

2009/09/02

AFP: In testing times, s...

In testing times, samurai craze sweeps Japan

By Kiniko de Freitas-Tamura (AFP) — 5 days ago

TOKYO — Japan's politicians have been trying to drum up election fever this summer, but followers of a growing craze are more excited about strongmen who have been dead for centuries — samurai warriors.

A mania over feudal warlords has been sweeping Japan, capturing the imagination of many in a way that grey-suited lawmakers can only dream of as they brave the sweltering dog days ahead of an election on Sunday.

Japan's medieval knights have become all the rage, battling it out in video games, on cinema screens and in manga comics as sexy sword-wielding hunks.

Sales of their biographies have surged, their family coats of arms have been snapped up as lucky charms, and their former castles are being besieged by legions of fans yearning for a brush with Japan's long-gone martial noblemen.

Samurai figures now beckon from cellphone wallpapers, and the wives of famous warrior-lords have become the stars of high-rating historical TV dramas.

The general history magazine "Rekishi Kaido" ("History Road") has run cover stories on samurai lords almost every month for the past year.

The history fad — worth 745 million dollars a year, according to Dai-ichi Life Research Institute economist Toshihiro Nagahama — has been driven by hit video games and the A-list casts of popular samurai television dramas.

But some social observers also say the trend reflects a deeper yearning for potent leaders in a country fatigued by recession and uninspired by a bland political system dominated by two centrist mainstream parties.

In testing times like these, "people tend to turn to strong symbolic figures on whom they can project their ideals," said Hideki Nakagawa, a Nihon University sociology professor and an expert on pop culture.

What started out as a trend among video game nerds erupted into a mainstream craze this year after young women latched onto it. Japanese media quickly found a label for them — "rekijo," or female history geeks.

In a society where market researchers recently identified a new male demographic as passive 'herbivores', "women seek 'super carnivorous males'," said Ichiya Nakamura, a media and pop culture researcher at Keio University.

"The warlords were different from the cold-eyed, dispassionate Japanese men of today," he said. "They stood out because of their strong personalities."

In a store dedicated to samurai books and paraphernalia, a 17-year-old female fan agreed wholeheartedly, gushing that the "warlords sacrificed themselves for justice and to protect the people."

Now, she scoffed, "politics purely serves the interests of politicians."

Currently hip warlords include Oda Nobunaga, the first leader to bring Japan under unified rule, and Date Masamune, dubbed the "One-Eyed Dragon" after his solitary eye and known for his iconic helmet with a blade-like crescent.

"We are in an era that lacks politicians with strong resolve," said Fumikazu Oyama, 39, browsing through a bookstore specialising in the Sengoku or Warring States Period, which lasted from the 15th to the 17th centuries.

"They only procrastinate and delay solving problems."

"Japan will surely worsen if this situation continues," he added, leafing through samurai biographies in a section labelled "The Male Resolve."

At the Tokyo bookstore Jidaiya sales of samurai biographies have jumped 10-fold over the past year, a spokeswoman said.

The new surge in samurai interest may also offer a glimpse into the consumer mind as the country is emerging from its worst recession since World War II.

"When consumers are frustrated by a sense of stagnation topped by a recession, they develop an infatuation with figures that could break this stagnation," said Yoshiya Nomura, of Dentsu's Centre for Consumer Studies.

Copyright © 2009 AFP. All rights reserved. [More »](#)

Related articles

In testing times, samurai craze sweeps Japan

AFP - 4 days ago

[More coverage \(1\) »](#)

Meet Japanese Ladies

Beautiful Japanese Women Seeking Love & Marriage. Join Free Now!

www.JapanCupid.com

[Want to work in Japan?](#)



Photo 1 of :



A sales assistant holds a samurai-themed comic book for a customer at a bookstore in Tokyo.



Map





PRINT

Friday, August 28, 2009 - 09:01

AFP News Briefs List

In testing times, samurai craze sweeps Japan by Kimiko de Freitas-Tamura

Japan's politicians have been trying to drum up election fever this summer, but followers of a growing craze are more excited about strongmen who have been dead for centuries – samurai warriors. A mania over feudal warlords has been sweeping Japan, capturing the imagination of many in a way that grey-suited lawmakers can only dream of as they brave the sweltering dog days ahead of an election on Sunday.

Japan's medieval knights have become all the rage, battling it out in video games, on cinema screens and in manga comics as sexy sword-wielding hunks.

