

# Japan Club 将軍 (Shōgun) Screening

LaGuardia Community College

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### Summary of the TV Show "Shōgun"

• Title: Shōgun

Based on: The novel "Shogun" by James Clavell

• Air Date: 2024 (remake of the 1980 original)

· Plot:

Set in early 17th century Japan.

- Follows the journey of navigator John Blackthorne, a stranded English sailor.
- Blackthorne becomes embroiled in political intrigue between feuding samurai lords.
- · Cultural clash, adaptation, and power struggles.
- Based on the true story about William Adams (a.k.a., Miura Anjin)
- Awards: the most Emmy Awards won by a single season of television



# The Protestant Reformation (1)



#### The Protestant Reformation (2)

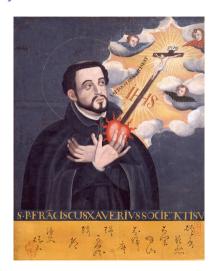
#### The Protestant Reformation

- Martin Luther's 95 Theses in 1517, challenging the Catholic Church's practices and authority.
- Europe was divided along religious lines: Protestant (England, Netherlands etc.) vs. Catholic (Spain, Portugal etc.)



## François Xavier (1506-1552)

- François Xavier (1506-1552) was a Spanish Jesuit missionary.
- Known for his missionary work in India, Sri Lanka, Japan, and China
- Arrived in Japan in 1549, Introduced Christianity to Japan, and adopted a strategy of engaging with the ruling class (daimyō) in Japan.



# Sengoku Jidai in Japan (1)

#### Sengoku Jidai

- · Sengoku Jidai (戦国時代): Also known as the "Warring States Period."
- Timeframe: Roughly from the mid-15th century to the early 17th century (1467 1603).
- Characterized by: Social upheaval, political intrigue, constant military conflict, and development of the samurai code, Bushido.
- Power vacuum: Emergence of regional daimyō (feudal lords) vying for power.



# Sengoku Jidai in Japan (2)







# 織田信長 / Oda Nobunaga (1534-1582)

- Began the unification of Japan after nearly 100 years of civil war
- Allowed Jesuits to proselytise Christianity in Japan (in exchange of advanced technology such as firearms)
- Known for the Battle of Okehazama and decisive victories with firearms
- Assassinated in 1582 during the Incident at Honnō-ji
- The model of **Kuroda** in Shōgun (only briefly appeared)



# 豊臣秀吉 / Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1537-1598)

- Born as a son of a peasant and become a foot soldier for Nobunaga
- Completed the unification of Japan by 1590
- Initiated major construction projects, including Osaka Castle.
- Died in 1598, leaving a young son, Hideyori, and the Council of Five Elders as his guardians
- The model of Taikō in Shōgun



# 徳川家康 / Tokugawa leyasu (1543-1616)

- One of the Council of Five Elders appointed by Hideyoshi
- Edo Castle (in Tokyo) as his base
- Gained control after the Battle of Sekigahara in 1600
- Given the title of sei-i taishōgun (a.k.a., shōgun) in 1603, marking the beginning of Tokugawa Shōgunate which lasted until 1868
- William Adams, the model of John Blackthorne, served leyasu as his direct vessel (hatamoto samurai)
- The model of **Toranaga** in Shōgun



## The first episode (1)

- Key characters
  - John Blackthorne An English navigator who finds himself shipwrecked in Japan.
  - Toranaga A powerful daimyo (feudal lord) who plays a significant role in Blackthorne's fate.
  - Lady Mariko A Christian noblewoman, serving Toranaga.
  - Father Alvito A Jesuit priest in Japan.
  - Kashigi Yabushige A samurai serving Toranaga, but switching loyalties to survive
  - Ishido Kazunari A member of the Council of Regents, a rival of Toranaga













# The first episode (2)

- · What to watch in the first episode
  - · Visuals representations of the 16-17 centuries in Japan
    - The elaborate sets and costumes, providing an authentic portrayal of the period.
    - The tension between Japan's isolationist policies and European interests.
  - · Philosophy on life and death
    - Bushido: The samurai code of honor, which influences how life and death are perceived.
    - In bushido, death is depicted as an accepted, even honorable, aspect of life.
  - Cultural Context
    - Depictions of the samurai culture, Zen Buddhism, and the political dynamics of feudal Japan.
    - Themes of loyalty, honor, and the conflict between and within Western and Eastern values are central.

# Bibliography (1)

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