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Transnational Japanese Literature: Diversity And Diaspora In Modern Japanese Literature (JPNS 073) Syllabus

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JPNS 073: Transnational Japanese literature: Diversity and diaspora in modern Japanese literature

**Prof. Will Gardner
Swarthmore College
fall 2021**

Mondays 1:15 - 4:00 pm, Kohlberg 318

Some additional guest talks will be scheduled outside of class meeting time.

Prof. Will Gardner wgardne1@swarthmore.edu Office phone: 610-690-6875 (x6875)
Office: Kohlberg 315 Office hours: Tuesdays 3:15 - 4:30 and by appointment

Course description:

This course will challenge the myths of Japanese ethnic homogeneity and cultural isolation and explore how modern “Japanese” literature crosses national and cultural borders. Topics to be examined include Japanese writers writing from abroad, colonial and postcolonial literatures, migration and writing in the Japanese diaspora, and the writings of ethnic minorities in Japan, including writers from Okinawa and Japan’s resident Korean community. Readings will be in English but students with reading knowledge of Japanese will be encouraged to read works in the original.

Format of the class:

This will be a seminar-style class in which students will be responsible for leading discussions and presenting secondary readings. Specifically, around two students will be appointed as discussion leaders each week. These students will post discussion questions to Moodle, lead in-class discussion (with the assistance of Prof. Gardner), and present highlights of the “Secondary Reading” in each week’s assigned readings. The “Secondary Reading” is optional for students who are not discussion leaders that week. Every student will post reflections to the Moodle discussion forum on that week’s Primary Reading(s), focusing on one aspect of the readings that they found interesting. In addition to the class discussion and summaries of the secondary readings presented by the discussion leaders, Prof. Gardner will often present brief lectures on the context and literary/linguistic qualities of the readings.

We will also have guest speakers/discussants on weeks 4, 5, and 7. *Guest talks will be considered part of mandatory attendance unless an excuse is issued in advance.*

Students will also work on a final research presentation and paper in consultation with Prof. Gardner. More information on presentations and papers including suggested topics will be forthcoming. The final two weeks of the class will be devoted to research presentations. Research papers will be due during the final exam period. (There will be no other final exam.)

Grading criteria:

- | | |
|--|-----|
| 1. Attendance and participation | 20% |
| 2. Weekly moodle discussion forum posts | 25% |
| 3. Discussion leading | 20% |
| 4. Final research project: in-class presentation | 15% |
| 5. Final research project: written paper | 20% |

Accommodations statement and COVID-19 protocols omitted from this copy of the syllabus

Weekly readings:

I. Modernism, Imperialism, and the Japanese diaspora

Week 1 -- August 30

Course introduction

1. Lisa Yoneyama, "Toward a Decolonial Genealogy of the Transpacific," *American Quarterly* 69.3 (September 2017), 471-482.
2. Begin reading Yokomitsu Riichi, *Shanghai*. Trans. Dennis Washburn. University of Michigan Center for Japanese Studies, 2002.

September 6-- Labor Day-- no classes

Week 2 -- September 13

Yokomitsu Riichi, *Shanghai*

Primary Reading:

1. Yokomitsu, Riichi. *Shanghai*. Trans. Dennis Washburn. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Center for Japanese Studies, 2002.

Secondary Reading:

2. Seiji Lippit, "Topographies of Empire: Yokomitsu Riichi's *Shanghai*." From *Topographies of Japanese Modernism*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2002. 75-115.

Week 3 -- September 20

Yi Sang, selected prose and poetry

Primary Reading:

1. Selections from *Yi Sang: Selected Works*. Ed. Don Mee Choi. Seattle: Wave Books, 2021. (Timeline and selected poetry in Korean, trans. Jack Jung; translator's introduction and poetry in Japanese, trans. Sawako Nakayasu.)
2. Yi Sang, "Wings." Trans. Walter Lew and Youngju Ryu. From *Modern Korean Fiction: An Anthology*, edited by Bruce Fulton and Youngmin Kwon. New York: Columbia University Press, 2005. 66-84.

Secondary Reading:

1. John H. Kim, "As the Crow Flies: Yi Sang's Aerial Poetics." *Journal of Korean Studies* 23.2 (October 2018), 241-274.

Week 4 -- September 27

Issei literature-- literature from the Pacific/American Japanese diaspora in Japanese (tanka, manga, etc.)

8:00 pm -- 9:00 pm. Discussion with Matt Sueda '17 via Zoom

Primary Readings:

1. Selections from Henry (Yoshitaka) Kiyama, *The Four Immigrants Manga: A Japanese Experience in San Francisco, 1904-1924*. Translation and introduction by Frederik L. Schodt. Berkeley, CA: Stone Bridge Press, 1999.
2. Synopsis of Matthew Sueda, "The Issei Experience in Hilo, Hawai'i as seen through the Gin-sen shû (Silver Rain Stories) Tanka Poetry Collection." BA Thesis, Swarthmore College, 2017.
3. *Poets Behind Barbed Wire: Tanka Poems: Keijiro Soga, Taisanboku Mori, Sojin Takei, Muin Ozaki*. Ed. and trans. By Jiro Nakano and Kay Nakano. Honolulu: Bamboo Ridge Press, 1983.

Secondary Reading:

1. *May Sky: There Is Always Tomorrow: an Anthology of Japanese American Concentration Camp Kaiko Haiku*. Ed. by Violet Kazue De Cristoforo. Los Angeles: Sun and Moon Press, 1997.

