Stanford



Ariel Stilerman

Assistant Professor of East Asian Languages and Cultures

CONTACT INFORMATION

- **Administrative Contact**

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Bio

BIO

I study premodern Japan through its manuscripts, objects, and languages.

My first book, Court Poetry and the Culture of Learning in Japan (Harvard, 2026), charts the transformation of the poetry of the imperial court into a shared language for military and priestly elites, lower-ranking warriors, and eventually urban merchants.

My second project, Meet the People Who Built Japan, investigates the emergence of a “culture of work” in early medieval manuscripts and artifacts.

I welcome inquiries from students interested in classical through early modern Japanese literature through the Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures, as well as those pursuing transdisciplinary work through the program in Modern Thought and Literature, and grad makers in the humanities through Making and Creative Praxis.

I advocate for a “maker mindset” in the humanities. My research is just as much about building and doing as about reading and writing. My courses involve hands-on experiences and are often co-taught with colleagues in Classics, English, Religion, History, Mechanical Engineering, or Physics.

More broadly, I am interested in how we engage with the world through our senses and skills, exploring fields such as the tea ceremony, psychoanalysis, woodworking, sailing, olfactory cultures, technology, and design.

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

- Assistant Professor, East Asian Languages and Cultures

ADMINISTRATIVE APPOINTMENTS

- Faculty Coordinator, East Asian Humanities Workshop, (2025-2026)

HONORS AND AWARDS

- Undergraduate Teaching Prize, Phi Beta Kappa (2023)

PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

- PhD, Columbia University , Japanese literature (2015)
- MA, Waseda University , Japanese literature (2012)
- Midorikai, Urasenke Konnichian , Japanese Tea Ceremony (2007)
- MA, SOAS, University of London , Japanese studies (2006)
- Licenciatura, Universidad de Buenos Aires , Psychology/Psychoanalysis (2002)
- Technical degree, ORT , Industrial Design (1996)

LINKS

- Personal Website: https://kotenseki.notion.site/ariel-stilerman

Research & Scholarship

PROJECTS

- Supeingo shin'yaku genji monogatari wo kiku - juyō hon'yaku pafōmansu - Waseda University (7/2013)
- The Tea Ceremony of Japan and the Mary Griggs Burke Collection at MIA - Minneapolis Institute of Art (5/2017)
- First International Conference Japón Interculturas - Universidad de La Plata and Columbia University (7/2014)
- ~~###############~~ - Waseda University (5/8/2019 - 5/20/2019)
- Material Pedagogies for East Asian Studies - Stanford University

Teaching

COURSES

2026-27

- East Asian Humanities Workshop III: EALC 213 (Spr)
- Proseminar in East Asian Humanities I: Skills and Methods: EALC 201 (Aut)
- Seminar in Premodern Japanese Literature: JAPAN 389 (Spr)
- Why College? Your Education and the Good Life: COLLEGE 101 (Aut)

2025-26

- East Asian Humanities Workshop I: EALC 211 (Aut)
- East Asian Humanities Workshop II: EALC 212 (Win)
- East Asian Humanities Workshop III: EALC 213 (Spr)
- Introduction to Premodern Japanese: JAPAN 164, JAPAN 264 (Spr)
- Proseminar in East Asian Humanities II: Current Scholarship: EALC 202 (Win)
- Seminar in Premodern Japanese Literature: JAPAN 389 (Win)
- The Japanese Tea Ceremony: The History, Aesthetics, and Politics Behind a National Pastime: ARTHIST 287A, JAPAN 188, JAPAN 288 (Aut)

2024-25

- Japanese Functional Objects: JAPAN 126, JAPAN 226 (Aut)
- Seminar in Premodern Japanese Literature: JAPAN 389 (Win)
- The Japanese Tea Ceremony: The History, Aesthetics, and Politics Behind a National Pastime: ARTHIST 287A, JAPAN 188, JAPAN 288 (Aut)

STANFORD ADVISEES

Doctoral Dissertation Co-Advisor (AC)

Katherine Whatley

Doctoral (Program)

