

The Piedmont Project substantially changed the way I treat the environment in undergraduate teaching. I applied to the Piedmont project because I wanted to rethink my survey courses, especially History 371 – Ancient and Medieval Japan. The project has given me the tools and vocabulary with which to do so.

I have rewritten parts of the class to emphasize the different ways in which civilizations have placed stress on the natural environment. In this way I hope to show students how new technologies commonly have complex effects. I had long taught students that the spread of wet-rice agriculture in Japan meant that farmers could produce more food per acre, but could also be more easily taxed. But the introduction of wet-rice agriculture also introduced a set of environmental problems, including diminished soil fertility and increased susceptibility to drought. Japanese farmers adapted but using fertilizers, but this introduced new problems. In this reshaped class I have tried not to present technology or economic growth as “bad,” but rather to make students aware that all growth stresses the environment. I am especially interested in showing a relatively successful case of environmental remediation: the building boom of the 1600s led to deforestation, which was successfully contained in the 1700s through stricter lumbering regulations. Most critically, I want students to think of the environment not as a “modern” problem, but as a basic issue in human history.

Mark Ravina

## ***History 371 Medieval and Early Modern Japan***

**Spring 2004 revised August 19, 2003      Mark Ravina    115 Bowden**

### **Overview:**

This course will examine Japan from prehistory through the early 1800s. This was the era in which much of "traditional" Japanese culture was developed: samurai, geisha, sushi, ninja, Zen meditation, etc. Our focus will be on the production, dissemination, and reproduction of these cultural and political practices. What are practices? How are they reproduced? We will also examine the interconnection of the environment with socio-economic systems. Although we often think of overpopulation and pollution as modern problems, humans have been overtaxing their surroundings for millenia. We will look at how Japanese farmed, ate, and handled their garbage as part of this examination of environmental history.

### **Grading:**

Grades will be based on an in-class midterm (March 6) (15%), a take-home midterm (20%), and an in-class final exam (25%) and a take-home final (25%) and class-participation (15%). The in-class midterm will be on March 6. The take-home midterm exam question will be given on February 20 and due on February 25. The take-home final exam question will be given on April 10 and due on April 15. Both take-home exams should be roughly five double-spaced typed pages. For the grading of the take-home

exams see <http://www.emory.edu/HISTORY/RAVINA/grades.html> . The in-class final exam is on May 1 at 8:30 AM. The in-class exams must be written in a bluebook. I assume no responsibility for exams written on loose-leaf paper, lunch bags, or anything other than bluebooks.

Part of the grade in class participation and, to make sure I can match names and faces, please send (e-mail is great) a photograph of yourself. THIS IS REQUIRED. Also, to make the entire exercise worthwhile, include your name when you send your photograph.

There is a supplemental web page to this class at <http://www.emory.edu/HISTORY/RAVINA/PROJECT/Index.html>. Please refer to the relevant pages.

Please be aware that I cannot give extensions with authorization from the dean's office. Even if I believe your excuse, the computer will score INC as an F without a dean's signature.

### **Pronunciation:**

Vowels in Japanese are pronounced as in Italian. Hence uomo, pasta, prego and bambino should get you through most words. Alternately,

a as in father  
e as in et cetera  
i as in beet  
o as in note  
u as in boot

Vowels with macrons are lengthened, but otherwise remain unchanged. This is an important distinction: shojo means "virgin" while shoojo (shōjo) means "little girl" and shoojoo (shōjō) means, depending on context, the symptoms of a disease or an orangutan. Also important is the distinction between adviser (komon) and rectum (kōmon).

Japanese family names come first. Thus, Itō Hirobumi is Mr. Itō, not Mr. Hirobumi.

Romanized Japanese follows standard capitalization rules. Capitalize only proper nouns. Do not arbitrarily capitalize "Samurai," or "Emperor."

### **Readings:**

Some of the readings are available as PDF files and there are links to most of these texts. Readings marked with an asterisk are photocopies on reserve at Woodruff library.

Readings marked with "+" are more advanced and should be read after the primary readings.

The following books are available at the bookstore.