Week 5 -- October 4

The Japanese-American Internment and Nisei literature

John Okada, *No-No Boy*

4:15 pm: Guest lecture by Prof. Josephine Park, University of Pennsylvania

Lecture topic: Issei and Nisei aesthetics during incarceration

Primary Reading:

1. John Okada, *No-No Boy*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2014.

Secondary Reading:

1. Jinqi Ling, "Race, Power, and Cultural Politics in John Okada's *No-no Boy*." *American Literature* 67.2 (June 1995), 359-381.

October 11 -- fall break

II. Postwar Japan, postcolonialism, and neocolonialism

Week 6 -- October 18

Introduction to Okinawan and Zainichi literature

Primary Readings:

1. "Introduction" to Davinder L. Bhowmik and Steve Rabson, eds., *Islands of Protest: Japanese Literature from Okinawa* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2016), 1-16.
2. Yamagusuku Seichû, "The Kunenbo Orange Trees" (1911), from Davinder L. Bhowmik and Steve Rabson, eds., *Islands of Protest: Japanese Literature from Okinawa* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2016), 25-40.
3. Yamanokuchi Baku, "Reminiscences from *The Days of My Youth*" (1963), "A Conversation" (1935), and "Shell-shocked Island" (1964), from Michael Molasky and Steve Rabson, eds., *Southern Exposure: Modern Japanese Literature from Okinawa* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2000), 46-49.
4. Melissa L. Wender, "Introduction," from *Into the Light: An Anthology of Literature by Koreans in Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2011), 1-12.
5. Kim Tal-su, "In the shadow of Mount Fuji" (1951) from *Into the Light: An Anthology of Literature by Koreans in Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2011), 39-65.

Secondary Readings:

1. Davinder L. Bhowmik, "The color orange in Yamagusuku Shichû's Okinawan Fiction," from *Writing Okinawa: Narrative Acts of Identity and Resistance* (London and New York: Routledge, 2008), 17-41.
2. Melisa L. Wender, "Introduction," to *Lamentation as History: Narratives by Koreans in Japan, 1965-2000* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005), 1-20.
3. Jonathan Glade, "Failed Solidarity: Confronting Imperial Structures in Kim Sa-ryang's "Into the Light" and Kim Tal-su's "Village with a View of Mt. Fuji." *Sungkyun Journal of East Asian Studies* 17.2 (October 2017), 191-210.

Week 7 -- October 25

Zainichi literature

Guest speaker/discussant: Gina Goosby '20, co-founder of [New Suns book subscription service](#)

Primary Readings:

1. Noguchi Kakuchû, "Foreign Husband," from *Into the Light: An Anthology of Literature by Koreans in Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2011), 66-91.
2. Yi Yang-ji, "Koku," from *Into the Light: An Anthology of Literature by Koreans in Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2011), 132-141.
3. Kim Ch'ang-Saeng, "Crimson Fruit," from *Into the Light: An Anthology of Literature by Koreans in Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2011), 142-171.

Secondary Readings:

1. Melisa L. Wender, "Ikaino the Homeland," from *Lamentation as History: Narratives by Koreans in Japan, 1965-2000* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005), 91-125.
2. Melisa L. Wender, "Words that Breathe," from *Lamentation as History: Narratives by Koreans in Japan, 1965-2000* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005), 126-156.

Week 8 -- November 1

Okinawan literature

Primary Readings:

1. Medoruma Shun, "Tree of Butterflies" (2000), trans. Aimée Mizuno, from Davinder L. Bhowmik and Steve Rabson, eds., *Islands of Protest: Japanese Literature from Okinawa* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2016), 71-112.
2. Sakiyama Tami, "Island Confinement" (1990), trans. Takuma Sminkey, from Davinder L. Bhowmik and Steve Rabson, eds., *Islands of Protest: Japanese Literature from Okinawa* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2016), 113-160.

Secondary Readings:

1. Davinder L. Bhowmik, "Postreversion Fiction and Medoruma Shun," from *Writing Okinawa: Narrative Acts of Identity and Resistance* (London and New York: Routledge, 2008), 124-157.
2. Davinder L. Bhowmik, "Darkness visible in Sakiyama Tami's island stories," from *Writing Okinawa: Narrative Acts of Identity and Resistance* (London and New York: Routledge, 2008), 158-178.

III. Contemporary literature, transnationalism, and the undeath of the nation-state

Week 9 -- November 8

Karen Tei Yamashita, *Circle K Cycles*

Primary Reading:

1. Selections from Karen Tei Yamashita, *Circle K Cycles*. Minneapolis: Coffee House Press, 2001.

Secondary Reading:

1. Kandice Chuh, "Of Hemispheres and Other Spheres: Navigating Karen Tei Yamashita's Literary World." *American Literary History* 18.3 (October 2006), 618-637.

Week 10 -- November 15

Yû Miri, *Tokyo Ueno Station*

Primary Reading:

1. Yu Miri, *Tokyo Ueno Station*. Trans. by Morgan Giles. London: Tilted Axis Press, 2019.

Secondary Reading:

1. Kirstina Iwata-Weickgenannt, "The roads to disaster, or rewriting history from the margins-- Yû Miri's JR Ueno Station Park Exit." *Contemporary Japan* 31.2 (2019), 180-196.

Week 11 -- November 22

Tawada Yoko, short stories from *Where Europe Begins*

Primary Reading:

1. Yoko Tawada, "The Bath," "Canned Foreign," and "Where Europe Begins," from *Where Europe Begins*. Trans. by Susan Bernofsky and Yumi Selden. New York: New Directions, 2002.

Secondary Reading:

1. Reiko Tachibana, "Tawada Yôko's Quest for Exophony: Japan and Germany," from *Yôko Tawada: Voices from Everywhere*, ed. Doug Slaymaker (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2007), 153-168.

Week 12 -- November 29

Student presentations

Week 13 -- December 6

Student presentations

5:00 pm, Thursday, December 16: Final Papers due by electronic submission