Sales of their biographies have surged, their family coats of arms have been snapped up as lucky charms, and their former castles are being besieged by legions of fans yearning for a brush with Japan's long-gone martial noblemen.

Samurai figures now beckon from cellphone wallpapers, and the wives of famous warrior-lords have become the stars of high-rating historical TV dramas.

The general history magazine "Rekishi Kaido" ("History Road") has run cover stories on samurai lords almost every month for the past year.

The history fad – worth 745 million dollars a year, according to Dai-ichi Life Research Institute economist Toshihiro Nagahama – has been driven by hit video games and the A-List casts of popular samurai television dramas.

But some social observers also say the trend reflects a deeper yearning for potent leaders in a country fatigued by recession and uninspired by a bland political system dominated by two centrist mainstream parties.

In testing times like these, "people tend to turn to strong symbolic figures on whom they can project their ideals," said Hideki Nakagawa, a Nihon University sociology professor and an expert on pop culture.

What started out as a trend among video game nerds erupted into a mainstream craze this year after young women latched onto it. Japanese media quickly found a label for them – "rekijo," or female history geeks.

In a society where market researchers recently identified a new male demographic as passive herbivores, "women seek 'super carnivorous males'," said Ichiya Nakamura, a media and pop culture researcher at Keio University.

"The warlords were different from the cold-eyed, dispassionate Japanese men of today," he said. "They stood out because of their strong personalities."

In a store dedicated to samurai books and paraphernalia, a 17-year-old female fan agreed wholeheartedly, gushing that the "warlords sacrificed themselves for justice and to protect the people."

Now, she scoffed, "politics purely serves the interests of politicians." Currently hip warlords include Oda Nobunaga, the first leader to bring Japan under unified rule, and Date Masamune, dubbed the "One-Eyed Dragon" after his solitary eye and known for his iconic helmet with a blade-like crescent.

"We are in an era that lacks politicians with strong resolve," said Fumikazu Oyama, 39, browsing through a bookstore specialising in the Sengoku or Warring States Period, which lasted from the 15th to the 17th centuries.

"They only procrastinate and delay solving problems."

"Japan will surely worsen if this situation continues," he added, leafing through samurai biographies in a section labelled "The Male Resolve."

At the Tokyo bookstore Jidaiya sales of samurai biographies have jumped 10-fold over the past year, a spokeswoman said.

The new surge in samurai interest may also offer a glimpse into the



A sales assistant displays comic books featuring a history of warlords at a bookshop in Tokyo. Amid Japan's forthcoming elections many younger people are switching off politics and opting instead to follow a growing craze for samurai warriors with video games, films and manga comics dedicated to the ancient fighters.

© 2007 AFP Toshiyuki Kitamura



A sales assistant hands out leaflets in front of a bookshop in Tokyo. Amid Japan's forthcoming elections many younger people are switching off politics and opting instead to follow a growing craze for samurai warriors with video games, films and manga comics dedicated to the ancient fighters.

© 2007 AFP Toshiyuki Kitamura



Shop staff pose at the entrance a retail outlet in Tokyo. Amid Japan's forthcoming elections many younger people are switching off politics and opting instead to follow a growing craze for samurai warriors with video games, films and manga comics.

2009/09/02

Sexy samurai obsession...



Sexy samurai obsession sweeps Japan

Posted Sat Aug 29, 2009 10:25am AEST

Updated Sat Aug 29, 2009 10:32am AEST

Japan's politicians have been trying to drum up election fever this summer, but followers of a growing craze are more excited about strongmen who have been dead for centuries - samurai warriors.

A mania over feudal warlords has been sweeping Japan, capturing the imagination of many in a way that grey-suited lawmakers can only dream of as they brave the sweltering dog days ahead of an election on Sunday.

Japan's medieval knights have become all the rage, battling it out in video games, on cinema screens and in manga comics as sexy, sword-wielding hunks.

Sales of their biographies have surged, their family coats of arms have been snapped up as lucky charms, and their former castles are being besieged by legions of fans yearning for a brush with Japan's long-gone martial noblemen.



*Growing craze: A shop clerk displays Manga comic books featuring the history of warloads.
(AFP: Toshifumi Kitamura)*

2009/09/02

Sexy samurai obsession...

Samurai figures now beckon from mobile phone wallpapers and the wives of famous warrior-lords have become the stars of high-rating historical TV dramas.

