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a level 1 oxford bookworms library graded reader written for learners of english by jennifer bassett when lord asano drew his sword on lord kira one spring day in 1701 it began a story that is now a national legend in japan lord kira lived but lord asano died and after his death his samurai became ronin samurai without a master and so began their long plan for revenge on lord kira their loyalty to their dead master made them famous and people in japan remember them to this day the story of the forty seven ronin has been told and retold for 300 years in plays novels and films a major hollywood film was made about the forty seven ronin in 2013

in the film seven samurai 1954 a whole society is on the verge of irrevocable change many people consider this film a major achievement in japanese cinema an epic that evokes the

cultural upheaval brought on by the collapse of japanese militarism in the 16th century echoing the sweeping changes occurring in the aftermath of the american occupation the plot is deceptively simple a village of farmers is beset by a horde of bandits and in desperation the village hire itinerant samurai to protect their crops and their village in the end the samurai see off the bandits together the samurai reflect the ideals and values of a noble class near the point of extinction the film may be a technical masterpiece and despite its movement and violence it appears to be a lament for a lost nobility in this book mellen contextualizes seven samurai marking its place in japanese cinema and in director akira kurosawa s career mellen explores the film s roots in mediaeval history and the film s visual language

samurai tells the story of the courageous and highly disciplined fighting men of this time showing how they evolved from the primitive fighters of the seventh century into an invincible military caste with a fearsome reputation in the early seventh century the samurai rose to prominence during the struggles between the emperor and the military leaders shogun they took part in the invasion of korea as well as helping to keep japan free from foreign influence from the heian period through to the onin wars the history of the samurai is replete with tales of heroism and bloodshed although the samurai is most famous for his use of the sword he also used a wide variety of other weapons such as the crossbow the dagger and the spear samurai armour and costume were constantly evolving and by the twelfth century most samurai were wearing the box like yoroi armour samurai examines samurai fighting tactics as well as acts such as ritual suicide hari kiri and the taking of enemy heads as trophies

profiles japanese samurai including their everyday life training fighting methods and societal role as well as their decline and role in popular culture

a comprehensive study into the spiritual world of the samurai from the cult of revenge and suicide to zen and martial arts the fierce loyalty and self sacrificing attitude of the samurai have made them both a legend and a cult yet although their military prowess and skills in the martial arts have been studied exhaustively an understanding of their belief system still eludes many this original and exciting work examines the spiritual world of the samurai from their attachment to japan s mainstream religions of shinto and buddhism to their involvement in confucianism christianity and folk religion samurai expert stephen turnbull examines important topics such as zen and the martial arts modern militarism the cult of the sword revenge and suicide hara kiri and the kamikaze pilots the suicide bombers of their day he also looks at the fascinating issue of japanese religious terrorism as well as the growing cult status of the samurai both in japan and in the west

the samurai s soul a tale of old japan is an immersive journey into the captivating world of the samurai unveiling their rich history cultural significance and enduring legacy this comprehensive exploration delves into the origins rise and eventual decline of the samurai offering a multifaceted perspective on their role in shaping japan s past and present readers will embark on a captivating exploration of samurai culture discovering the intricate code of bushido that governed their lives their mastery of martial arts and weaponry and their unwavering commitment to honor and loyalty through the examination of legendary samurai figures such as miyamoto musashi and the 47 ronin the book brings to life the samurai s unwavering spirit and the timeless values they embodied beyond the battlefield the book delves into the samurai s profound influence on japanese society art and literature it explores their role in shaping the nation s political landscape their contributions to the development of zen buddhism and their enduring legacy in modern japanese culture with captivating storytelling and illuminating insights the samurai s soul a tale of old japan offers a comprehensive understanding of the samurai s enduring fascination whether you re a history buff a martial arts enthusiast or simply someone intrigued by japanese culture this book promises an immersive and thought provoking journey into the world of these legendary warriors if you like this book write a review on google books

japan underwent tumultuous changes in the eighteenth century the merchant class was rising in power and the privileges of the professional warriors or samurai were disappearing the 47 ronin story is the classic story of lord asano of ako and one of the bloodiest vendettas in japan s feudal history in 1701 in edo japan lord asano of ako lashed out at a corrupt court official and set in motion a chain of events that shocked the country and brought the shogun himself to a legal and moral impasse when it was over there emerged the most unlikely set of heroes the forty seven ronin or ex samurai of ako

