

Modern Japanese Literature – 2017-2018

Dr L. M. Flores, Faculty of Oriental Studies

Tuesdays 13.00 – 14.00, Michaelmas and Hilary Terms at the Oriental Institute

Course Description:

The lecture series on Modern Japanese Literature is designed to provide an overview of important literary works and writers in the period spanning from the end of the Edo to the beginning of the 20th century. Throughout the course of the lectures we will explore key issues in Japanese literary studies including modernity, the self, identity, and gender. Lectures will address both the social and historical context of the works under examination as closer readings of the texts themselves. You are expected to read the works on the 'Lectures and Required Readings' list below prior to attending lectures.

Week 1	What is 'Modern' 'Japanese' 'Literature'?
Week 2	The Edo Period and the Invention of Japan
Week 3	Defining Gender in Meiji
Week 4	Civilisation and Enlightenment
Week 5	The Invention of Literature
Week 6	The Reform of <i>Tanka</i> Poetry
Week 7	The Rise of Empire
Week 8	Japanese Naturalism and the 'I-novel'

Lectures and Required Readings:

Week 1: Course Introduction: What is modern Japanese Literature?

Reading:

- Stephen Vlastos, 'Tradition: Past/Present Culture and Modern Japanese History', in Vlastos, ed., *Mirror of Modernity: Invented Traditions of Modern Japan* (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1998) pp. 1-16.
- Dipesh Chakrabarty, 'Afterword: Revisiting the Tradition/Modernity Binary', in Vlastos, ed., *Mirror of Modernity: Invented Traditions of Modern Japan* (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1998) pp. 285-296.

Essay Question: What is 'modern' 'Japanese' 'literature'?

*Suggested Reading:

Karatani Kojin, *Origins of Modern Japanese Literature*. (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1994) pp. vii-10 and pp. 190-195.

Week 2: The Edo Period and the Invention of Japan

Reading:

- Chikamatsu Monzaemon, 'Love Suicides at Amijima,' from *Four Major Plays of Chikamatsu*, Donald Keene, trans., (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961).

Essay Question: Discuss the relationship between the characters Osan and Koharu.

*Suggested Reading:

- Victoria V. Vernon, *Wish, Will and Social Constraint in Fiction by Modern Japanese Women* (Berkeley, California: Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California, 1988), pp. 1-16, pp. 135-203.

Week 3: Defining Gender in Meiji

Reading:

- Kaibara Ekiken, 'The Greater Learning for Women' in Basil Hall Chamberlain, *Things Japanese* (London: Kegan Paul, 1891).
- 'Kamo Mabuchi' and 'Motoori Norinaga,' from Ryusaku Tsunoda, William Theodore de Bary and Donald Keene, eds., *Sources of Japanese Tradition*, Volume 2 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1958).

Essay Question: How did women challenge constructions of womanhood in their writing in the Meiji-Taisho periods? To what extent were these challenges successful?

*Suggested Reading:

Sharon H. Nolte and Sally Ann Hastings, 'The Meiji State's Policy Toward Women, 1890-1910', in Gail Lee Bernstein, ed., *Recreating Japanese Women, 1600-1945* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991), pp. 151-174.

*Suggested Reading:

Kunikida Doppo, 'On Women and Translation', in Rebecca L. Copeland, *Woman Critiqued* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2006)

*Suggested Reading:

Yosano Akiko, 'What is "Womanliness"?', in Rebecca L. Copeland, *Woman Critiqued* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2006)

Week 4: Civilisation and Enlightenment

Reading:

- Tsubouchi Shōyō, 'The Essence of the Novel,' in Donald Keene, ed., *Modern Japanese Literature*. (New York: Grove Press, 1956).
- Mori Ogai, 'Maihime,' Richard Bowring, trans. *Monumenta Nipponica*, Vol. 30, No. 2 (Summer, 1975), pp. 151-176.

Essay Question: What does it mean to be modern?

*Suggested Reading:

Bowring, Richard. *The Historical Fiction of Mori Ogai* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1991).

Week 5: The Invention of Literature

Reading:

- Higuchi Ichiyo, 'The Thirteenth Night' (1895) and 'Child's Play' (1895-96) in Danly, Robert *In the Shade of Spring Leaves: Life and Writings of Higuchi Ichiyo, a Woman of Letters in Meiji Japan* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1993).

Essay Question: What is joryū bungaku? Is it a useful or meaningful category?

*Suggested Reading: Ericson, Joan. *Be a Woman: Hayashi Fumiko and Modern Japanese Women's Literature* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1997).

Week 6: The Reform of *Tanka* Poetry

Reading:

- Yosano Akiko, *Tangled Hair: selected tanka from Midaregami* (1901) (Lafayette, Indiana: Purdue University Studies, 1971).
- Yosano Tekkan, selected tanka (handout).

Essay Question: Was Yosano Akiko's poetry revolutionary?

*Suggested Reading:

- Morton, Leith. *The Alien Within: Representations of the Exotic in Twentieth-Century Japanese Literature* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2009).

Week 7: The Rise of Empire

Reading:

- Natsume Sōseki, *Kokoro*, Edward McClellan, trans. (London: Peter Owen, 1968).

Essay Question: Discuss the role of father figures in Natsume Sōseki's *Kokoro*.

*Suggested Reading:

Bargen, Doris. *Suicidal Honor: General Nogi and the Writings of Mori Ōgai and Natsume Sōseki* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2006).

Week 8: Japanese Naturalism and the 'I-novel'

Reading:

- Shiga Naoya, 'At Kinosaki,' in *The Paper Door and Other Stories*, Lane Dunlop, trans. (Columbia University Press, New York; 2001).
- Tayama Katai, 'Futon,' in *The Quilt and Other Stories*, Kenneth G. Henshall, trans., (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1981).

Essay Question: How has the I-novel changed the way we read Japanese literature?

*Suggested Reading:

Suzuki, Tomi. *Narrating the Self: Fictions of Japanese Modernity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996).