Katherine Whatley

Publications

PUBLICATIONS

- **Court Poetry and the Culture of Learning in Japan** *Harvard East Asian Monographs*
  Stilerman, A.
  Harvard University Press (Asia Center).2026; 485
- **The Portrayal of Work in Early Medieval Illustrated Scrolls** *Japan Review*
  Stilerman, A.
  2026; forthcoming
- **Go Make Tea! (ten cha ko): Assignment Design for Material Literacy and Critical Making.** *Teaching Tea: History, Practice, Art*
  Stilerman, A.
  2025
- **Material Heuristics in the Humanities: My Year Between the Center and the Lab** *Stanford Humanities Review*
  Stilerman, A.
  2025; 2: 165-72
- **Chanoyu hyakushu. Los cien poemas del arte del té** *Colección Clásicos Satori*
  Stilerman, A.
  Satori.2022
- **Cultural Knowledge and Professional Training in the Poetic Treatises of Late Heian Japan** *MONUMENTA NIPPONICA*
  Stilerman, A.
  2017; 72 (2): 153–87
- **Poema a tres voces de Minase Renga = ####### = Minase sangin hyakuin**
  Stilerman, A.
  Sexto Piso.2016
- **In the age of AI, we should still teach students to make things: Skills-based knowledge need not be considered the opposite of an intellectual life**
  Stilerman, A.
  Financial Times.
  2025
- **La poesía waka como práctica social en los períodos Heian y Kamakura** *Nuevas aproximaciones a la literatura japonesa*
  Stilerman, A.
  edited by Pitarch Fernández, P.
  Bellaterra.2020: 71–90
- **La interpretación de la poesía tradicional japonesa: texto, contexto e intertexto** *Mirai Nihon Kenkyū Kiyō*
  Stilerman, A.
  2018; 2 (0): 153-174
- **El archipiélago : ensayos para una historia cultural de Japón**
  edited by Stilerman, A., Hoyos Hattori, P.
  Lomo.2018

- **How to Do Things with Poems: A Reassessment of The Wondrous Powers of Waka** *Performance and Japanese Literature*
  Stilerman, A.
  Association for Japanese Literary Studies.2015: 112–120
- **El estatuto del sujeto en el Japón clásico** *Nadie Duerma Publicación Digital de Psicoanálisis*
  Stilerman, A.
  2014; 4 (October)

PRESENTATIONS

- ########## ########## - ##### ########## (June 17, 2024)
- Projecting Psychoanalysis Onto East Asia: A Transnational History of Twentieth-Century Dialogues on Culture, Society, and Mental Health (Organizer) - AAS (3/16/2023)
- The Other Side of the Noh Stage - Noh as Intermedia Symposium (4/26/2023)
- Pedagogy and High Culture in Early Medieval Japan - Association for Asian Studies (3/2014)
- Genji monogatari y la experiencia del lector: hermenéutica, filología, disfrute - II Encuentro de Estudios Japoneses (8/1/2017)
- Sōsharu media to shite no chūko waka - Meiji University (6/2016)
- Learning Chanoyu from Waka: Instruction and Cultural Transmission in Early Modern Japan - Ocha Zanmai Tea Culture Conference (5/2016)
- El Estatuto del Sujeto en el Japón Clásico - Foro Psicoanalítico del Río de la Plata (8/2014)
- How To Do Things With Poems - Association for Japanese Literary Studies (10/2013)
- Medieval Narratives About the Efficacy of Classical Japanese Poetry - Asian Studies Conference Japan (6/2012)
- Poetry, Narrative, and Imperial Imagination in Gosenshū - Fifth Waka Workshop (5/2010)
- Japan before 1900: Translations and Trends beyond English Scholarship - MLA (1/9/2022)
- Intertextuality and Narrativity - 19th Annual Graduate Student Conference on East Asia (Columbia University) (2/2010)
- La poesía de Genji - Jornadas de Lengua Japonesa y de Cultura Japonesa, Instituto Tōzai (10/2009)
- Nampōroku: Té y poesía en la creación de la estética wabi - Jornadas de Lengua Japonesa y de Cultura Japonesa, Instituto Tōzai (10/2007)
- Tachibana no Narisue and The Culture of Profession in Medieval Japan - Asian Studies Conference Japan (6/2018)
- Kodai nihon no waka: comyunikēshon wo megutte - Nichia Gakuin (Instituto Argentino Japonés) (7/2018)
- Té y pedagogía - Serendipity Lab (12/2015)
- El lugar de la poesía en la historia cultural del Japón: corte imperial, cultura popular y modernización - Núcleo de Estudios del Japón (IDAES / Universidad de San Martín) (11/2018)
- Classical Poetry Across the Spatial and Social Expansion of Court Culture in Early Medieval Japan - PAIXUE Symposium, The University of Edinburgh (12/14/2019)
- ¿Cómo hacer cosas con poemas? Una introducción a la literatura medieval japonesa - NIchia Gakuin - Instituto Superior de Estudios Japoneses (11/25/2020)
- El oído de traductor: Reflexiones para leer, escuchar y sentir el japonés clásico en castellano - Japan Foundation (December 9, 2020)
- Poetry, social grace, and popular humor in medieval narrative tales for commoners - European Association for Japanese Studies (EAJS 2021) (8/25/2021)
- Classical Japanese Pedagogy - Transmission of Knowledge and Praxis - American Association of Teachers of Japanese - Bungo Special Interest Group (March 17, 2022)
- Reading Differently - MLA (1/9/2022)
- La Cultura del Manuscrito en Japón - Un taller con herramientas de inteligencia artificial - Nichia Gakuin (June 15, 2022)
- Premodern Pedagogic Technologies in the Classroom - ATXpo (10/3/2022)
- The Tale of Genji in the Collection of the National Museum of Oriental Art - MNAO (6/30/2023)
- Presentation of the book Los Cien Poemas del Arte del Té (Satori) (7/13/2023)
- Technology, Accessibility, and Labor in Premodern Japanese Studies - MLA (1/7/2023)