General history magazine Rekishi Kaido (History Road) has run cover stories on samurai lords almost every month for the past year.

The history fad - worth \$1 billion a year, according to Dai-ichi Life Research Institute economist Toshihiro Nagahama - has been driven by hit video games and the A-list casts of popular samurai television dramas.

But some social observers also say the trend reflects a deeper yearning for potent leaders in a country fatigued by recession and uninspired by a bland political system dominated by two centrist mainstream parties.

In testing times like these, "people tend to turn to strong symbolic figures on whom they can project their ideals," said Hideki Nakagawa, a Nihon University sociology professor and an expert on pop culture.

What started out as a trend among video game nerds erupted into a mainstream craze this year after young women latched onto it.

Japanese media quickly found a label for them - "rekijo," or female history geeks.

'Super carnivorous males'

In a society where market researchers recently identified a new male demographic, known as "passive herbivores", "women seek super carnivorous males," said Ichiya Nakamura, a media and pop culture researcher at Keio University.

"The warlords were different from the cold-eyed, dispassionate Japanese men of today," he said.

"They stood out because of their strong personalities."

In a store dedicated to samurai books and paraphernalia, a 17-year-old female fan agreed wholeheartedly, gushing that the "warlords sacrificed themselves for justice and to protect the people."

2009/09/02

Sexy samurai obsession...

Now, she scoffed, "politics purely serves the interests of politicians."

Currently hip warlords include Oda Nobunaga, the first leader to bring Japan under unified rule, and Date Masamune, dubbed the "One-Eyed Dragon" after his solitary eye and known for his iconic helmet with a blade-like crescent.

"We are in an era that lacks politicians with strong resolve," 39-year-old Fumikazu Oyama said, browsing through a bookstore specialising in the Sengoku or Warring States Period, which lasted from the 15th to the 17th centuries.

"They only procrastinate and delay solving problems."

"Japan will surely worsen if this situation continues," he added, leafing through samurai biographies in a section labelled The Male Resolve.

At the Tokyo bookstore Jidaiya, sales of samurai biographies have jumped tenfold over the past year, a spokeswoman said.

The new surge in samurai interest may also offer a glimpse into the consumer mind as the country is emerging from its worst recession since World War II.

"When consumers are frustrated by a sense of stagnation topped by a recession, they develop an infatuation with figures that could break this stagnation," said Yoshiya Nomura, of Dentsu's Centre for Consumer Studies.

- AFP

Tags: [popular-culture](#), [world-politics](#), [human-interest](#), [offbeat](#), [japan](#)

TAIPEI TIMES

Published on [Taipei Times](#)

<http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/world/archives/2009/08/30/2003452303>

In testing times, samurai craze eclipses politicians

AFP, TOKYO

Sunday, Aug 30, 2009, Page 4

Japan's politicians have been trying to drum up election fever this summer, but followers of a growing craze are more excited about strongmen who have been dead for centuries — samurai warriors.

A mania over feudal warlords has been sweeping Japan, capturing the imagination of many in a way that gray-suited lawmakers can only dream of as they brave the sweltering dog days ahead of today's election.

Japan's medieval knights have become all the rage, battling it out in video games, on cinema screens and in manga comics as sexy sword-wielding hunks.

Sales of their biographies have surged, their family coats of arms have been snapped up as lucky charms, and their former castles are being besieged by legions of fans yearning for a brush with Japan's long-gone martial noblemen.

Samurai figures now beckon from cellphone wallpapers, and the wives of famous warrior-lords have become the stars of high-rating historical TV dramas. The general history magazine *Rekishi Kaido* ("History Road") has run cover stories on samurai lords almost every month for the past year.

"The warlords were different from the cold-eyed, dispassionate Japanese men of today."

- - -

The history fad — worth US\$745 million a year, according to Dai-ichi Life Research Institute economist Toshihiro Nagahama — has been driven by hit video games and the A-list casts of popular samurai TV dramas.

But some social observers also say the trend reflects a deeper yearning for potent leaders in a country fatigued by recession and uninspired by a bland political system dominated by two centrist mainstream parties.



Employees of Tokyo bookstore Jidaiya pose at the entrance of the shop on Aug. 1.

