

EAST 306

Current Topics: Japanese Studies 2

Society, Culture, and Identity in Early Modern Japan

Winter 2022

T/TH 4:05-5:25 PM

Location: 688 Sherbrooke, Room 361

McGill University

INSTRUCTOR

Dr. David Porter

Office: Ferrier 330

Office Hours: Tuesday 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM – available in person OR by Zoom

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OVERVIEW

This course explores the dynamics of Japanese society during the Tokugawa era, which lasted from 1600-1868. Students will learn about topics like the workings of the status system, family structure and ideas about gender, the conquest and management of Ainu lands in the northern island of Hokkaidō, and the spatial and social organization of Japanese cities and villages. They will explore how the Tokugawa order came into being out in the wake of the preceding period of intense warfare and examine the radical shifts that occurred in response to the arrival of American and European imperial powers in the middle of the nineteenth century and the political demise of the Tokugawa regime. The course aims to give students the opportunity to explore topics relevant to their own lives and societies, like gender, sexuality, ethnicity, religion, disability, and colonialism, in a social, cultural, and political context very different from their own.

READINGS

You should purchase a copy of Amy Stanley, *Stranger in the Shogun's City: A Japanese Woman and Her World* (New York: Scribner, 2020), which is available at Le James Bookstore or for purchase online.

All other readings will be available online via MyCourses.

COURSE STRUCTURE

We will meet two days per week and class sessions will include both lecture and discussion. Students are expected to have read the assigned readings for each class session in advance in order to be well-prepared to discuss those readings during class.

ASSESSMENT

In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University's control, the content and/or evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change.

Map Quiz (5%)

We will have an in-class quiz on **January 20** to ensure that you have basic familiarity with the geography of Japan. This is aimed at helping you contextualize the information that you encounter during the entire course. A guide to the quiz will be posted on MyCourses one week in advance – you will be expected to have familiarity with major features of both the political and physical geography of early modern Japan.

Class Participation (10%)

You will be expected to make thoughtful contributions to class discussions that show clear evidence of having done the required readings. Your contributions should be responsive to your classmates' comments and should always be respectful to everyone else in the room. Quality is more important than quantity – of course, if you don't say anything, you aren't participating – but one or two excellent comments will impress me far more than dominating the conversation with ideas that suggest that you haven't actually done the reading. Attendance is not graded explicitly, but since it is impossible to participate without being present, you will receive no credit for participation if you are absent without a valid excuse.

Midterm Exam (30%)

You will take an in-class mid-term exam **on February 22**. In the midterm you will be expected to write identifications of 6 terms (which you will choose from a group of 10 possibilities), each worth 1/6 of the midterm grade.

ID terms will be taken from both lecture and readings. You are expected to write 1-2 paragraphs about each term, demonstrating BOTH that you have a grasp of basic factual information about the person/thing being discussed AND (more importantly) their significance. That is, tell me not just who or what the term refers to, but why they/it matter. The best answers will relate the term to broader themes in the course: how does understanding the term shape our understanding of the social order of early modern Japan?

Book Review (20%)

You will write a book review of Amy Stanley's *Stranger in the Shogun's City*, **due on March 25 at 5 PM**. Your goal will be to evaluate her depiction of the life of Tsuneno in light of what you have learned in class and in your other readings about early modern Japanese society. You will

be limited to a **MAXIMUM of 1250 words**. Further instructions will be distributed two weeks in advance of the due date.

Note that in order to review this book, you will of course need to read it. A suggested reading schedule is included on the weekly schedule for the syllabus. Since we will not be talking about the book every week, there is no requirement that you follow this schedule precisely, but you should do your best to keep up.

Take-Home Final Examination (35%)

You will have **72 hours** for a take-home final examination during the exam period, consisting of **2 essays, each of no more than 1000 words**. One essay question will focus on material covered since the midterm, while one will be relevant to the entire course. These questions will be broad, requiring you to synthesize material from both readings and lecture from multiple weeks.

