



Hokusai's *Kōshū Kajikazawa* ('Kajikazawa in Kai Province'), c.1830-32

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| <b>HIU12055</b>    | <b>An Introduction to the History of Japan</b>                                                               |
| <b>Credits</b>     | <b>5 ECTS</b>                                                                                                |
| <b>Semester</b>    | <b>Hilary Term</b>                                                                                           |
| <b>Assessment:</b> | <b>One 1,000-1,500-word historiographical review essay (40%), and one 2,000-word end-of-term essay (60%)</b> |

At the start of the seventeenth century, the Tokugawa shogunate established itself as the most powerful political authority in Japan. What did 'Japan' mean, though, to the people living on an archipelago that been a landscape of independent states for generations? This module begins at this point and gives an overview of Japan's history through to the postwar decades of the twentieth century. As we explore the many social, cultural, and political changes that took place during these centuries, lectures and tutorials will also engage with how enduring ideas about Japan's national history – from the notion that it was a closed country for 250 years, to the narrative of top-down modernisation, to the concept of the Way of the Samurai – were created. In this way, the module serves as both an introduction to the history of Japan and a pathway to rethinking some of the most well-known and accepted ideas about it.