PHOTO: AFP

2009/09/02

Taipei Times - archives

— Ichiya

**Nakamura,
media and pop
culture
researcher**

In testing times like these, “people tend to turn to strong symbolic figures on whom they can project their ideals,” said Hideki Nakagawa, a Nihon University sociology professor and an expert on pop culture.

What started out as a trend among video game nerds erupted into a mainstream craze this year after young women latched onto it. Japanese media quickly found a label for them — rekijo, or female history geeks.

In a society where market researchers recently identified a new male demographic as passive “herbivores,” “women seek ‘super carnivorous males,’ ” said Ichiya Nakamura, a media and pop culture researcher at Keio University.

“The warlords were different from the cold-eyed, dispassionate Japanese men of today,” he said. “They stood out because of their strong personalities.”

In a store dedicated to samurai books and paraphernalia, a 17-year-old female fan agreed wholeheartedly, gushing that the “warlords sacrificed themselves for justice and to protect the people.”

Now, she scoffed, “politics purely serves the interests of politicians.”

Currently hip warlords include Oda Nobunaga, the first leader to bring Japan under unified rule, and Date Masamune, dubbed the “One-Eyed Dragon” after his solitary eye and known for his iconic helmet with a blade-like crescent.

“We are in an era that lacks politicians with strong resolve,” said Fumikazu Oyama, 39, browsing through a bookstore specializing in the Sengoku or Warring States Period, which lasted from the 15th to the 17th centuries.

“They only procrastinate and delay solving problems. Japan will surely worsen if this situation continues,” he added, leafing through samurai biographies in a section labeled “The Male Resolve.”

At the Tokyo bookstore Jidaiya sales of samurai biographies have jumped 10-fold over the past year, a spokeswoman said.

The new surge in samurai interest may also offer a glimpse into the consumer mind as the country is emerging from its worst recession since World War II.

“When consumers are frustrated by a sense of stagnation topped by a recession, they develop an infatuation with figures that could break this stagnation,” said Yoshiya Nomura, of Dentsu’s Center for Consumer Studies.

Copyright © 1999–2009 The Taipei Times. All rights reserved.

2009/09/02

Print Story: In testing ti...

YAHOO! NEWS

[PRINT](#)

[Back to](#)

In testing times, samurai craze sweeps Japan

by Kimiko de Freytas-Tamura
Fri Aug 28 13:56 am ET

TOKYO (AFP) — Japan's politicians have been trying to drum up election fever this summer, but followers of a growing craze are more excited about strongmen who have been dead for centuries — samurai warriors.

A mania over feudal warlords has been sweeping Japan, capturing the imagination of many in a way that grey-suited lawmakers can only dream of as they brave the sweltering dog days ahead of an election on Sunday.

Japan's medieval knights have become all the rage, battling it out in video games, on cinema screens and in manga comics as sexy sword-wielding hunks.

Sales of their biographies have surged, their family coats of arms have been snapped up as lucky charms and their former castles are being besieged by legions of fans yearning for a brush with Japan's long-gone martial noblemen.

Samurai figures now beckon from cellphone wallpapers, and the wives of famous warrior-lords have become the stars of high-rating historical TV dramas.

The general history magazine "Rekishi Kaido" ("History Road") has run cover stories on samurai lords almost every month for the past year.

The history fad — worth 745 million dollars a year, according to Dai-ichi Life Research Institute economist Toshihiro Nagahama — has been driven by hit video games and the A-list casts of popular samurai television dramas.

But some social observers also say the trend reflects a deeper yearning for potent leaders in a country fatigued by recession and uninspired by a bland political system dominated by two centrist mainstream parties.

In testing times like these, "people tend to turn to strong symbolic figures on whom they can project their ideals," said Hideki Nakagawa, a Nihon University sociology professor and an expert on pop culture.

What started out as a trend among video game nerds erupted into a mainstream craze this year after young women latched onto it. Japanese media quickly found a label for them — "rekijo," or female history geeks.

In a society where market researchers recently identified a new male demographic as passive "herbivores" and "women seek 'super carnivorous males'," said Ichiya Nakamura, a media and pop culture researcher at Waseda University.

"The warlords were different from the cold-eyed, dispassionate Japanese men of today," he said. "They stood out because of their strong personalities."

In a store dedicated to samurai books and paraphernalia, a 17-year-old female fan agreed wholeheartedly, gushing that the "warlords sacrificed themselves for justice and to protect the people."

Now, she scoffed, "politics purely serves the interests of politicians."

