

## 【Course Aim】

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).

## 【Contents of Course】

We will read a wide range of Japanese literature from a global perspective. What can and can't be translated successfully? Are traditional Japanese ways of telling a story peculiar to Japan, characteristic of other Asian literatures, or found in narratives world-wide? We will study how Japanese story-tellers use fictional and factual techniques that are widely found in narratives around the world. The key themes of this course are (1) "universality"; (2) "translatability"; (3) fiction vs. fact.

## 【Course Schedule】

- 【第1回】 Introduction to Japanese literature and its special characteristics.
- 【第2回】 Fact and fiction in early "history": the tale of Yamato Takeru.
- 【第3回】 Realism and fictionality in poems of the Man'yōshū. "Translatability."
- 【第4回】 Invented stories (fictional) presented as "fact" (realistically). Short examples.
- 【第5回】 Autobiographical diaries and memoirs: The Kagerō Diary.
- 【第6回】 Autobiographical diaries and memoirs: Sei Shōnagon's Pillow Book.
- 【第7回】 Early fictional narratives: The Bamboo Cutter's Tale / Taketori monogatari. Universal motifs.
- 【第8回】 Early fictional narratives: The Tale of Oshichiyo / Oshichiyo monogatari. "Cinderella" stories.
- 【第9回】 Medieval narratives ("setsuwa") and their techniques: realism and fantasy. Comparisons.
- 【第10回】 Edo-period narratives and their techniques. Contrast with Meiji-period writing. Presentations.
- 【第11回】 The Tale of Genji / Genji monogatari: introduction to the work. ("Firefly" chapter)
- 【第12回】 The Tale of Genji. Excerpts from chapters 1-2. Topic: reception.
- 【第13回】 The Tale of Genji, Chapter 4 (Yugao / Evening Faces) (1).
- 【第14回】 The Tale of Genji, Chapter 4 (Yugao / Evening Faces) (2).
- 【第15回】 The Tale of Genji, Chapter 5 (Wakamurasaki / Young Murasaki) (1).
- 【第16回】 The Tale of Genji, Chapter 5 (Wakamurasaki / Young Murasaki) (2). Presentations.
- 【第17回】 War narratives: mixing history with fiction. The Tale of the Heike / Heike monogatari (1).
- 【第18回】 War narratives: mixing history with fiction. The Tale of the Heike / Heike monogatari (2).
- 【第19回】 War narratives: mixing history with fiction. The Tale of the Heike / Heike monogatari (3).
- 【第20回】 War narratives: mixing history with fiction. The Tale of the Heike / Heike monogatari (4). Presentations.
- 【第21回】 Noh dramas based on semi-factual narratives and fictional narratives. Introduction.
- 【第22回】 Noh dramas based on semi-factual narratives (1)
- 【第23回】 Noh dramas based on fictional narratives (2)
- 【第24回】 Noh dramas (3). Presentations.
- 【第25回】 20th century writers mixing fact and fiction
- 【第26回】 20th century writers mixing fact and fiction. Presentations.
- 【第27回】 Modern narratives and their techniques. Presentations.
- 【第28回】 Modern narratives and their techniques.
- 【第29回】 Looking back at writers discussed. Comparing original and translation.
- 【第30回】 Looking back at writers discussed. Comparing original and translation.

## 【Preparation / Advice】

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.

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.

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

## 【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】

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. Ovler and Watson.

## 【Grading】

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