate in popular and elite culture?
 - Zen Buddhism, Secular Buddhism, Christianity, Popular Tales

Unit 3: Worlds of Pleasure/Worlds of Pain

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See http://www.unicamultimedia.com/p1/images/Utamaro.jpg

- ✓ What were the experiences of women?
- How did different classes interact with each other?
- ✓ What were the tensions between social values and human feelings/relationships?

Why Medieval Japan?

- Development of traditional Japanese arts, philosophy and religion
- Continued presence in contemporary popular imagination
- Dynamic, rich, multi-faceted society populated by diverse peoples

Temples



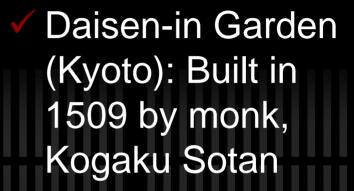


- Great Buddha(Daibutsu): Statue ofAmida Buddha castin 1252
- Kinkakuji (Golden Temple): Zen
 Temple Built by
 Yoshitsune in 1397

Zen Gardens



Image removed due to copyright restrictions. Photograph of Daisen-in Garden.





Ryôanji (Temple of the Peaceful Dragon)Noh/Kabuki

Noh/Kabuki



Images removed due to copyright restrictions. Photographs of modern Kabuki and Noh actors.

Bunraku (Puppet Theater)



Image removed due to copyright restrictions.

Bunraku puppet.

See: http://www.city.osaka.jp/yutoritomidori/susume/eng/images/showbiz/bunraku.jpg

Image removed due to copyright restrictions.

Bunraku puppet and operator.

See: http://www.bookmice.net/darkchilde/japan/japan/raku.jpg

Tea Ceremony (Chanoyû)



Image removed due to copyright restrictions. Ceremonial tea cup.

Image removed due to copyright restrictions. Schoolgirls practice performing the tea ceremony.

Mito Kômon



Images removed due to copyright restrictions. Photographs from the television series *Mito Kômon*.

Abarenbô Shogun



Image removed due to copyright restrictions. Photograph from the television show *Abarenbô Shogun*.

Image removed due to copyright restrictions.
Image from anime *Samurai 7.*See: http://www.samurai-7.com/download/s7k_1024_768.jpg

Image removed due to copyright restrictions.
Promotional image for animated series, *Afro Samurai*.
See: http://static.flickr.com/9/12514638_a7e54edf58_o.jpg

Films for Unit 1



- "Hôichi the Earless" from Kwaidan (Kobayashi Masaki, 1964)
- Seven Samurai (Kurosawa Akira, 1954)
- Forty-Seven Rônin (Mizoguchi Kenji, 1940-1941)
- Recommended: Throne of Blood (Kurosawa Akira, 1957)

Films for Unit 2



- Ugetsu (Mizoguchi Kenji, 1953)
- Onibaba (Shindô Kaneto, 1964)
- Sen no Rikyû (Teshigahara Hiroshi, 1990)

Films for Unit 3



Image removed due to copyright restrictions.
Image from Samurai Rebellion.

Image removed due to copyright restrictions. Image from *Utamaro and His Five Women*.

- Utamaro and His Five Women (Mizoguchi, 1946)
- ✓ Double Suicide (Shinoda Masahiro, 1969)
- Life of Oharu, (Mizoguchi, 1952)
- ✓ Samurai Rebellion (Kobayashi, 1967)

Assignments

- and the second
 - Class Participation: 20%
 - Attendance
 - Contribution to Class Discussions
 - ✓ Weekly Response Papers
 - Around 250 to 300 words.
 - Usually, I'll give a question beforehand
 - ✓ Post to website by Thursday, class time!
 - Also bring to class
 - ✓ You may skip 1 response paper

Assignments (cont.)

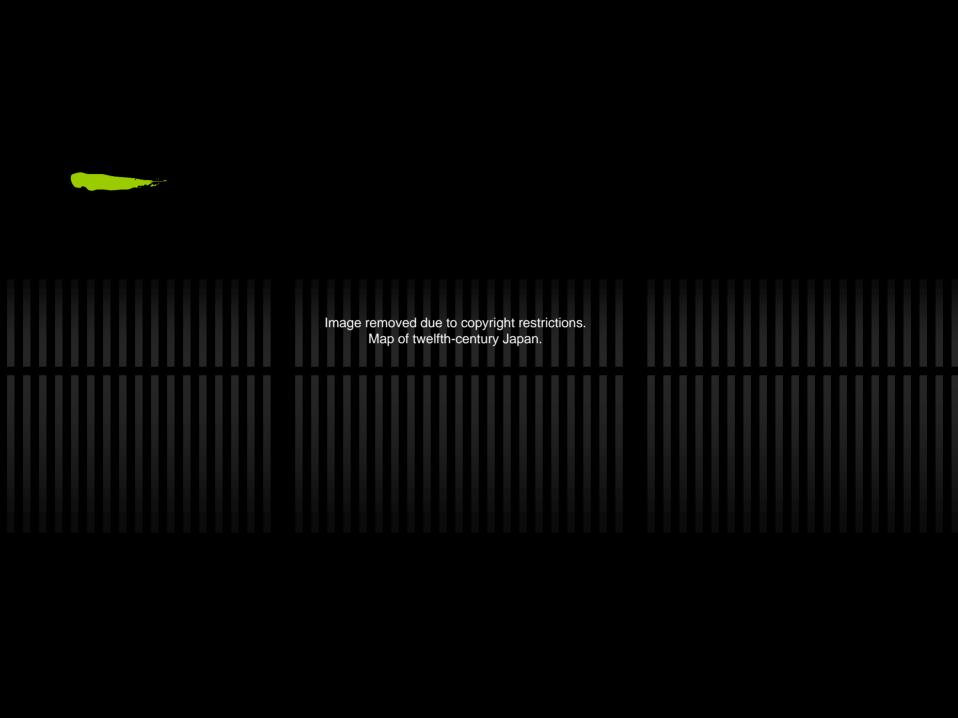
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 - ✓ Three essays: 45%
 - √ 1,500 words, six double-spaced pages
 - Grading based on presentation of argument, organization, and articulateness of writing
 - ✓ Show familiarity with readings, films, and lectures
 - Do not plagiarize: When in doubt, cite or insert quotation marks, then cite.
 - Questions in syllabus

Assignments (cont.)