- La Historia de Genji en Objetos del Museo Nacional de Arte Oriental - Museo Nacional de Arte Oriental (6/30/2023)
- The New Pedagogical Campus: Tools to Offer Stanford Courses at High Schools in Low-Income Communities - Workshop on International Japanese Studies in the Classroom (August 24, 2023)
- Teaching Japan in the Age of AI - Interpreting a Changing Japan Symposium (Inter University Center Yokohama) (10/7/2023)
- Haiku and Its Cultural History in Japan - JAPAN 191/291 Sharing Conversations Across Generations: The Magic of Haiku (Yoshiko Matsumoto) (11/1/2023)
- Hot to Know Everything: Encyclopedic Works, Technical Knowledge, and Cultural Warfare in Medieval Japan - Stanford Humanities Center (11/7/2023)
- Meet The People Who Built Japan: Early Medieval Craft & Technology in the Aftermath of Disaster - Univeristy of California, Los Angeles (2/23/2024)
- Meet The People Who Built Japan: Early Medieval Craft & Technology in the Aftermath of Disaster - Yale University (2/12/2023)
- Industrial Artificial Intelligence Applications in Higher Education - Who Wrote that Paper? Teaching Humanities Writing in the Era of Generative AI (H&S Dean's Office Workshop) (3/20/2024)
- Making Tea in College - Thoughts on Course Design to Leverage Critical Making for Material Literacy - Yanai Initiative (UCLA / Waseda University) (4/25/2024)
- Transdisciplinary Approaches in Premodern Japanese Studies - Graduate Seminar on Research Methods (Kristopher Reeves) (6/10/2024)
- A Performative Approach to Translating Medieval Japanese Poetry - ####### 2-1 (Kristopher Reeves) (6/13/2024)
- Medieval Technology in the Classromm - The Medieval Academy of America (MMA) (August 16, 2024)
- A Poetics of Technology and Community in Early Medieval Japan - East Asian Humanities Workshop (1/21/2025)
- Craft and Community in the Aftermath of Disaster: The Illustrated Narratives of Early Medieval Japan - Center for Medieval and Early Modern Studies, The Ho Center for Buddhist Studies, Woods Institute for the Environment, Product Realization Lab (10/1/2024)
- Cómo se construye un templo japonés: Tecnología y artesanos en las narrativas ilustradas medievales - Museo del Templo Mayor (9/6/2024)
- Pretextos Materiales: Los Objetos de la Ceremonia del Té - Museo Kaluz (9/5/2024)
- The Poetics of Reconstruction - Association for Asian Studies (3/13/2025)
- Making, Material Heuristics, and the New Humanities Classroom - UCLA Luskin Symposium (4/26/2025)
- A Poetic Contest of Working People: How Imagining Commoners' Lives Shaped Aristocratic Experiments in Medieval Poetry - Performance, Media, and Place-Making in East Asia (4/25/2025)
- The First Shokunin utaawase and the Future of Medieval Poetry - Waka et al Symposium (5/3/2025)
- An AI tutor for premodern Japanese languages - Center for Teaching and Learning Community Share-outs (2/17/2026)
- Thinkign & Making the New East Asian Humanities - Creative Teaching with AI (d.school) (1/15/2026)
- Making An AI Tutor for College-Level Courses - Stanford d.school: Hasso Plattner Institute of Design (2/12/2026)
- ####### ——####################AI########—— - Waseda University (7/1/2026)