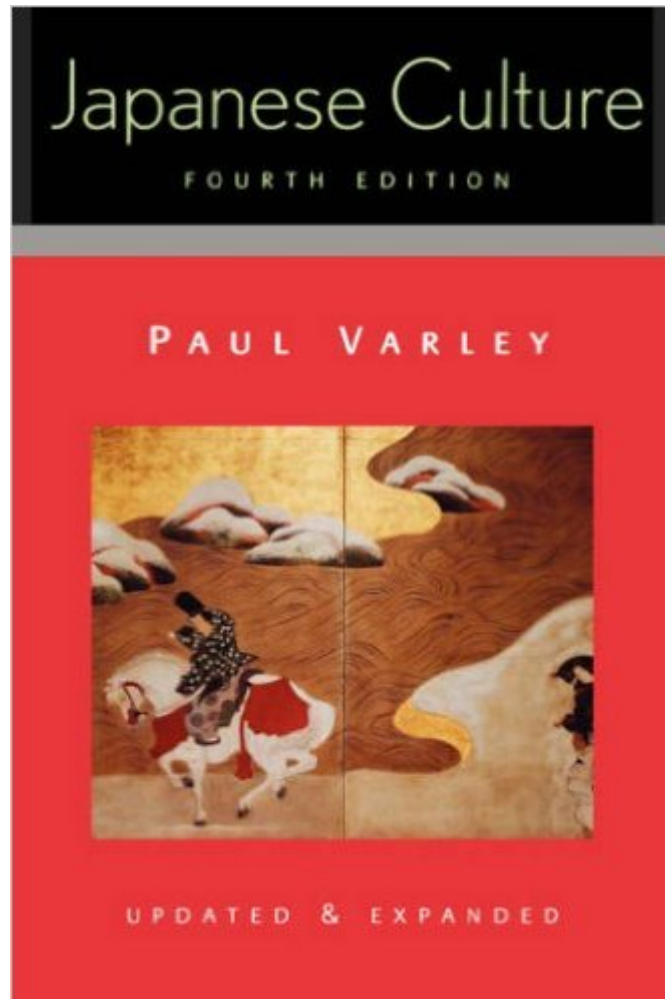


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Japanese Culture, 4th Edition (Updated And Expanded)



Synopsis

An introduction to Japanese history and culture. This fourth edition includes expanded sections on numerous topics, among which are samurai values, Zen Buddhism, the tea ceremony, Confucianism in the Tokugawa period, the story of the 47 ronin, and mass culture in contemporary times.

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (21 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

The tracings of Japanese culture go back some 10,000 years - speaking conservatively. Since then there has been a remarkable continuity of inhabitation on the Japanese islands, which has resulted in one of the richest and complex cultures in the world today. Originally heavily influenced by the neighboring Chinese culture in the period from 300 BC to 300 AD, the islands quickly found their own way and over the ensuing years have developed a breadth of integrated experience that is often baffling to the outsider or curious student. Paul Varley's book, in its fourth edition and showing no signs of losing its value, is an attempt to present the significant cultural and historical developments, covering the past two millennia. Of course, most of the focus is from the eighth century on as Japanese civilization shifted from day to day survival to a complex political framework with a great flourishing of substantive creative art. Considering that my standard historical reference on Japan has some seven volumes and thousands of (often tedious) pages, Varley's task is considerable and his success worthy of note. In a mere three hundred pages of tiny print Varley manages to draw a picture of the Japanese people that, while far from complete, misses none of the key culture moments. He does this in a plain, business-like writing style that pours out unending

amounts of information with merciless patience. He is very readable, but not what I would call enjoyable, since the sheer quantity of information can be overwhelming. If simply read straight through, it is easy to lose track of the thread of ideas. But the book rewards repeated study and the reader will soon find that all this information contributes much towards an understanding of the Japanese experience.

By far the best overall coverage of Japanese cultural history-- cogent, intelligent, readable, for the rank novice thru the specialist's reference shelf-- that I have found in 30 years of studying & teaching the subject. On second thought, not only the best but in fact the Only. Lovely illustrations too.

I had to purchase this book for a class, but found myself pleasantly surprised by the content. It was an easy, informative read for me. If you're interested in Japanese history, this is a great place to start. There's not a whole lot on modern Japan, but there are tons of other books and TV shows you can find for that.

I've read several of Paul Varley's books on Japanese culture and consider them to be invaluable reference books to my understanding of Japan's history and culture. This interesting book had much added information especially of Japan's modern period.

This Ebook is the most ridiculous and unreasonable method of reading a textbook. Upon downloading it, I had expected to get a book with proper page numbers (because it is A TEXTBOOK). But instead, the pages were completely off and the "location" option was very confusing as it skipped about 30 numbers in between each "page". I do not recommend this as an Ebook.

Certain chapters bored me to death because I wasn't interested in the topic while other chapters I literally devoured. I think you have to have a real love of Japan to get through this book because it can be rather "dry" to read. It's got good information, I just wish the writing itself had more life to it and less of the "dry, dull textbook" flavor.

I received the book in excellent condition. The seller was very punctual about getting the book to me in a timely manner. In terms of the book, the chapters are very long, but it is very thorough and has

a lot of excellent information for those who are truly interested in and enjoy an overview of Japanese culture and its artworks. The explanations given can even help a novice understand the difference between the art styles within different cultural periods

A difficult read - difficult to stay awake. Replete with high level vocabulary used to explain simple things, and at times the author almost assumes you already know Japanese history. An outline at the beginning of each chapter (rather than at the back of the book) would be helpful, and a brief bio of the important historical figures, prior to rambling on about their escapades and accolades, would have been greatly appreciated. This is being used as a textbook for a class I am taking in the Fall; however, it doesn't have the structure of a textbook, and doesn't read like a novel. It looks a lot more like someone's thesis.

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