- and the second
 - ✓ Short Exam (Sept. 26): 10%
 - ✓ ID format
 - Based on "historical overview" and readings until exam.
 - ✓ Final Exam: 25%
 - ✓ IDs and essay questions
 - Covers course as a whole

Geography, 1185-1600

- Pre-1185 Japan was a group of countries under authority of court in Kyoto
- ✓ 4 main islands: Kyûshû, Shikoku, Honshû, Hokkaidô
- East vs. West Japan
- Main Regions: Kinai, Kantô, Kyûshû, Chûgoku, Shikoku, Tôhoku, Hokkaidô



Kinai Region

- and the second
 - Heart of the Country
 - Around 2 million people
 - ✓ Kyoto: Imperial Court
 - ✓ Nara: Ancient capital/Center of Buddhism
 - Lake Biwa: major trade area
 - Heavy rice cultivation

Western Regions

- and the second
 - Kyûshû, Chûgoku, Shikoku
 - Sanyôdô: Road linking Kinai to Kyûshû
 - Maritime culture along sea route to Kyûshû: fishing, shipping
 - Around 2 million people
 - ✓ Base of Taira (Heike) warrior clan

Kantô

- and the same of th
 - ✓ Tôsandô: Road from Kyoto to northern and eastern Kantô
 - Best land for rice cultivation, high yields
 - Plains for horse breeding
 - Tôkaidô: Coastal road from Kyoto to Edo (southern and western Kantô)
 - Kamakura: Seat of warrior political power: 1185-1333
 - Base of Minamoto (Genji) warrior clan

Tôhoku, Hokkaidô, Tsushima, Ryukyu islands

- Tôhoku: sparsely populated, mountainous, semi-independent
- Hokkaidô: Semi-nomadic North Asian peoples, Ainu tribes peoples
- Ryukyu: semi-independent kingdom with strong ties to China
- Tsushima: Economic and political ties to Korea

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Map of the provinces of medieval Japan.

See: http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~chgis/japan/images/hall_medieval_prov.jpg

Tales of the Heike



Image removed due to copyright restrictions. Modern illustration for *Tales of the Heike*.

Story

- Genpei War, 1180-1185
- Genji (Minamoto) vs. Heike (Taira) warrior clans
- Taira leader: Taira no Kiyomori
- ✓ Dominates Kyoto imperial court of Go-Shirakawa (Hô-ô)
- Genji Leader: Minamoto no Yoritomo

Taira no Kiyomori



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See http://www.sonic.net/~tabine/Heike/Heike_Graphics_aGeneral/heike_kiyomori03.jpg

Go-Shirakawa (Hô-ô)



See http://www.sonic.net/~tabine/Heike/Heike_Graphics_aGeneral/heike_goshirakawa.jpg



Story (cont.)

- First half of Tales of Heike focuses on the history of Kiyomori (Sadler, 22-110)
- Second half: fall of the Taira (Sadler, 110-end)
- Focuses on fates of various Taira figures who suffer and die because of Kiyomori's sins

Other Minamoto leaders

- and the second
 - ✓ Kiso Yoshinaka: Genji leader who drove Heike from Kyoto to the Inland Sea in 1183.
 - He plunders Kyoto and asserts independence.
 Defeated by Genji forces in 1184.
 - Minamoto Yoshitsune: Yoritomo's half-brother. Defeats Heike forces at Ichi-no-tani in 1184.
 - ✓ Last of Heike forces killed at Dan-no-ura in 1185.



✓ Kiso Yoshinaka

Image removed due to copyright restrictions.

See http://www.amy.hi-ho.ne.jp/gehen/picture/Yosinaka3.jpg

Image removed due to copyright restrictions.

See http://images.artelino.com/images/images/heike-monogatari2.jpg

MinamotoYoshitsune

Other Important Facts

- and the second
 - Most famous example of "Warrior Tale" genre
 - Originally sung by biwa hôshi: wandering blind minstrels who entertained commoners
 - Sung to appease restless spirits of those who died in Genpei War
 - By late 1200s, numerous written versions appeared: each different
 - Definitive Kakuichi Version (1371): upperclass acceptance and patronage

Biwa hôshi



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See http://www.sonic.net/~tabine/Heike/Heike_Graphics_aGeneral/Biwa_hoshi_Tokyo_Museum.jpg

What to Look for



- Romantic tales/anecdotes of emerging warrior ethos during Early Medieval Age
- Buddhist sense of "impermanence of things"; pathos
- Non-warrior characters: women, priests, and nobles

Caution!!

- Don't get overwhelmed by all the names and ranks.
- If overwhelmed, use character glossary
- Just get a sense of the different tales.
- Chinese figures and tales often appear
- ✓ Start reading now!

Historical Readings

- war.
 - Kamakura Age (1185-1333)
 - Muromachi Age (1333-1568)
 - ✓ Azuchi-Momoyama (1568-1600)
 - Edo Period (1600-1868)
 - Do not get overwhelmed by density of facts.
- Get sense of basic structures and developments of each period