COURSE POLICIES

Absences and Late Work

You are expected to attend all class meetings and to submit all work on time. Missed class will result both in failing to learn the material covered (which can affect your success in other assignments) and in a failure to participate in discussion, directly lowering your participation grade. I recognize that there will be situations that make it impossible (or unwise) for you to attend class or to submit a paper on time, including illnesses (if you're sick, please rest and recover; don't come to class). I treat my students as responsible adults; if you are genuinely unable to come to class or submit a paper on time for a legitimate reason, I simply ask that you inform me **IN ADVANCE** (no extensions are offered if they are requested after an assignment's due date) and let me know the reason. Please tell me the length of extension that you believe you require; no indefinite extensions will be granted (though note that the actual length of extension you receive will depend on the nature of your excuse and is at my discretion). I reserve the right to request documentation of your excuse.

Unexcused late assignments will be marked down by 5% for each day late, though in no case will a paper that would otherwise receive a passing grade receive a failing grade (which is to say, you won't drop below a D), as long as it is submitted by the end of the semester. Note that I have a grading deadline – in no case will assignments be accepted for credit after April 29. Students with serious extenuating circumstances may contact me about arranging a grade of K (incomplete), but these will only be granted in very rare situations, and requests must be made as far in advance as possible.

Covid-19-Related Academic Accommodations

Per McGill policy, all students in need of academic considerations on account of Covid-19 are required to fill out the online form, available in the "Personal" tab of their Minerva account, titled "COVID-19 Academic Accommodations Request Form." You should contact me directly as well, but the university insists on maintaining centralized tracking and it is mandatory to use the official form.

Office Hours

I will hold regular office hours on Tuesdays from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM in my office in Ferrier 330 (and will be simultaneously available over Zoom). I will also be available for appointments outside those times if they are incompatible with your schedule. In order to avoid lines outside my office, appointments should be made in advance for all office hour meetings; for meetings during my scheduled office hours, a sign-up link will be made available via MyCourses. I encourage you to come by early in the semester to chat so that I can get to know you a bit better, as well as to visit whenever you have questions about the course material or assignments or simply wish to talk about East Asian history or your academic goals.

Academic Integrity

“McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the [Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures](#).” (See McGill’s [guide to academic honesty](#) for more information.)

« L’université McGill attache une haute importance à l’honnêteté académique. Il incombe par conséquent à tous les étudiants de comprendre ce que l’on entend par tricherie, plagiat et autres infractions académiques, ainsi que les conséquences que peuvent avoir de telles actions, selon le Code de conduite de l’étudiant et des procédures disciplinaires (pour de plus amples renseignements, veuillez consulter le [guide pour l’honnêteté académique de McGill](#)). »

Language of Submission

“In accord with McGill University’s [Charter of Student Rights](#), students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded.”

« Conformément à [la Charte des droits de l’étudiant](#) de l’Université McGill, chaque étudiant a le droit de soumettre en français ou en anglais tout travail écrit devant être noté. »

STUDENT FEEDBACK

I encourage you to complete a Mercury evaluation for this course upon its conclusion. Your experiences and observations will help me make this class, and all classes I teach, better for future students.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

If you are a student with a disability that requires accommodation, please register with the Office for Students with Disabilities (<https://www.mcgill.ca/osd/>) and inform me of the accommodations you require during the first week of class (or the first week after the disability arises). Anything you tell me will be kept confidential.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Note that in addition to the required reading for each class meeting (which you must complete IN ADVANCE of the meeting), there is a suggested reading schedule for *Stranger in the Shogun’s*

City to help ensure that you finish it prior to writing your book review. The reading schedule for *Stranger in the Shogun's City* is identified with the letters SSC.

All readings other than *Stranger in the Shogun's City* can be found on MyCourses, in the "Content" tab, either in the form of a link to an E-Book version owned by McGill or as a pdf.

Week 1 – Introduction

SSC, prefatory material, prologue, and acknowledgments pp. ix-xxvi, 253-255

January 6 – Course Introduction – The History of Tokugawa Japan

Week 2 – Villages and Rural Life

SSC, ch. 1, pp. 1-30

January 11 – The Rural Economy and Society

Reading:

1. Furushima Toshio, "The Village and Agriculture during the Edo Period," in *The Cambridge History of Japan, Vol. 4*, ch. 10, pp. 478-518.
2. Ninomiya Sontoku's writings on "Agrarian Reform and Cooperative Planning," 9 pp.