**REQUIRED:**

Donald Keene, trans. *Chiushingura: The Treasury of Loyal Retainers*

Hall, *Japan from Prehistory to Modern Times*

Lu, *Japan: A Documentary History*

De Bary et. al., *Sources of Japanese Tradition, Volume I*

**RECOMMENDED:**

Keene, *Anthology of Japanese Literature: From the Earliest Era to the Mid-Nineteenth Century*

Nakane and Oishi, *Tokugawa Japan*

---

**SCHEDULE**

**Week one: Jōmon, Yayoi and Kofun (1/21 and 1/23)**

De Bary, et. al., *Sources of Japanese Tradition*, I: 23-40

especially *Wei chih*, pp. 6-8; *Kojiki*, pp. 15-16, 21-23, 25-27; *Nihongi* (or *Nihon shoki*), pp. 13-14, 20-21, 24-25

Hall, *Japan from Prehistory to Modern Times*, pp. 1-47

Lu, *Japan: A Documentary History*, pp. 3-20.

especially *Kojiki*, pp. 5-11; *Wei chih*, pp. 11-14; *Engishiki*, pp. 17-20.

Web outlines of [Paleolithic](#), [Jōmon](#), and [Yayoi](#)

FOR CLASS DISCUSSION PREPARE: *Kojiki* and *Wei chih*

## **Week Two: Asuka and Nara (1/28 and 1/30)**

De Bary, et. al., *Sources of Japanese Tradition*, I: 40-83, 100-111

especially Shōtoku constitution, pp. 50-54, Taika reform edict, pp. 77-83; Keron texts, 108-111.

Hall, *Japan from Prehistory to Modern Times*, pp. 48-61.

Keene, *Anthology of Japanese Literature*, pp. 1-60

especially Manyōshū; pp. 31-53.

Lu, *Japan: A Documentary History*, pp. 21-40

especially Shōtoku constitution, pp. 23-26; Taika reform edict, pp. 26-29; Taihō code, pp. 29-36.

Farris, *Population, Disease, and Land in Early Japan*, 118-149, esp 140-149.

Review of Farris by [Dana Morris](#)

FOR CLASS DISCUSSION PREPARE: Shōtoku constitution, Taika reform edict, Keron texts

ENVIRONMENTAL QUESTIONS: Was Nara Japan overpopulated? What would constitute evidence of overpopulation? What sort of technologies did Nara farmers use?

## **Week Three: Heian Politics (2/4 and 2/6)**

Lu, *Japan: A Documentary History*, pp. 21-40, 81-92.

especially edicts Taihō code, 30-36 and land edicts, 86-92

Hall, *Japan from Prehistory to Modern Times*, pp. 61-74

[\\*Ivan Morris, Sugawara no Michizane](#)

De Bary, et. al., *Sources of Japanese Tradition*, I: 63-99.

especially Taika reform edict, pp. 77-83; Nihon shoki on Nintoku, pp. 74-75

FOR CLASS DISCUSSION PREPARE: Taika reform edict, Taihō code, edicts from edicts from Lu

#### **Week Four: Heian Culture (2/11 and 2/13)**

De Bary, et. al., *Sources of Japanese Tradition*, I: 153-170, 211-237

especially "Ten Stages of Religious Consciousness," 169-170; "Essentials of Salvation," 217-222; Shinran, 227-228,

Keene, *Anthology of Japanese Literature*, 63-66, 106-36.

Lu, *Japan: A Documentary History*, pp. 40-79

especially Lotus sutra, pp. 54-56

FOR CLASS DISCUSSION PREPARE:

"Ten Stages of Religious Consciousness," 169-170; "Essentials of Salvation," 217-222; Shinran, 227-228 from De Bary

#### **Week Five: Kamakura (2/18 and 2/20)**

##### **TAKE HOME MIDTERM HANDED OUT 2/20**

De Bary, et. al., *Sources of Japanese Tradition*, I: 265-280, 307-335

especially Heike monogatari passages on 276-280, and Zen precepts on 316-317, Genjō kōan 325-326, Musō sermon, 328-330.

Hall, *Japan from Prehistory to Modern Times*, pp. 75-102

Lu, *Japan: A Documentary History*, pp. 81-116

especially land edicts 92-101; vassal edicts, 101- 106; and Goseibai shikimoku, 106-116

[\\*Ivan Morris, "Minamoto no Yoshitsune"](#)

Keene, *Anthology of Japanese Literature*, "Heike Monogatari," 179-84; "Account of My Hut", pp. 197-212

FOR CLASS DISCUSSION PREPARE: "Heike Monogatari," "Account of My Hut," Goseibai shikimoku, and Genjō kōan

**Week Six: Muromachi (2/25 and 2/27)**

**TAKE HOME MIDTERM DUE 2/25**

De Bary, et. al., *Sources of Japanese Tradition*, I: 364-376, 413-420

Hall, *Japan from Prehistory to Modern Times*, pp. 102-134.

