Modern Japanese Literature in Translation
Spring 2020
MW 1:10-2:50pm (HH-B4)
Instructor: Satoru Saito
Office Hours: MW 11:00am-12:50pm (Scott Hall 338)
Email: ssaito@alc.rutgers.edu

Course Description
This course examines the critical literary developments of modern Japan, from the late-nineteenth century to the postwar period through a close reading of literary texts. A particular attention will be paid to the understanding of various analytical frameworks, from the historical to the theoretical. Through the consideration of such frameworks, the course seeks to equip students with the tools necessary to critically analyze literary texts in general and other works of modern Japanese literature in particular. In order to best achieve this goal, the course takes up many canonical texts to consider not only how such texts form the interpretative foundations of modern Japanese literature but also how the interpretation of such texts themselves can be radically challenged through new interpretative frameworks.

The course will be taught in English, and there are no prerequisites for this course. The basic structure of the course is a lecture and introductory discussion on Mondays, followed by more in-depth discussion on Wednesdays.

Program Goals
Majors in Japanese will acquire in-depth knowledge of the literature and culture of Japan. Majors will develop critical skills in analyzing and interpreting literary, historical, and cultural texts. Students will acquire the literary, cultural and linguistic competency necessary for continuing onto post-graduate study or employment requiring such cultural knowledge.

Minors will be introduced to the cultural heritage of Japan through courses on literature, history, visual culture, language and linguistics. Minors will learn critical skills in analyzing and interpreting literary and cultural materials appropriate to the student’s area of specialization.

Requirements
Weekly Responses (7 out of 11 total) 35%
Midterm Consultation (3/2, 3/4, 3/9, 3/11, 3/23) 5%
Final Presentation (8 minutes) 10%
Final Paper (10-12 pages double-spaced) 40%
Class participation and attendance 10%

Weekly Responses
To facilitate class discussions, which normally takes place each Wednesday, students should select a passage of interest from the reading and analyze the passage in 7 of the 11 weeks. These passages and analysis will inform classroom discussion, and students will turn the response at the end of class to be graded. Please refer to the Weekly Response Guideline for details.
Midterm Consultation (3/2, 3/4, 3/9, 3/11, 3/23)
Midterm consultation is an opportunity for students to discuss their progress with the instructor during office hours on 3/2, 3/4, 3/9, 3/11, or 3/23. In particular, the progress of Weekly Responses will be discussed. Students must have submitted at least 3 weekly responses before the midterm consultation.

Final Presentation (8 minutes)
During the last 3 classes of the semester, students are asked to give an oral presentation on their final paper. The presentation should use some form of visual aid (PowerPoint, PDF file, etc.). Attendance for all presentations is a part of your presentation grade.

Final paper (10-12 pages double-spaced)
The final paper is the culmination of the course. The final paper should present an organized argument on a chosen theme. Students are encouraged to discuss extensively with the instructor to determine their final paper topic. These papers do not require additional research.

Class participation and attendance
Students are expected to attend all classes and regularly participate in class discussions. As much of the historical/cultural information, which are necessary for the responses and the final paper, are provided in the form of lectures, students should actively take notes during class and get notes from other students if you miss a class.

Note on Academic Integrity
Students are expected to uphold the highest level of academic integrity in this class. Violations include cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, denying others access to information or material, and facilitating violations of academic integrity. For details, please see http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu. I will also be glad to discuss with you any concerns or questions you have on this issue.

A special note on plagiarism: Please note that ignorance of the citation practice is not a mitigating circumstance for plagiarism. Anyone who needs assistance in academic writing should contact the writing program (http://wp.rutgers.edu/tutoring/writingcenters).

Note on Students with Disabilities
It is the policy of Rutgers to make reasonable academic accommodations for qualified individuals with disabilities. If you have a disability and wish to request accommodations to complete your course requirements, please contact the Office of Disability Services and ask to speak with a Coordinator (848-445-6800 or dsoffice@echo.rutgers.edu) about accommodations.

Note on absences
Students are expected to attend all classes; if you expect to miss class, please use the University absence reporting website https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/ to indicate the date and reason for your absence. An email is automatically sent to me.
Required Texts (available at University Bookstore; other readings available on Sakai)


Class Schedule (subject to change)

1/22  Introduction

UNIT I: Meiji Japan and the Formation of Modern Japanese Literature

Week 1: Before the Japanese Novel and the Emergence of Tsubouchi Shôyô


1/29  No Response Paper This Week

Week 2: Early Experiments and the Question of Narration


2/5  Response #1

Week 3: Naturalism in Japan


2/12  Response #2

Week 4: The Rise of the Japanese Novel


2/19  Response #3
Week 5: The Japanese Intellectual and the End of an Era

***Natsume Sōseki, *Kokoro* (1914)***

2/26  Response #4

UNIT II: Japanese Modernism in the 1920s and 1930s

Week 6: The Japanese Subject in Tales of Mystery and Fantasy


3/4  Response #5

Week 7: The Modern Girl and the Rise of Visual Culture


3/11  Response #6

3/16, 3/18  NO CLASS, Spring Break

Week 8: Various Facets of Japanese Modernism


3/25  Response #7

Unit III: Postwar Japan, Male Subjectivity, and Woman as Symbol

Week 9: The Country and Nostalgia, an Escape from Modernity


4/1  Response #8
Week 10: The Aesthetics of Fading Past and Narrative of Suicide

***Dazai Osamu, *The Setting Sun* (1947)

4/8 Response #9

Week 11: Trauma and Memories of War

4/13 ***Ooka Shôhei, *Fires on the Plain* (1951)

4/15 Response #10

Week 12: Tradition, Sexuality, and the Language of Empowerment


4/22 Response #11

Week 13 & 14: Final Presentations

4/27 Final Presentations #1

4/29 Final Presentations #2

5/4 Final Presentations #3

Final Paper due at noon on Tuesday, May 12th via Dropbox function of Sakai.