

Instructor's Name **Alexander Dolin**
Office C-5
Office Hours
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Semesters fall semester
Day and Time Monday, Wednesday 14:00 – 15:15

Course description

The course presents a comprehensive overview of classic Japanese literature from the Nara period to the early XX c. which will familiarize students with the most famous authors and their masterpieces as well as with the cultural background. Comparative approach revealing numerous parallels with Chinese and Western traditions unveils the complex nature of Japanese aesthetics as seen in relation to cross-cultural contacts. Such unique phenomena as the early medieval novel, lyrical diaries, tanka and haiku poetry, Noh and Kabuki drama will each be shown in the larger context of world literary heritage.

The course is provided with video materials featuring historic sights, biographies of various writers and various kinds of classic performances like No, Kabuki and Bunraku.

Course objectives

1. Create a background for understanding the basic characteristics of Japanese literature.
2. Introduce students to the texts of the great masterpieces of Japanese Literature (in English translation)
3. Open up access to various fields within Japanese culture, including religious thought, fine arts, performing arts, martial arts, Japanese gardens and tea ceremony.

Study Materials

- A. Dolin "Japanese Literature in a Nutshell"
(special CD-ROM textbook / reference disk with Internet links)
Shuichi Kato "A History of Japanese Literature". Japan Library, ed. 2
- videotapes and DVD
Reference Materials
Donald Keene "Anthology of Japanese Literature". Tuttle, ed. 3
Online resources
List of recommended reading

Assessment

Percentage of each grading item

Homework assignments	100 points	25 %
Participation in discussions	100 points	25 %
Final examination	200 points	50 %
Total number of points	400	

Expected academic background

Sufficient English proficiency
(advanced EAP – level 3 and above)

Policies

- Attendance is required.
- Interest in the subject is encouraged.
- Presentation skills are appreciated.
- Plagiarism is despised.

Format and Activities

Lecture/seminar with regular presentations and discussions.
The students are required to write papers using their reference materials provided on the CD-ROM and fully participate in the discussions..

Class Schedule

1. Japanese Literature and Culture in the Context of World Civilization
Folklore and the First Monuments of Literature in the Nara Period.-
The Myths of the *Kojiki* – the *Nihongi* and the *Fudoki*.
2. The Poetry of the *Manyoshu*.
3. Heian Culture: The *Kokinshu* and other Imperial waka Anthologies.
Waka Poetry in the Early Kamakura Period: The *Shinkokinshu* – Saigyō –
Fujiwara Teika.
4. Great Prose Masterpieces of the Heian Period: Folklore and Setsuwa Stories - Early
Monogatari Literature – The *Genji Monogatari* - Lyrical Diaries.
5. Presentations
6. Emergence of Samurai Culture in the Kamakura, Ashikaga and Muromachi Periods.
Medieval *Gunki* Epic Tales - *The Heike Monogatari*.
7. Later Medieval *Gunki* Epic Tales – The *Taiheiki* – The *Gikeiki*. -
History of Japan in the Mirror of Fiction (*rekishi monogatari, zuihitsu*)

8. Noh Theatre and Kyogen – Plays and Poetics. – Kanami and Zeami. -
Noh Theatre and Kyogen – Performance.
9. Literature and culture in the Tokugawa Period – Introduction.
Religion, Philosophy and Morals of the *ukiyo* World
10. Zen Buddhism in Fine Arts and Martial Arts – Zen Style of Life -
Zen Buddhism in Literature – Renga and Gozan bungaku
11. *Haiku* Poetry, *Haiga* Paintings and *Haibun* Prose -
Basho and his Aesthetic Universe.
12. Haiku after Basho – Shofu School – Yosa-no Buson – Kobayashi Issa.
Edo waka Poetry: Ryokan-hoshi, Ozawa Roan, Tachibana Akemi.
13. Presentations
14. Prose Masterpieces of the Tokugawa Period:
Ihara Saikaku
15. Joruri and Bunraku Theatre.
Kabuki Theatre and its Role in the City Life.
16. Plays by Chikamatsu Monzaemon – Jidai-mono – Sewa-mono
Drama after Chikamatsu – Chusingura.
17. Ueda Akinari and *Kaidan* Ghost Stories -
Popular Fiction and Book Printing – Evolution of the Woodblock Prints
Technique and ukiyo-e Painting..
18. “National School” *Kokugaku and Literature: Kamo Mabuchi, Motoori Norinaga* -
Literature of the *Bakumatsu* Period
19. Presentations
20. Literature and Culture in the Meiji Period: Modernization – Western Influences -
Education and Science – Religion - Arts – Revival of National Identity
21. Great Names in Meiji-Taisho- Showa Poetry - Great Names in Fiction in the
Meiji- Taisho Period (overview) .
23. Great Names in Fiction in the Showa Period (overview)
24. New Japanese Literature and the West: a Century of Shared Love.
25. Final Examination