January 13 – Village Politics

Reading:

1. Herman Ooms, *Tokugawa Village Practice: Class, Status, Power, Law*, ch. 1., "Mountains of Resentment': One Woman's Struggle Against Tokugawa Authority," pp. 11-70.
2. "Self-Governance in Villages," in *Voices of Early Modern Japan: Contemporary Accounts of Daily Life during the Age of the Shoguns*, ch. 15, pp. 75-78

Week 3 – Marriage and the Family

SSC, ch. 2, pp. 31-58

January 18 – The Organization of the Family

Reading:

1. Marcia Yonemoto, "Adoption and the Maintenance of the Early Modern Elite: Japan in the East Asian Context," in *What is a Family? Answers from Early Modern Japan*, ch. 2, pp. 47-67
2. Kaibara Ekken, "The Great Learning for Women," 7 pp.

January 20 – Family Problems

MAP QUIZ (In Class January 20)

Reading:

1. Harald Fuess, *Divorce in Japan: Family, Gender, and the State, 1600-2000*, ch. 2, “For the Sake of the House: Edo-Period Patterns, Perceptions, and Precedents,” pp. 18-46.
2. “Obtaining a Divorce,” in *Voices of Early Modern Japan: Contemporary Accounts of Daily Life during the Age of the Shoguns*, ch. 2, pp. 6-11

Week 4 – Religion

SSC, ch. 3, pp. 59-85

January 25 – The Religious Landscape of Tokugawa Japan

Reading:

1. Alexander M. Vesey, “Entering the Temple: Priests, Peasants, and Village Contention in Tokugawa Japan,” *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* Vol. 28, No. 3/4 (Fall, 2001), pp. 293-328
2. Suzuki Shōsan, “Right Action for All,” 6 pp.

January 27 – Christianity and Anti-Christian Persecution

Reading:

1. Fumiko Miyazaki, Kate Wildman Nakai, Mark Teeuwen (trans), *Christian Sorcerers on Trial: Records of the 1827 Osaka Incident*, Introduction, pp. xv-xxxv
2. In addition to the introduction, select one chapter of the above book (note that the e-book only lets you download each “Part” separately, but each part consists of several chapters – YOU NEED ONLY READ ONE CHAPTER). Each chapter consists of translated primary sources dealing with the 1827 incident. In class, you will be teaming up with classmates who read different chapters from you to try to come up with an account of the event that integrates multiple sources.

Week 5 – Cities and Urban Life

SSC, ch. 4, pp. 87-110

February 1 – Urban Politics

Reading:

1. Maren Ehlers, *Give and Take: Poverty and the Status Order in Early Modern Japan*, ch.1, “The Castle Town and Domain of Ōno,” pp. 33-67
2. “Regulating Townspeople in Two Cities,” in *Voices of Early Modern Japan: Contemporary Accounts of Daily Life during the Age of the Shoguns*, ch. 16, pp. 79-84.

February 3 – Urban Spaces and Economies

Reading:

1. Gary P. Leupp, “The Silk Weavers of Nishijin: Wage-laborers in the Tokugawa World” in *The Tokugawa World*, ch. 17, pp. 304-321
2. Selections from Shikitei Sanba, *Ukiyoburo*, in Robert Leutner, *Shikitei Sanba and the*

Comic Tradition in Edo Fiction, pp. 137-139 and 168-183

Week 6 – The Status System and the Samurai Elite

SSC, ch. 5, pp. 111-133

February 8 – The Early Modern Status Order

Reading:

1. John W. Hall, “Rule by Status in Tokugawa Japan,” *The Journal of Japanese Studies* 1.1 (Autumn, 1974), pp. 39-49
2. Maren Ehlers, *Give and Take: Poverty and the Status Order in Early Modern Japan*, introduction, pp. 1-32
3. “Samurai Dress and Grooming Standards,” in *Voices of Early Modern Japan: Contemporary Accounts of Daily Life during the Age of the Shoguns*, ch. 6, pp. 30-32

