

【Course Description】

We will read a wide range of Japanese literature from a global perspective. A range of fictional and factual techniques are found in narratives around the world. Are traditional and modern Japanese ways of telling a story peculiar to Japan, characteristic of other East Asian literatures, or found in narratives elsewhere? How do contemporary narratives differ from older narratives in style and technique? The key themes of this course are (1) "narratology" (the study of narrative); (2) "tradition" vs "innovation"; (3) "reception" and "intertextuality"; (4) "translatability."

【Class Goals】

To read works that are enjoyable in themselves and raise interesting points for discussion about Japanese culture and society, as well as universal themes of human experience. To think about literature from the perspective of linguistic and cultural background, considering problems of translation and reception (appreciation, influence, adaptation).

【Course Schedule】

【第1回】 Introduction to Japanese literature and its special characteristics.

【第2回】 Early fictional narratives: The Bamboo Cutter's Tale / Taketori monogatari. Universal motifs.

【第3回】 Early fictional narratives: The Tale of Ochikubo / Ochikubo monogatari. "Cinderella" stories.

【第4回】 Autobiographical diaries and memoirs: The Kagero Diary.

【第5回】 Autobiographical diaries and memoirs: Sei Shonagon's Pillow Book

【第6回】 Comparing multiple translations. Presentations.

【第7回】 The Tale of Genji / Genji monogatari: introduction to the work. ("Firefly" chapter)

【第8回】 The Tale of Genji. Excerpts from chapters 1-2. Topic: reception.

【第9回】 The Tale of Genji, Chapter 4 (Yugao / Evening Faces) (1).

【第10回】 The Tale of Genji, Chapter 4 (Yugao / Evening Faces) (2).

【第11回】 The Tale of Genji, Chapter 4 (Yugao / Evening Faces) (3). Quiz

【第12回】 The Tale of Genji, Chapter 5 (Wakamurasaki / Young Murasaki) (1).

【第13回】 The Tale of Genji, Chapter 5 (Wakamurasaki / Young Murasaki) (3).

【第14回】 The Tale of Genji, Chapter 5 (Wakamurasaki / Young Murasaki) (4).

【第15回】 Fact and fiction: from "myth" to "history"

(Midterm report due in week 8)

【第16回】 Invented stories (fictional) presented as "fact" (realistically).

【第17回】 Medieval narratives ("setsuwa") and their techniques: realism and fantasy. Comparisons.

【第18回】 War narratives: mixing history with fiction. The Tale of the Heike / Heike monogatari (1).

【第19回】 War narratives: mixing history with fiction. The Tale of the Heike / Heike monogatari (2).

【第20回】 War narratives: mixing history with fiction. The Tale of the Heike / Heike monogatari (3).

【第21回】 War narratives: mixing history with fiction. The Tale of the Heike / Heike monogatari (4). Presentations.

【第22回】 Noh dramas based on semi-factual narratives and fictional narratives. Introduction.

【第23回】 Noh dramas based on semi-factual narratives (1)

【第24回】 Noh dramas based on fictional narratives (2)

【第25回】 Noh dramas (3). Presentations.

【第26回】 20th century writers mixing fact and fiction

【第27回】 20th century writers mixing fact and fiction. Presentations.

【第28回】 Contemporary narratives and their techniques. Comparing original and translation.

【第29回】 Modern narratives and their techniques. Presentations

【Preparation for Class】

All texts can be read in Japanese or English. Answers must be written in English using the e-learning site. You will need to prepare by doing the set readings BEFORE each class as well as completing any written assignments. Estimated time required: 4 hours/week.

【Review of Class】

When there is no new assignment, read through the text and translation again, comparing some passages in detail. Additional questions will sometimes be assigned via the e-learning site. Estimated time required: 4 hours/week.

【Remarks for Class】

Good attendance is required, but above all, you will be expected to READ carefully, DISCUSS actively, and WRITE thoughtfully and clearly.

【Texts】

Some texts will be available on reserve in the library. See "Reference Books."

Most other texts will be available in the "Discussions" section of the e-learning site.

【Reference Books】

See e-learning for details of the volumes on reserve: A four-volume anthology of Japanese literature in translation and a collection of essays and translations of noh (Like Clouds or Mists: Studies and Translations of No Plays of the Genpei War, ed. Owler and Watson)

【Evaluation Criteria】

Active participation in class (20%), oral presentations (20%), e-learning assignments (20%), midterm report (20%), final report

【Notes】

Japanese reading ability is NOT required for this class. All texts can be read in English translation.