Syllabus Spring 2014
Passion and Poetics in Early Japan
IDSEM UG1351
Tues and Thurs 2:00-3:15
January 28 – May 8
1 Washington Place, 527

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), no and puppet plays, selections from The Tale of Genji, The Pillow Book.

Presentations: each student will present twice a semester, once during the first half, once during the second half. Students are to choose a particularly representative, interesting, difficult, or etc. passage from the assigned texts to read in class, and offer a 2-3 page intellectual and analytic reaction of their own as well. Why this choice? The presenting students must hand in their reaction papers for grading.

Course requirements:
Attendance, Participation, 10% *
Midterm Paper 30%
Additional writings/ Assignments 10%
Presentations 10%
Final Exam in class 40%
• 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.
• Laptops are allowed in class. However, if you choose to spend your time on social media please choose a seat in the back of the class, and be aware that it will negatively impact your grade in the end. It is far more obvious to the professor than you may think.

Course Objectives: The course aims to familiarize students with the various arts of ancient and premodern Japan, from poetry to puppet theater to early progenitors of manga. The course also aims to teach students about the concept of art forms that privilege exteriority, or form and function, above interiority or expressions of individual “voices” and emotions.

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:
Also on reserve at Bobst Library.


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


Schedule

Part One – Antiquity/ Middle Ages

January 28 Tuesday: Course Introduction

January 30 Thursday: Communities of Antiquity
Readings: Anderson, Imagined Communities, 1-46 (NYU CLASSES)

February 4 Tuesday: Communities of Antiquity 2 - Imagine there’s no Japan
Readings: Miner, The Princeton Companion to Classical Japanese Literature, 3-43; 399-408; 415-418.
Assignment: Familiarize yourself with The Princeton Companion.

February 6 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.)
Student Presentations 1 and 2

February 11 Tuesday: A World of Signs.
Readings: Marra, “A Lesson to the Leaders: Ise Monogatari and the Code of Miyabi,” (NYU CLASSES)
Student Presentations 3 and 4

February 13 Thursday: How to do Things with Words
Readings: LaMarre, Uncovering Heian Japan, 41-74.
Student Presentations 5 and 6

February 18 Tuesday: The Materiality of the Text
Readings: LaMarre, Uncovering Heian Japan , 93-106; Raud, “The Lover’s Subject,” (NYU CLASSES)
Assignments: (1) Write two acrostic poems (4 or 5 lines long each). Be prepared to share these in class.

February 20 Thursday: Gendering Language
Readings: LaMarre, Uncovering Heian Japan, 107-113; Cornyetz, excerpt from Dangerous Women, 78-81; Fukumori, “Chinese Learning,” (NYU CLASSES)
Student Presentations 7 and 8

February 25 Tuesday: Sei Shonagon – proto-feminist?
Student Presentations 9 and 10
February 27 Thursday: *Zuihitsu 2*
Assignment: (1) make your own list.
   (2) Write a *zuihitsu* about 1 or 2 pages long.
   (3) be ready to share these in class.

March 4 Tuesday: *Monogatari 1 View: The Illustrated handscroll tale of Genji* (VCA 5274)

March 6 Thursday: *Women Possessed etc.*
Student Presentations 11 and 12

March 11 Tuesday: *The nô theater, time and space* (in class video)
No new readings.
**Paper Due**

March 13 Thursday: *Nô and Buddhism, performance and power – lecture on Marra, aesthetics of impurity*
Student Presentations 13 and 14

**March 18 and 20 – no classes, spring break**

**Part Two -- Early Modern Japan, Edo**

March 25 Tuesday: *Not About Representation*; in class bunraku play
Readings: *Princeton Companion*, 63-111; 322-340;

**NO Class March 27, Thursday**

April 1 Tuesday: *Strategies of Narration 1*
Readings: Sakai, “Supplement”; “The Love Suicides at Amijima” (NYU CLASSES)
Student Presentations 15

April 3 Thursday: *Loving men*
Student Presentations 16
April 8 Tuesday: *Male-male Pleasures, Edo Style*
   Student Presentations 17

April 10 Thursday: *4 Genders?*
   Student Presentations 18

April 15 Tuesday: *Pornography and Advertising in Edo*
   Student Presentations 19

**NO Class April 17 Thursday**

April 22 Tuesday: *Humor and A Weave of Language*
   Student Presentations 20

April 24 Thursday: *Dangerous Women*

April 29 Tuesday: *Dangerous Women 2* -- in class film, “Ugetsu” part one
   No new readings. Start reviewing for exam.

May 1 Thursday: *Dangerous Women 3* -- in class movie, “Ugetsu” part 2
   No new readings. Review for exam.

May 6 Tuesday: Review
   No new readings. Review for exam.

May 8 Thursday: In class final exam.