February 10 – The Samurai

Reading:

1. Constantine Vaporis, *Tour of Duty: Samurai, Military Service in Edo, and the Culture of Early Modern Japan*, Introduction, pp. 1-10
2. Constantine Vaporis, *Tour of Duty: Samurai, Military Service in Edo, and the Culture of Early Modern Japan*, ch. 6, “Life in the Capital,” pp. 172-204.
3. “Private Vengeance among the Samurai,” in *Voices of Early Modern Japan: Contemporary Accounts of Daily Life during the Age of the Shoguns*, ch. 25, pp. 123-126

Week 7 – Artistic and Cultural Expression

SSC, ch. 6, pp. 135-160

February 15 – Culinary Arts

Reading:

1. Eric Rath, “The Tastiest Dish in Edo: Print, Performance, and Culinary Entertainment in Early-Modern Japan,” *East Asian Publishing and Society* 3.2 (2013), pp. 184-214.
2. “Japanese Foodways and Diet” in *Voices of Early Modern Japan: Contemporary Accounts of Daily Life during the Age of the Shoguns*, ch. 8, pp. 37-43

February 17 – Edo Comic Books

Reading:

1. Adam L. Kern, *Manga from the Floating World: Comicbook Culture and the Kibyōshi of Edo Japan*, “A Note on Reading Backwards,” pp. 251-253 MAKE SURE TO READ THIS FIRST, OR YOU MIGHT FIND THE NEXT READING CONFUSING
2. Santō Kyōden, “Playboy, Roasted à la Edo,” Introduction and translation by Adam L. Kern in *Manga from the Floating World: Comicbook Culture and the Kibyōshi of Edo Japan*, pp. 339-426 (I promise, this is way shorter than it sounds)

Week 8 – Sexuality

SSC, ch. 7, pp. 161-194

February 22 – **MIDTERM EXAM** (covers all material through week 7)

February 24 – *Male-Male Sexuality*

Reading:

1. Gregory Pflugfelder, *Cartographies of Desire: Male-Male Sexuality in Japanese Discourse, 1600-1950*, ch. 1, “Authorizing Pleasure: Male-Male Sexuality in Edo-Period Popular Discourse,” pp. 23-97.
2. Ihara Saikaku, *Life of an Amorous Man*, “Strange Mate,” pp. 35-39 and “Lovelorn Man in a Tree,” pp. 147-149.

WINTER READING BREAK, February 28 – March 4

Week 9 – The Status System and the Marginalized

SSC, ch. 8, pp. 195-222

March 8 – *Beggars and Outcastes*

Reading:

1. Maren Ehlers, *Give and Take: Poverty and the Status Order in Early Modern Japan*, ch. 3, “The Management of Mendicancy,” pp. 115-160
2. “Outcastes in Tokugawa Society,” in *Voices of Early Modern Japan: Contemporary Accounts of Daily Life during the Age of the Shoguns*, ch. 30, pp. 140-143

March 10 – *Disability*

Reading:

1. Gerald Groemer, “The Guild of the Blind in Tokugawa Japan,” *Monumenta Nipponica* 56.3 (Autumn, 2001), pp. 349-380.

Week 10 – The World beyond Japan

SSC, ch. 9 and epilogue, pp. 223-252

March 15 – *Japan in East Asia*

Reading:

1. Adam Clulow, “The Pirate and the Warlord,” *Journal of Early Modern History* 16 (2012), pp. 523-542
2. Robert Hellyer, *Defining Engagement: Japan and Global Contexts, 1640-1868*, ch. 1, “Interdependent Partners: The Shogunate, Satsuma, and Tsushima,” pp. 25-48.
3. “Tokugawa Japan and Choson Korea,” in *Voices of Early Modern Japan: Contemporary*

Accounts of Daily Life during the Age of the Shoguns, ch. 18, pp. 93-96

March 17 – Tokugawa Japan and Europe

Reading:

1. Michael R. Auslin, *Negotiating with Imperialism: The Unequal Treaties and the Culture of Japanese Diplomacy*, ch. 1, “The Style and Substance of Treaty-Making,” pp. 11-33.
2. “Treaty of Amity and Commerce between the United States and Japan, July 29, 1858” in Michael R. Auslin, *Negotiating with Imperialism: The Unequal Treaties and the Culture of Japanese Diplomacy*, appendix 3, pp. 214-221.