Lu, *Japan: A Documentary History*, pp. 147-70.

[\\*Ivan Morris, "Kusunoki Masashige"](#)

Keene, *Anthology of Japanese Literature*, "Essays in Idleness," pp. 231-241

[Hall, "The Ashikaga Hegemony"](#)

+[Ruch, "Medieval Jongleurs"](#)

FOR CLASS DISCUSSION PREPARE: "Essays in Idleness" and Nō theater clips

**Week Seven: Warring State era (3/4) and MIDTERM (3/6)**

[Miyagawa, "From Shōen to Chigyō"](#)

[Nagahara, "Village Communities and Daimyo Power"](#)

Lu, *Japan: A Documentary History*, pp. 171-186

FOR CLASS DISCUSSION PREPARE: Lu documents

**Week Eight: Spring Break**

**Week Nine: Unification (3/17 and 3/20)**

Hall, *Japan from Prehistory to Modern Times*, pp. 135-159

[Hall, "Japan's Sixteenth Century Revolution."](#)

[Hall, "Nobunaga, Hideyoshi and the Unification of the Daimyo"](#)

Lu, *Japan: A Documentary History*, pp. 186-201.

De Bary, et. al., *Sources of Japanese Tradition*, I: 433-46

FOR CLASS DISCUSSION PREPARE: Lu documents, Hideyoshi's letter to Korea in De Bary

### **Week Ten: The Tokugawa Settlement (3/25 and 3/27)**

Hall, *Japan from Prehistory to Modern Times*, pp. 160-99.

Öishi, "The Bakuhan System," in *Tokugawa Japan*

Lu, *Japan: A Documentary History*, pp. 203-208, 219-228

Totman, *Early Modern Japan*, pp. 11-99.

William S. Atwell, [\*A Seventeenth-Century 'General Crisis' in East Asia?\*](#)

FOR CLASS DISCUSSION PREPARE: Lu documents

ENVIRONMENTAL QUESTIONS: How did the environment affect the Japanese economy in the 1600s?

### **Week Eleven: The Tokugawa Village (4/1 and 4/3)**

Sato, "Tokugawa Villages and Agriculture," in *Tokugawa Japan*

Nakane, "Japanese Society," in *Tokugawa Japan*

[Walthall, "The Life Cycle of Farm Women"](#)

[Varner, "The Organized Peasant"](#)

["Women and Wisdom of Japan" or Onna daigaku](#)

Lu, *Japan: A Documentary History*, pp. 203-219.

[Totman, "Tokugawa Peasants: Win, Lose or Draw?"](#)

ENVIRONMENTAL QUESTIONS: Was the Japanese economy stressing the natural environment in the 1700s? How did this affect living standards?

ALSO PREPARE: Onna daigaku, Lu documents

**Week Twelve/Thirteen: Tokugawa Popular Culture (4/8 and 4/10)**

**TAKE HOME FINALS HANDED OUT 4/10**

Keene, trans., *Chūshingura*

Comments on the 47 rōnin case:

- [Hayashi Nobuatsu](#)
- [Asami Yasusada](#)
- [Satō Naokata](#)

Masakatsu, "Kabuki and Its Social Background" in *Tokugawa Japan*

Moriya, "Urban Networks and Information Networks" in *Tokugawa Japan*

+ Totman, *Early Modern Japan*, pp. 161-222.

FOR CLASS DISCUSSION PREPARE: *Chūshingura*

**Week Fourteen: Economic Development and Cultural Change (4/15 and 4/22 -- NO CLASS on 4/17)**

**TAKE HOME FINALS DUE ON 4/15**

[Hanley, "Urban Sanitation in Preindustrial Japan"](#)

[Totman, "Preindustrial River Conservancy"](#)

[Totman, "Land-Use Patterns and Afforestation in the Edo Period"](#)

-----

[Motoori Norinaga](#) in Tsunoda, et. al., *Sources of Japanese Tradition*, pp. 514-540

[Aizawa, "Shinron"](#) in Reading in Tokugawa Thought

[Robertson, "Sexy Rice"](#)



ENVIRONMENTAL QUESTIONS: How was the Japanese economy stressing the natural environment in the 1700s and 1800s? How did different levels of government respond? How did Japanese philosophers and intellectuals understand the natural environment?

ALSO PREPARE: Motoori and Aizawa readings

---

Copyright January 2003 Mark Ravina

revised January 15, 2003

[Emory Home](#) | [History Home](#) | [Search](#) | [Index](#) | [Help](#)