

# Mid-term Exam HIST 437 History of Modern Japan

Fall 2024

This exam consists of four sections. You can answer between one and four of these sections. If you answer one, that will count for your entire grade. If you answer two, each will count for half of your grade. If you answer three, each will count for a third of your grade. If you answer all four, three will count for a third of your grade, and the fourth will count for extra credit. Please indicate which one you want to count for extra credit.

Please submit the whole exam as a single MS-Word file on d2l by 11:30 pm October 22.

## Section Satsuma -Essay

Please write a short essay (you can write as much as you want, but 1000-2000 words might be a target to aim for) answering one of these questions. Please be specific and use clear examples, but use these examples to prove your thesis, not just to list facts.

**Why did the Meiji Restoration of 1868 matter in Japanese history?** Note that if you put this question into Chat-GPT it will give you an answer about the whole Meiji period. I am asking about the specific events of 1868 and their long-term implications and connections to things that came before.

**Some Meiji figures, like Fukuzawa Yukichi, saw the Tokugawa period as a time of feudal backwardness to be rejected and forgotten. Other people, like McClain, see it as laying the foundations for the successes of the Meiji period. What do you think?**

**What did the phrase *sonno joi* mean in Tokugawa and Meiji Japan?** Obviously, the meaning changed a lot, and it meant different things to different people, but what are the most important meanings, and how are they related to each other?

**What did the term *kokutai* mean in Tokugawa and Meiji Japan?** Obviously, the meaning changed a lot, and it meant different things to different people, but what are the most important meanings, and how are they related to each other?

## Section Edo -Secondary sources

Please choose one of these articles (they are all on d2l) and write an analysis of it. This is exactly the same as the article review assignment you did already, and you should use the same guidelines. **Please include at least two direct quotes from the reading.** I don't think any of you did one of these for your first article review, but if you did, pick something else.

-Odaira Mika and Michael Burtscher, "Female Shrine Priests and Doctrinal Instructors in the Early Meiji Moral Edification Campaign," *Monumenta Nipponica* 73, no. 2 (2018)

-Simon Partner, "Peasants into Citizens?: The Meiji Village in the Russo-Japanese War," *Monumenta Nipponica* 62, no. 2 (2007)

Ravina, Mark J. "The Apocryphal Suicide of Saigo Takamori: Samurai, Seppuku, and the Politics of Legend." *The Journal of Asian Studies* 69, no. 3 (August 2010)

-Gregory Smits, "Shaking up Japan: Edo Society and the 1855 Catfish Picture Prints," *Journal of Social History* 39, no. 4 (2006)

## Section Tosa -Primary sources

Please choose one of these primary source readings (all on d21) and write an analysis of it. This is similar to the things we have been doing in class, and there are guidelines for writing a primary source analysis on d21. **Please include at least two direct quotes from the reading.**

-Fukuzawa Yukichi *A Petition on the Subjugation of Choshu*

-Fukuzawa Yukichi *On Fighting to the Bitter End*

-Soeda Azembo *The Period of Soshi Politics and Political Songs*

-Tokai Sanshi *Strange Encounters With Beautiful Women*

## Section Chonin -Identification

Rather than having you write ID answers yourself (as we have done before), I would like you to assess how well others have done it. Please read the instructions carefully and write answers for 4 of these terms.

1. Read the Wikipedia article on this topic. I have linked to these for you.
2. Go to ChatGPT <https://chat.openai.com/> and type in "Why is [thing X] important in history"?
3. Paste the ChatGPT results into your exam. You don't need to paste in the Wikipedia article.
4. Write an explanation of which of the two does a better job of explaining why this thing is important in history. How well did they do at explaining the reasons this thing is important for understanding the major themes of the period? How specific and clear are they about what this is and why it matters? Are there any inaccuracies in here? You can draw on the lectures, the stuff we read for class, or anything else to answer this.

[Fukuzawa Yukichi](#)  
[Floating World \(Ukiyo\)](#)  
[Perry Expedition](#)  
[Ie Naosuke](#)  
[Oshio Heihachiro](#)  
[Mito Rebellion](#)  
[Tokugawa Yoshinobu](#)  
[Hirata Atsutane](#)  
[Yoshida Shoin](#)  
[rangaku](#)

[Tenpo famine](#)  
[Sakamoto Ryoma](#)  
[sankin kotai](#)  
[Itagaki Taisukei](#)  
[Meirokeisha \(Meiji 6 Society\)](#)