2009/09/02

Print Story: In testing ti...

blade-like crescent.

"We are in an era that lacks politicians with strong resolve," said Fumikazu Oyama, 39, browsing through bookstore specialising in the Sengoku or Warring States Period, which lasted from the 15th to the 17th centuries.

"They only procrastinate and delay solving problems."

"Japan will surely worsen if this situation continues," he added, leafing through samurai biographies in a section labelled "The Male Resolve."

At the Tokyo bookstore Jidaiya sales of samurai biographies have jumped 10-fold over the past year, a spokeswoman said.

The new surge in samurai interest may also offer a glimpse into the consumer mind as the country is emerging from its worst recession since World War II.

"When consumers are frustrated by a sense of stagnation topped by a recession, they develop an infatuation with figures that could break this stagnation," said Yoshiya Nomura, of Dentsu's Centre for Consumer Studies.

Copyright © 2009 Yahoo! Inc. All rights reserved. Questions or Comments Privacy Policy Terms of Service Copyright/IP Policy

<http://www.arabtimesonline.com/images/arabtimeslogo.gif>

In testing times, samurai craze sweeps Japan

TOKYO, Aug 30, 2009 (AFP) – Japan's politicians have been trying to drum up election fever this summer, but followers of a growing craze are more excited about strongmen who have been dead for centuries — samurai warriors.

A mania over feudal warlords has been sweeping Japan, capturing the imagination of many in a way that grey-suited lawmakers can only dream of as they brave the sweltering dog days ahead of an election on Sunday.

Japan's medieval knights have become all the rage, battling it out in video games, on cinema screens and in manga comics as sexy sword-wielding hunks.

Sales of their biographies have surged, their family coats of arms have been snapped up as lucky charms, and their former castles are being besieged by legions of fans yearning for a brush with Japan's long-gone martial noblemen.

Samurai figures now beckon from cellphone wallpapers, and the wives of famous warrior-lords have become the stars of high-rating historical TV dramas.

The general history magazine 'Rekishi Kaido' ('History Road') has run cover stories on samurai lords almost every month for the past year.

The history fad — worth 745 million dollars a year, according to Dai-ichi Life Research Institute economist Toshihiro Nagahama — has been driven by hit video games and the A-List casts of popular samurai television dramas.

But some social observers also say the trend reflects a deeper yearning for potent leaders in a country fatigued by recession and uninspired by a bland political system dominated by two centrist mainstream parties.

In testing times like these, 'people tend to turn to strong symbolic figures on whom they can project their ideals,' said Hideki Nakagawa, a Nihon University sociology professor and an expert on pop culture.

What started out as a trend among video game nerds erupted into a mainstream craze this year after young women latched onto it. Japanese media quickly found a label for them — 'rekijo,' or female history geeks.

In a society where market researchers recently identified a new male demographic as passive 'herbivores', 'women seek 'super carnivorous males', ' said Ichiya Nakamura, a media and pop culture researcher at Keio University.

'The warlords were different from the cold-eyed, dispassionate Japanese men of today,' he said. 'They stood out because of their strong personalities.'

In a store dedicated to samurai books and paraphernalia, a 17-year-old female fan agreed wholeheartedly, gushing that the 'warlords sacrificed themselves for justice and to protect the people.'

Now, she scoffed, 'politics purely serves the interests of politicians.'

Currently hip warlords include Oda Nobunaga, the first leader to bring Japan under unified rule, and Date Masamune, dubbed the 'One-Eyed Dragon' after his solitary eye and known for his iconic helmet with a blade-like crescent.

'We are in an era that lacks politicians with strong resolve,' said Fumikazu Oyama, 39, browsing through a bookstore specialising in the Sengoku or Warring States Period, which lasted from the 15th to the 17th centuries.

'They only procrastinate and delay solving problems.'

'Japan will surely worsen if this situation continues,' he added, leafing through samurai biographies in a section labelled 'The Male Resolve.'

At the Tokyo bookstore Jidaiya sales of samurai biographies have jumped 10-fold over the past year, a spokeswoman said.

The new surge in samurai interest may also offer a glimpse into the consumer mind as the country is emerging from its worst recession since World War II.

'When consumers are frustrated by a sense of stagnation topped by a recession, they develop an infatuation with figures that could break this stagnation,' said Yoshiya Nomura, of Dentsu's Centre for

Consumer Studies.

無題