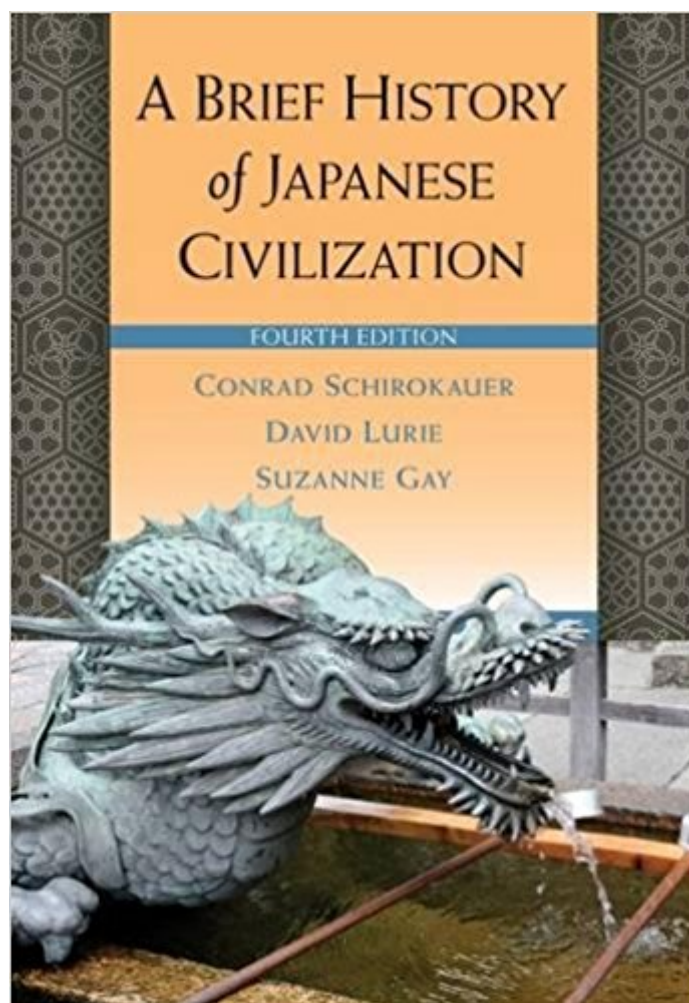


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# A Brief History Of Japanese Civilization



## Synopsis

This compelling text explores the development of Japan through its art, religion, literature, and thought as well as through its economic, political, and social history. The author team combines strong research with extensive classroom teaching experience to offer a clear, consistent, and highly readable text that is accessible to students with no previous knowledge of the history of Japan.

## Book Information

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Conrad Schirokauer currently serves as Senior Scholar and Adjunct Professor at Columbia University as well as Professor Emeritus at the City University of New York. In addition to *A BRIEF HISTORY OF CHINESE AND JAPANESE CIVILIZATIONS* (and its separate volumes on China and Japan), he has published articles on Song intellectual history and served as co-editor (with Robert Hymes) of *ORDERING THE WORLD: APPROACHES TO STATE AND SOCIETY IN SUNG*

DYNASTY CHINA and as translator of CHINA'S EXAMINATION HELL, by Miyazaki Ichisada. David Lurie received a B.A. in Literature from Harvard University and a M.A. and Ph.D. in Japanese Literature from Columbia University. He teaches Japanese history and literature in the Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures at Columbia University. His research concerns the history of writing systems in Japan, and more broadly, in pre-modern East Asia. David Lurie also works on the cultural and intellectual history of Japan through the Heian period. He is currently completing a manuscript entitled "Realms of Literacy: Early Japan and the History of Writing" and is also working on a project analyzing the interconnections among biography, historiography, education, and the production and circulation of texts in Nara and Heian period Japan. Suzanne Gay is Professor of East Asian Studies at Oberlin College. Her research interests include the social and economic history of medieval Japan, with a particular emphasis on the role of commoners in history. Her monography, THE MONEYLENDERS OF LATE MEDIEVAL KYOTO, was published by University of Hawaii Press in 2001. She is currently working on the history of two merchant families of medieval Kyoto, and her next project will focus on commerce and pilgrimage in the Oyamazaki area southwest of Kyoto.

This book covers a lot of periods of Japanese history in a short and simple manner. It tells you about the Kofun, Edo, and every period leading up to modern Japan. A great book for anyone trying to get a brief taste of the history of Japan.

couldn't pass my class without this.

I ordered this required text for my summer Japanese history course. It is a beautiful book to look at, and although a bit densely written, it seems to be a good introduction to a complex and labyrinthine subject.

I highly recommend anyone who is interested in learning Japanese culture. I like the fact that this book has many pictures and a chronological table for Japan and what was happening in the rest of the world then.

The book was very interesting.

In good condition.

Ordered it in December and got it at the end of December. Good price! Ready for class to start.  
Whoo Hoo!

My knowledge of Japanese history is cobbled together from bits of other history books, chambara and other Japanese movies, and some Japanese fantastika fiction. So, I decided it was time to read a survey book to put it all in context. Specifically, I wanted one fairly new to accommodate new findings in Japanese archaeology and that covered all of Japanese history, not just from the Tokugawa Shogunate on. This is a text book. Despite some attempts to liven things up, it's fairly dry going - especially when covering post-WWII Japanese politics. It is fairly thorough and concise for 297 pages of actual text. It's well supplied with maps and pictures of Japanese art and architecture. 119 of those pages cover the history of Japan before 1573. I particularly appreciated covering the various permutations of Buddhism in the country and their rivalries, the translations of Japanese poetry from various times (there is much more to Japanese poetry than haiku), and the frequent appearances by members of the Fujiwara house - a family that has been involved in Japanese politics since the seventh century AD. I also thought its coverage of all the different ways that rival factions in Japan have used the idea of the emperor valuable. I was a bit surprised by some omissions. No mention is made of Lafcadio Hearn though other Westerners important to the Japanese are mentioned. While Kurosawa, Ozu, and Kobayashi are certainly significant and worthy exports of Japanese cinema, I'm not sure that the "horror and monster films" can be categorized as mere "ephemeral entertainments". Obviously, for the very reasons I read this book, I can't compare it to similar works or pronounce any significant opinion on its coverage of Japanese civilization. However, it certainly seems not at all a bad place to start in your readings about Japan.

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