**Samurai:** - Warrior class in pre-modern Japan -Composition and role vary over time -Retainer: a warrior pledging service to a feudal lord

**Emergence of the Samurai:** - Rise to power 12th c. CE

-Establishment of shogunate(military government) in 1192 – symbolic power with emperor, government in hands of shogun and feudal lords.

- Ascendance of disciplined warrior culture

**The Shogunates :**

* Kamakura, 1192- 1333
* Ashikaga, 1338-1573
  + Cultural influence of Zen Buddhism
  + Chaos and warfare of Sengoku period (1467-1568)
* Tokugawa (Edo), 1603-1867

**Tokugawa samurai**

* Closed caste
* Serve as civil bureaucrats rather than warriors
* Erosion of economic and social status
* Eclipse of austere “samurai values”

**The end of the samurai**

* Meiji restoration, 1868
* Abolishment of feudal economic structures and social privileges
* Last gasp: the Satsuma revolt, 1877

**Bushido: “The Way of the Warrior”**

* Unwritten code of the samurai
* Skill in the martial arts
* Military virtues – courage, discipline, stoicism
* Confucianism – courtesy, self-cultivation, group over individual
* Zen Buddhism – contemplation, detachment

**Loyalty – “Devotion to feudal lord”**

**The sword – “soul of the samurai”**

**The way of the Warrior: the Soul of Japan?**

**Historicizing bushido:**

* Pre-tokugawa (pre-17th-century) – unwritten, systematized
* Tokugawa (1603-1867) codification – elements of preservation, nostalgia
* Meiji period (1868-1912) – bushido for the Japanese people, not the (entinct) samural
* Loyalty to the emperor, not the feudal lord
* Nitobe inazo (1862-1933), bushido: the soul of japan, 1899 – chivalry and universal ethical values
* Militarism and world war 2 – patriotism and wartime propaganda – martial virtues, Japanese essence, sacrifice for the emperor
* The post-war crisis – are Japan’s martial traditions forever tainted by the association with wartime militarism

**What is a samurai?**

The seven samurai: varied traits, skills, and personalities, implicit comparison with the forty-seven Ronin.

The samurai as a social group: - relationship with the peasants – mirrored in reverse by the bandits

Apprenticeship and initiation: - the noble youth katsushiro – the peasant kikuchiyo

**Mise-en-scene**: the arrangement of performers and properties on a stage for a theatrical or filmic production.

Why draw the lines in shot?

1. Because filmmakers draw these lines, at least in their mind: we back-engineer the film and understand how directors work.
2. Because film, as other forms of art, is a code to be deciphered. Like art historians, film critics regard formal analysis as a key to the work’s symbolism and meaning.

**Deep focus**:

* multiple stories taking place at the same time
* Mise-en-scene is complementary to montage, or editing.
* Different visual elements can be shot separately and combined in editing, where one shot follows another, or they can combine into the same shot.
* Kurosawa, like Kenji Mizoguchi and Orson Wells before him, is known for using deep focus, a technique that uses a long-focus lens to cram many distinct elements into a single frame.

Deep focus is pictorially rich.

Deep focus allows to add more detail in the background and foreground.

Deep focus adds dynamics.

Deep focus allows to tell two stories in one shot.

Deep focus can accentuate battle dynamics.

Deep focus requires good camera skills and knowledge of lighting, to keep all objects equally in focus and equally lit.

Since deep focus frames lack dimensionality, viewers might have trouble telling distances btw objects or characters. Kurosawa compensates through mise-en-scene, by placing landmarks, such as fences and walls to help the eye establish depth.