Week 11 – The Gender System

March 22 – Adultery and Prostitution

Reading:

1. Amy Stanley, *Selling Women: Prostitution, Markets, and the Household in Early Modern Japan*, ch. 3, “Negotiating the Gendered Order: Prostitutes as Daughters, Wives, and Mothers,” pp. 72-100.
2. Ihara Saikaku, “The Eavesdropper Whose Ears Were Burned,” part 5 of “What the Seasons Brought the Almanac Maker,” in William Theodore De Bary, trans, *Five Women Who Loved Love: Amorous Tales from 17th-Century Japan*, pp. 151-156.

March 24 – Travel and Movement

Reading:

1. Laura Nenzi, *Excursions in Identity: Travel and the Intersection of Place, Gender, and Status in Edo Japan*, ch.3, “Women on the Road: Identities in Motion,” pp. 71-91
2. “Advice to Travelers in the Edo Period” in *Voices of Early Modern Japan: Contemporary Accounts of Daily Life during the Age of the Shoguns*, ch. 31, pp. 147-151
3. “Documentation for Travel” in *Voices of Early Modern Japan: Contemporary Accounts of Daily Life during the Age of the Shoguns*, ch. 32, pp. 152-156

BOOK REVIEW ESSAY DUE (Mar. 25, 5PM)

Week 12 – Ethnicity and the Ainu

March 29 – Japanese Expansion in Hokkaidō

Reading:

1. Brett Walker, *The Conquest of Ainu Lands: Ecology and Culture in Japanese Expansion, 1590-1800*, ch. 1, “The Consolidation of the Early Modern Japanese State in the North,” pp. 17-47.

March 31 – Ethnicity in Early Modern Japan

Reading:

1. Brett Walker, *The Conquest of Ainu Lands: Ecology and Culture in Japanese Expansion, 1590-1800*, ch. 2, “Shakushain’s War,” pp. 48-72
2. David Howell, *Geographies of Identity in Nineteenth-Century Japan*, ch. 5, “Ainu Identity and the Early Modern State,” pp. 110-130.
3. “Ezo shima kikan” (“The Wonderful Sights of the Island of Ezo”) - <https://webarchives.tnm.jp/imgsearch/show/C0012760>. Examine the images in this set of Japanese-produced images of Hokkaidō and the Ainu from 1800; what can you determine from them about how Japanese understood the Ainu?

Week 13 – Education, Literacy, and the Spread of Information

April 5 – Education and Literacy

Reading:

1. Richard Rubinger, *Popular Literacy in Early Modern Japan*, ch. 3, “Rural Culture and the Rise of Provincial Literati in the Eighteenth Century,” pp. 80-112
2. “A Set of Terakoya Precepts,” in Ronald Dore, *Education in Tokugawa Japan*, Appendix 2, pp. 323-326

April 7 – Publishing and Information

Reading:

1. Mary Elizabeth Berry, *Japan in Print: Information and Nation in the Early Modern Period*, ch. 1, “A Traveling Clerk Goes to the Bookstores,” pp. 1-12.
2. Peter Kornicki, “The Enmeiin Affair of 1803: The Spread of Information in the Tokugawa Period,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 42.2 (December, 1982), pp. 503-533.

Week 14 – Reflecting on the Tokugawa Period

April 12 – The Fall of the Tokugawa and Reflections on the Class

Reading:

1. Kimura Sachihiko, “The Shinsengumi: Shadows and Light in the Last Days of the Tokugawa Shogunate,” in *The Tokugawa World*, ch. 62, pp. 1104-1124

72 HOUR FINAL EXAM WILL BE RELEASED DURING EXAM PERIOD (DATE TBA)