EAST 212  
Modern Japanese Literature in Translation  
Spring 2000

Instructor  
elofgren@bucknell.edu  
x7-1756  
T: 9:00–10:00; W: 1:00–2:00; and by appointment

Required Books:

Kurahashi Yumiko (b. 1935).  *The Woman with the Flying Head & Other Stories* (1963–91)
Natsume Sōseki (1867–1916).  *Kokoro* (1914)

Note: all required books are available for purchase at the Bucknell University Bookstore.

Supplemental Material on Reserve:


You may also find it helpful to have a reference work such as the MLA Style Manual or Diana Hacker’s A Pocket Style Manual. The MLA guidelines are also available on-line at: <http://www.isr.bucknell.edu/research/mla.pdf>

Grading:

3 Papers =45% (15% each)
Class Participation =30%
Essay Evaluations (I shall choose 6 randomly and grade them) =20%
Map =5%

Course Overview and Goals:

The goal of this course is to study the trends and developments seen in modern Japanese literature, and to use this literature as a tool in attaining a better understanding of Japan and its people. Works of the modern period (since 1868) illustrate the clash between tradition and change that characterizes the struggles of the modern Japanese, and serve as an invaluable source of information about Japanese society and culture precisely because the literature reflects the challenges faced and attitudes formed by the Japanese people as they witness the modernization of their nation and its subsequent transformation into a super power.

Although this course falls into the general category of ‘survey’, it eschews the traditional approach of reading snippets of works by many authors in favor of greater focus on the literary works of six writers who might be considered ‘representative’ of the modern era. One problem we shall strive to avoid is that engendered by the term ‘representative’. We must recognize in our discussion of ‘modern Japanese authors’ a “strategic essentialism” that attempts to arrogate to itself the limiting force and authority of definition. In other words, we must avoid turning ‘modern Japanese authors’ into a metonym for a structure or concept that may not actually exist as it is structured by the twelve writers examined in this course.

Parallel readings in critical materials about each author or text will be used to help move our discussion from a simple affirmation of likes or dislikes to a consideration of those literary and extra-literary concerns that have produced the ‘texts’ we have before us.

Course Requirements and Responsibilities:

This course is predicated upon an active participation in discussions. Consequently, class participation and topic introductions play a significant part in the determination of your overall grade. It is incumbent upon you to attend class faithfully. There is a practical consequence to
missing class: every three (3) unexcused absences will drop your course grade by 0.33 out of a total 4.0 (e.g., from an A- to a B+ or a C+ to a C).

Although discussion of any given novel extends over two class periods, I expect that you will have finished reading the book by the Tuesday on which it is introduced. A half-read novel is tantamount to coming to class unprepared and will be reflected in your final grade.

Pre-class questions: Each student is required to post three unique, thought-provoking questions, carefully written, pertaining to the reading for that week to the EAST212 listserv by 4:00pm on each Monday. I expect everyone to read and think about those questions prior to class as they will form the basis for our discussions. Please feel free to respond to the list prior to class if something strikes you as particularly interesting.

Essay Evaluations: On those days for which ancillary readings have been assigned (Thursdays), you have an additional obligation. You must write a précis of the article that demonstrates to me your comprehension and consideration of the major point(s) of the essay. The purpose of these passage papers is twofold: a) encourage you to think thoughtfully about secondary readings, and b) to provide a starting point for class discussions. This response need not be long (say, one page, double spaced) but it should be complete, thoughtful, and demonstrate to me that you have devoted substantial thought to the issues raised in the article. You may find it helpful to keep in mind the following three questions as you read:

1) What is the argument?
2) How is the argument made (what evidence is provided, what juxtapositions are made to encourage inference, etc.)?
3) Is the argument compelling? Why or why not?

You should also include your reaction/response to the essay with particular attention paid to particularly troubling problems, or unusual ideas that stimulate you to consider the issues raised more thoroughly. Because these papers are due at the beginning of any class for which there is a supplemental reading, and because your opinions will help determine the direction of the classroom discussion, no late essay evaluations will be accepted or considered part of your work for the course. I shall collect six essays at random during the term as the basis for your grade for this part of the class.

Maps: In order to familiarize you with some of the locations that appear in the works we will be reading, a short map assignment is required early in the semester. You are welcome to use any resource you wish in completing this task.

Papers: While there is no final exam in this class, students are expected to write three original papers. The papers should deal with the works treated in class. The emphasis is on your own creative interpretation of the text, rather than on outside research or reading, although you are free and encouraged to use other sources if you wish to.

• At least one paper must be comparative, exploring a relationship between two ‘similar’ novels by different authors. The definition of ‘similar’ is left to your discretion.
• At least one paper must focus on a specific problem in a single work.
• The remaining paper must attempt to answer one question from the EAST212 listserv, posted by someone other than you, and not addressed in class. It may adopt either a comparative approach or it may focus on a single work.

Mechanics: Approximately 6 pages in length (±1 page), double spaced, 1" margins all around, 12-point serif font; in-line citations for quotations, footnotes for explanatory or digressive comments, separate page, exclusive of 6 (±1)-page limit, for ‘Works Cited’. I prefer footnotes over endnotes unless you are still using a typewriter.
NOTE: All the handouts from this class are available as a pdf file (you will need Adobe Acrobat Reader to view the file) through my web page for this class, EAST 212 at:
<http://www.facstaff.bucknell.edu/elofgren/EAST212-s00/E212Home.html>.

A Note on Academic Responsibility (from the pamphlet Academic Responsibility at Bucknell, available from the Office of the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences or on-line at <www.departments.bucknell.edu/vp_academic_affairs/cla/forms/pamphlets/AcadResp.html>):

Bucknell students are responsible to the academic community for the preparation and presentation of work representing their own individual effort.