japan has been among the first of the handful of countries to move beyond modern and in this third edition of a much praised book ardath burks brings the blur of the nation s rapid change into focus in his newly revised and updated japan professor burks also traces the history of the japanese exploring their traditions their continuity and their cultural heritage he devotes a chapter to the remarkable introspection boom nihonron the japanese asking who are we japanese in discussing the country s swift modernization the author looks not only at the initial transition from primary agriculture to an industrial economy but also at the current evolution into a service centered society on both domestic and international levels the book evaluates the maturing of japanese industry and its growing investment abroad as well as the global tensions fueled by japan s enormous trade surpluses in response to the intense trade pressure it feels the country is beginning to shift from export

driven growth to a consumer oriented economy a shift that will demand the building of a heretofore neglected yet essential infrastructure of housing and transportation the author analyzes domestic political developments including the regime of nakasone yasuihiro and the fall of takeshita noboru and uno sousuke precipitated by financial scandal within the majority liberal democratic party ldp burks assesses the formidable tasks facing the revamped ruling ldp as its new generation of younger leaders grapples with an evolving economy an expanding regional role and the dissatisfaction of women and young people who have begun to rebel against the growth ethic and their marginalized role in society in his well drawn lucid portrait of this complex country professor burks reflects on japan as a nation in historical transition envisioning a postindustrial future filled with friction and promise as he writes in his introduction americans and japanese too often look

the japanese film director akira kurosawa who died at the age of 88 has been internationally acclaimed as a giant of world cinema rashomon which won both the venice film festival s grand prize and an academy award for best foreign language film helped ignite western interest in the japanese cinema seven samurai and yojimbo remain enormously popular both in japan and abroad in this newly revised and expanded edition of his study of kurosawa s films stephen prince provides two new chapters that examine kurosawa s remaining films placing him in the context of cinema history prince also discusses how kurosawa furnished a template for some well known hollywood directors including martin scorsese steven spielberg and george lucas providing a new and comprehensive look at this master filmmaker the warrior s camera probes the complex visual structure of kurosawa s work the book shows how kurosawa attempted to symbolize on film a course of national development for post war japan and it traces the ways that he tied his social visions to a dynamic system of visual and narrative forms the author analyzes kurosawa s entire career and places the films in context by drawing on the director s autobiography a fascinating work that presents kurosawa as a kurosawa character and the story of his life as the kind of spiritual odyssey witnessed so often in his films after examining the development of kurosawa s visual style in his early work the warrior s camera explains how he used this style in subsequent films to forge a politically committed model of filmmaking it then demonstrates how the collapse of kurosawa s efforts to participate as a filmmaker in the tasks of social reconstruction led to the very different cinematic style evident in his most recent films works of pessimism that view the world as resistant to change

the difficult mission of a regime change toshio nishi gives an account of how america converted the japanese mindset from war to peace following world war ii

revenge murder honor these are the ingredients of one of the greatest samurai legends of all time the forty seven ronin the legend of samurai who take revenge on a court official who leaves them leaderless with a gripping narrative historycaps takes you back in time for a look at perhaps the greatest samurai tales in the history of japan historycaps is an imprint of bookcaps study guides with each book a brief period of history is recapped we publish a wide array of topics from baseball and music to science and philosophy so check our growing catalogue regularly to see our newest books

relates the true story of masterless samurai ronin who avenged their lord s death and came to represent the ultimate ideal of self sacrifice

in the annals of history and martial lore the name miyamoto musashi stands tall a figure shrouded in legend and intrigue a master swordsman a philosopher and a strategist musashi s life and teachings have captivated generations now in this captivating book we venture beyond the myths and delve into the heart of musashi s extraordinary journey through meticulous research and engaging storytelling this book unveils the true essence of miyamoto musashi exploring the depths of his character the brilliance of his mind and the enduring impact of his legacy we trace his path from a young ambitious swordsman to a revered master witnessing his triumphs and tribulations his duels and his profound insights more than just a tale of a legendary samurai this book offers a window into the soul of a warrior philosopher musashi s teachings encapsulated in his seminal work the book of five rings transcended the realm of swordsmanship offering timeless wisdom on strategy leadership and the pursuit of self mastery his words have resonated with readers across centuries inspiring warriors artists and business leaders alike with vivid descriptions and insightful analysis this book brings musashi s world to life painting a panorama of feudal japan where the clash of swords and the intrigue of political machinations shaped the destiny of nations we encounter the key figures in musashi s life from his rivals to his students gaining a deeper understanding of the forces that shaped his character and philosophy this comprehensive exploration of musashi s life teachings and legacy is a must read for anyone interested in japanese history martial arts or the timeless pursuit of self mastery through his remarkable journey musashi offers invaluable insights into the human condition the nature of conflict and the path to inner peace and fulfillment in this book you will discover the untold stories behind musashi s legendary duels and battles the profound insights and teachings of the book of five rings musashi s unique perspective on strategy leadership and self mastery the enduring impact of musashi s legacy on japanese culture and martial arts a deeper understanding of the samurai code of bushido and its relevance in the modern world prepare to be captivated by the extraordinary life and teachings of

