Syllabus Fall 2011
Behind the Mask 1: Exteriority
IDSEM UG1351
Tues and Thurs 2:00-3:15
1 Washington Place, Room 601

Course Description:

It can be argued that until the 1880s one thing was almost completely absent in Japanese literary and performing arts: the notion of an interiorized subject. In fact, the premodern Japanese arts are examples of extreme “exteriority,” that privilege form, word play and intertextuality and enfold the human being and human erotic passions within rituals for purity and harmony with a cosmology of the heavens. This course will explore ancient and premodern Japanese poetics and prose, performing and visual arts, from the very first writings through the nineteenth century, in relation to politics, gender, history and cosmology. Texts will include: Selections of poetry, emaki (picture scrolls), nō and puppet plays, selections from The Tale of Genji, The Pillow Book.

Course requirements:
Attendance, Participation, 15% *
Two Papers 50%
Additional writings/ Assignments 20%
Presentations 15%

* Participation is a vital part of this class, and therefore also your grade. If you have a very difficult time talking in class come to see me during office hours EARLY in the semester so we can talk about what we can do.

Statement on Plagiarism
Plagiarism means: presenting as your own someone else’s words, ideas, opinions, and/or argument. You must be sure to cite your sources, include a bibliography, and use quotation marks when you incorporate another person’s words or language verbatim. This includes buying a paper! Cases of suspected plagiarism will be referred to the Dean for disciplinary action(s).
**** On Japanese names: Japanese names are in the opposite order of American ones, so the FAMILY NAME (our last name) comes first, and the GIVEN NAME is second. (Like in a bibliographic list, but without a comma: i.e. Cornyetz Nina).

Students are required to bring a copy of the assigned readings to class.

**Required Books:**
For sale at Bluestockings, 172 Allen Street between Stanton and Rivington – (1 block south of Houston and 1st Avenue). Buy these in the beginning of the class, the bookstore sends back unsold copies by around midterm. Also on reserve at Bobst Library.


**Additional Readings are available on blackboard. Below they are listed with full citation information in the order in which we will be reading them.**


Schedule

Part One – Antiquity/ Middle Ages

September 6 Tuesday: Course Introduction

September 8 Thursday: Communities of Antiquity
    Readings: Anderson, Imagined Communities, 1-46 (blackboard)

September 13 Tuesday: Communities of Antiquity 2 - Introducing Heian Japan
    Imagine there’s no Japan
    Readings: Miner, The Princeton Companion to Classical Japanese Literature, 3-43; 399-408; 415-418.
    Assignment: Look over and get a sense of the historical periods in Japan in relation to China, Korea, and Europe in the chart on blackboard. Also, familiarize yourself with The Princeton Companion.

September 15 Thursday: Language Games – handouts on the Japanese language
    Readings: LaMarre, Uncovering Heian Japan 1-25.
    (Remember to consult The Princeton Companion to Classical Japanese Literature for terms, famous names, etc. It will help make the reading more understandable.)

September 20 Tuesday: A World of Signs.
    Readings: Marra, “A Lesson to the Leaders: Ise Monogatari and the Code of Miyabi,” (blackboard)

September 22 Thursday: How to do Things with Words
    Readings: LaMarre, Uncovering Heian Japan, 41-74.

September 27 Tuesday: The Materiality of the Text
    Readings: LaMarre, Uncovering Heian Japan, 93-106; Raud, “The Lover’s Subject,” (blackboard)
    Assignments: (1) Write two acrostic poems (4 or 5 lines long each), one that mimics the Heian waka in terms of word-play, topic, etc., and one that you might write as a college student today. Think carefully about what is different in the two acrostics.
    Student Presentations 1

September 29 Thursday: Kanshi / Politics 1
    Readings: Kanshi (blackboard)
    Assignment: 1 or 2 page reaction to how kanshi compares to waka.
October 4 Tuesday: *Gendering Language*
Readings: LaMarre, *Uncovering Heian Japan*, 107-113; Cornyetz, excerpt from *Dangerous Women*, 78-81 (blackboard); Fukumori, “Chinese Learning,” (blackboard).

October 6 Thursday: *Sei Shonagon – proto-feminist?*
Student Presentations 2

**No classes October 11 Tuesday**

October 13 Thursday: *Zuihitsu 2*
Assignment: (1) make your own list.
(2) Write a *zuihitsu* about 1 or 2 pages long, contemplating how you might use language itself to make a political commentary in English. Or, show me by doing so. Is there anything we can use in the way that Shonagon or Murasaki used Chinese?
(3) be ready to share these in class.

October 18 Tuesday: *Monogatari i View: The Illustrated handscroll tale of Genji (VCA 5274)*

October 20 Thursday: *Women Possessed etc.*
Assignment: Response paper to Genji and secondary readings
Student Presentations 3

October 25 Tuesday: *The nô theater, time and space* (in class video)
Readings: Miner, Princeton Companion, 43-63; 307-322; Zeami(?), “The Shrine in the Fields,” (blackboard)
**First Paper Due**

October 27 Thursday: *Medieval Japan –Buddhism, performance and power*
Readings: Marra, “The Aesthetics of Impurity” (blackboard)
**Part Two -- Early Modern Japan, Edo**

November 1 Tuesday: *Not About Representation* – In class movie part one.
Shinoda, “Double Suicide”
Readings: *Princeton Companion*, 63-111; 322-340;
Assignment: Response paper to Zeami and Nô in general
Student Presentations 4

November 3 Thursday: *Bunraku* -- In class, finish watching “Double Suicide”
Readings: de Bary, “Not Another Double Suicide,” (blackboard)

November 8 Tuesday: *Strategies of Narration 1*
Readings: Sakai, “Supplement,” (blackboard)
Student Presentations 5

November 10 Thursday: *Loving men, despising women*

November 15 Tuesday: *Male-male Pleasures, Edo Style*

November 17 Thursday: *Pornography and Advertising in Edo*
Assignment: Response paper to the issue of sex/gender in Edo Japan

November 22 Thursday: *Dangerous Women* -- in class film, “Ugetsu” part one

Reading Break!

NO CLASS NOVEMBER 24, HAPPY THANKSGIVING

November 29 Tuesday: *Dangerous Women 2* – in class movie, “Ugetsu”  part 2
Reading Break!

December 1 Thursday: *Dangerous Women 3*
December 6 Tuesday: *A Weave of Language*  
Assignment: Response paper to Kibyoshi  
Student Presentations 6

December 8 Thursday: *Constructing or deconstructing “Japan”?*  

December 13 Tuesday: *Deconstructing “ri” (principle/law)*  
Readings: Karatani, “One Spirit, Two Nineteenth Centuries,” (blackboard)

December 15 Thursday  
No new Readings  
**Final Paper Due**