I take this very seriously and you should as well. Any student who is caught engaging in what is termed “academic irresponsibility” will be referred to the Judicial Review Board for academic sanction. “Academic irresponsibility” includes, but is not limited to: plagiarism and cheating, where plagiarism is defined as “the act of using another person’s ideas or expressions in your writing without acknowledging the source” and cheating is defined as “to deceive by presenting material on an exam or assignment as known when it is not known.”
### EAST 212: Modern Japanese Literature in Translation
Syllabus: Spring 2000

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<th>Week</th>
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<th>Thursday</th>
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<td>1 ♦ 17–21 Jan</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Introduction to the course</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 ♦ 24–28 Jan</td>
<td>Introduction to modern Japanese literature (A)</td>
<td>Introduction to modern Japanese literature (B); <strong>Maps Due</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>3 ♦ 31 Jan–4 Feb</td>
<td>Sōseki. <em>Kokoro</em></td>
<td>Sōseki. <em>Kokoro</em></td>
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<td>5 ♦ 14–18 Feb</td>
<td>Mishima. <em>Confessions of a Mask</em></td>
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<td>6 ♦ 21–25 Feb</td>
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<td>Tanizaki. <em>The Key</em></td>
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<td>8 ♦ 6–10 Mar</td>
<td>Abe. <em>Woman in the Dunes</em></td>
<td>Abe. <em>Woman in the Dunes</em></td>
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<td>9 ♦ 13–17 Mar</td>
<td><strong>Spring Break!</strong></td>
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<td>10 ♦ 20–24 Mar</td>
<td>Kurahashi. <em>The Woman with the Flying Head</em></td>
<td>Kurahashi. <em>The Woman with the Flying Head</em></td>
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<td>12 ♦ 3–7 Apr</td>
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<td>Endō. <em>Silence</em></td>
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<td>16 ♦ 1–5 May</td>
<td>Summary</td>
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<td><strong>Paper #3 Due by end of Registrar-assigned Final Exam time</strong></td>
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Syllabus
a detailed list of what to read, when to read it, and where to find it

Week 1 ◆ 17–21 Jan

Thursday:
Introduction to the Course

Week 2 ◆ 24–28 Jan

Tuesday:
Introduction to modern Japanese literature (A)

Thursday:
Introduction to modern Japanese literature (B); Maps Due

Week 3 ◆ 31 Jan–4 Feb

Tuesday:
Sōseki. Kokoro

Thursday:
Sōseki. Kokoro
Pollack. “The Psychopathic Self: Natsumé Sōseki’s Kokoro” (RESERVE)

Week 4 ◆ 7–11 Feb

Tuesday:
Kawabata. Snow Country

Thursday:
Kawabata. Snow Country
Rimer. “Kawabata Yasunari: Eastern Approaches — Snow Country” (RESERVE)

Week 5 ◆ 14–18 Feb

Tuesday:
Mishima. Confessions of a Mask

Thursday:
Mishima. Confessions of a Mask
McCarthy. “Mishima Yukio’s Confessions of a Mask” (RESERVE)

Week 6 ◆ 21–25 Feb

Tuesday:
Tanizaki. The Key; Paper #1 Due
Thursday:
Tanizaki. *The Key*
Fernandex. “A Study of Tanizaki’s *The Key*” (RESERVE)

Week 7 ♦ 28 Feb–3 Mar

Tuesday:
Enchi. *Masks*

Thursday:
Enchi. *Masks*

Week 8 ♦ 6–10 Mar

Tuesday:
Abe. *Woman in the Dunes*

Thursday:
Abe. *Woman in the Dunes*
Pollack. “The Ideology of Science: Kōbō Abé’s *Woman in the Dunes*” (RESERVE)

Week 9 ♦ 13–17 Mar

Tuesday & Thursday:
No Class: *Spring Break*

Week 10 ♦ 20–24 Mar

Tuesday:
Kurahashi. *The Woman with the Flying Head and Other Stories*

Thursday:
Kurahashi. *The Woman with the Flying Head and Other Stories*

Week 11 ♦ 27–31 Mar

Tuesday:
Oe. *A Personal Matter*

Thursday:
Oe. *A Personal Matter*
Napier. “Oe Kenzaburō and the Search for the Sublime at the End of the Twentieth Century” (RESERVE)
Week 12 ♦ 3–7 Apr

Tuesday:
Endō. *Silence*; **Paper #2 Due**

Thursday:
Endō. *Silence*
Gessel. “The Road to the River: The Fiction of Endō Shûsakû” (RESERVE)

Week 13 ♦ 10–14 Apr

Tuesday:
Furui. *Child of Darkness*

Thursday:
Furui. *Child of Darkness*
Storey. All three essays in her translation of Furui’s works

Week 14 ♦ 17–21 Apr

Tuesday:
Murakami. *A Wild Sheep Chase*

Thursday:
Murakami. *A Wild Sheep Chase*
Rubin. “Murakami Haruki’s Two Poor Aunts Tell Everything They Know About Sheep, Wells, Unicorns, Proust, Elephants, and Magpies” (RESERVE)

Week 15 ♦ 24–28 Apr

Tuesday:
Yoshimoto. *Kitchen*

Thursday:
Yoshimoto. *Kitchen*
Sherif. “Japanese Without Apology: Yoshimoto Banana and Healing” (RESERVE)

Week 16 ♦ 1–5 May

Tuesday:
Summary

Week 17 ♦ 8–12 May

**Paper #3: Due by end of Registrar-assigned Final Exam time**