miyamoto musashi a warrior philosopher whose legacy continues to inspire and enlighten generations if you like this book write a review

kipling visited japan in 1889 and 1892 no other leading english literary figure of his day spent so long in that country or wrote so fully about it kipling s newspaper dispatches from japan were described by the great japanologist basil han chamberlain as the most graphic even penned by a globetrotter these vivid pen pictures together with kipling s other writings about japan are now collected by sir hugh cortazzi and george webb carefully edited with an introduction and notes first published in 1988 this title is part of the bloomsbury academic collections series

this book explores and details the experiences and trials of both the journalist romano known here as the first man adam and his celestial ancient persian guide zarathustra while they travel to the inferno and limboland arenas of the pre historic paleo heroes the ancient greek gods goddesses the ancient roman gods goddesses the sumerian babylonian egyptian gods the norse viking gods the indian hindoo vedic gods the chinese gods emperors the koreans the vietnamese the amerikan experimental the cambodian laotian encampments the burmese the hodgepodge of nations on the fringe desiring anonymity the japanese the irish republican army sinn fein the native americans the incas aztecs mayas and cuba nicaragua

how the samurai cultivated zen relating its teaching of a free and spontaneous mind to the experience of a warrior in individual combat and finding philosophical strength in zen as they prepared themselves for death

ancient and medieval people profiles some of the fiercest warriors in history learn about their lives and times notorious battles and daring feats in the japanese samurai read about famous samurai battles in japan learn about samurai swords the bushido code and the decline of the ancient samurai book jacket

love letter for a japanese war bride is stephen e prices memoir of his eternal love for his first wife ryuko set primarily in postwar japan the story provides a window into a new worldone that spawned cultural diversity but one that was largely unprepared for and unaccepting of it the tale chronicles the lovers perseverance as they struggle with both the us and japanese governments to gain permission to marry the narrative is woven into fabrics of cultures traditions attitudes language and historysome of which may be unfamiliar but all of which is captivating above all the unending and redemptive romance in this story captures the purest essence of love with all its twists and turns joys and sorrows highs and lows and culminates in a tragic yet transcendent ending a remarkable memoir and love

letter that rings true on every pagean intimate and heartbreaking story beautifully told i can think of no other work about japan and america that reveals more poignantly how love and trust can bridge race and culture even where the odds seem so formidably against this john w dower ford international professor of history massachusetts institute of technology and pulitzer prize winning author of embracing defeat japan in the wake of world war ii

revenge tale kill mara by marcel revenge tale kill mara is a tale about something that s old as time sweet sweet fucking revenge also about honor morality redemption and forgiveness which is damn near impossible to give the message of kill mara is what would you do for the truth what lengths would you go to what lines would you cross because for minamoto minato the lines between good and evil cease to exist morals are forgotten in the pursuit of vengeance no matter how much pain how much hurt we cause each other it s interesting to see how trauma changes a person either making them stronger or weaker ultimately the choice is yours would you rather be a victim or become the victimizer

a diary of darkness is one of the most important and compelling documents of wartime japan between 1942 and 1945 the liberal journalist kiyosawa kiyoshi 1890 1945 kept at great personal risk a diary of his often subversive social and political observations and his personal struggles the diary caused a sensation when it was published in japan in 1948 and is today regarded as a classic this is the first time it has appeared in english kiyosawa was an american educated commentator on politics and foreign affairs who became increasingly isolated in japan as militant nationalists rose to power he began the diary as notes for a history of the war but it soon became an inadvertent autobiography and a refuge for the bitter criticism of japanese authoritarianism that he had to repress publicly it chronicles growing bureaucratic control over everything from the press to people s clothing kiyosawa pours scorn on such leaders as premiers tojo and koiso he laments the rise of hysterical propaganda and relates his own and his friends struggles to avoid arrest he writes in gripping detail about increasing poverty crime and disorder he records the sentiments of the local barber as faithfully as those of senior politicians and all the while he traces the gradual disintegration of japan s war effort and the looming certainty of defeat a diary of darkness is a perceptive and courageous account of wartime japan and a revealing record of the devastation wrought by total war

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