



PRELIMINARY READING FOR JAPANESE

Welcome to Queen's and to the Japanese course! This letter is to suggest some reading that will be helpful preparation for your first term here:

-In your first term, you'll undertake intensive study of the modern Japanese language, either starting from scratch or building on your previous knowledge. If you do have prior knowledge of the language, it would be a very good idea to refresh your memory over the summer so that the initial placement test gives an accurate sense of your level. If you're beginning with basics of the language, you will be required to fully memorize the two basic syllabaries, hiragana and katakana, before the first class session – do spend any time needed to make sure you are very comfortable with reading and writing these, so that you can make use of them right away in the first week of language classes. You'll be contacted separately by a language instructor later in the summer with some useful materials for learning hiragana/katakana.

-You will also have a full schedule of lectures and essay tutorials throughout the first year, on a range of topics related to the language, history, literature, and culture of Japan. The first term will cover topics in Japanese linguistics, archaeology, early history, and early literature – you'll be doing your future self a great favour if you do some background reading on these topics over the summer, and the list below would be a good starting point (titles marked with asterisks are especially recommended). If you can't access these particular sources, feel free to substitute others, and to follow your own reading interests as well – but do try to read and think about at least one source each related to Japanese linguistics, premodern history, and premodern literature.

Your summer reading is also a good chance to practice the habit of reading critically and taking useful notes. Consider as you read what kinds of ideas, assumptions, and argument strategies each writer is relying on; keep notes on your observations and on any questions that occur to you, along with noting down the most important points of background information and the key arguments made in each section or chapter. These notes will be useful to you later on as you write essays and discuss them in tutorial.

I hope you have a rewarding summer, and I look forward to meeting you again in October.

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General Background

Ebrey, Patricia Buckley and Anne Walthall. *East Asia: a cultural, social, and political history* (3rd ed). Boston: Wadsworth, 2013.***

Fairbank, J K, E. O. Reischauer, and A. M. Craig, *East Asia: Tradition and Transformation* (Houghton Mifflin, 1989).

Frellesvig, Bjarke. *A History of the Japanese Language* (Cambridge University Press, 2011).

Jansen, Marius B. *The Making of Modern Japan* (The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2000)

Pyle, Kenneth B. *The Making of Modern Japan* (Houghton Mifflin, 1996).

Shibatani, Masayoshi. *The Languages of Japan* (Cambridge University Press, 1990).***

Shirane, Haruo, Tomi Suzuki, and David Lurie eds., *The Cambridge History of Japanese Literature* (Cambridge University Press, 2016).

Shirane, Haruo. *Traditional Japanese Literature: an Anthology, Beginnings to 1600* (Columbia University Press, 2008).***

Shirokauer, C., D. Lurie and S. Gay. *A Brief History of Japanese Civilization* (Thomson Wadsworth, 2006).

Totman, Conrad. *Japan Before Perry: a Short History* (University of California Press, 1982).***

Varley, Paul. *Japanese Culture*, 4th ed. (University of Hawai'i Press, 2000).

July 2019