

Department of English, Foreign Language, and Journalism
English 480-01
Selected Studies in Literary Authority—Japanese Literature
TR 8:00-9:20 Murphy 104
Dr. Stacia Bensyl SSC 222I
Phone 271-5936 [email bensyl@missouriwestern.edu](mailto:bensyl@missouriwestern.edu)
Office hours: 2-3 MW, 9:30-11:30 TR, and by appointment

Required Texts:

Endo, Shusaku. *Silence*. Trans. William Johnston. New York: Taplinger, 1969.

Hume, Nancy G., Ed. *Japanese Aesthetics and Culture: A Reader*. Albany: State U of New York P, 1995.

Kawabata, Yasunari. *Snow Country*. Trans. Edward B. Seidensticker. New York: Vintage, 1996.

Kirino, Natsuo. Trans. Stephen Snyder. *Out*. New York: Vintage, 2005.

Mishima, Yukio. *Temple of the Golden Pavilion*. Trans. Ivan Morris. New York: Vintage, 1994.

McCullough, Helen. Trans. *Genji and Heike: Selections from The Tale of Genji and The Tale of the Heike*.

Murakami, Haruki. *After the Quake*. New York: Vintage, 2002.

Handouts on Kabuki and Waka.

Course Objectives:

- **Become familiar with Buddhist philosophy and how it has shaped Japanese aesthetics.**
- **Become familiar with pre-modern, modern, and contemporary Japanese texts and identify similarities and differences between texts from each of these periods.**
- **Examine Japanese texts from both an aesthetic and historical perspective.**
- **Apply critical theory to Japanese texts.**
- **Discuss similarities and differences between Japanese poetry, drama, and prose.**

Assessment Methods:

NB: I will distribute instructions for assessments well before the due date.

- **Write one in-class essay over an aspect of Buddhist philosophy or aesthetics. This essay will be worth 15% of your total grade.**
- **Write two take-home exams consisting of one essay question. Each will be worth 15% of your total grade.**
- **Write a take-home mid-term exam consisting of two essay questions, for which you will write a documented essay. Each will be worth 50% of the exam. The exam will be worth 20% of your total grade.**
- **Keep a reading journal applying critical and cultural theories to each of the texts you read (2-3 pages per entry), as well as an introductory essay and a culminating essay (1-2 pages each) giving a context for the readings you have done for the class. This journal will be worth 15% of your grade.**
- **Take a final exam consisting of objective and essay questions. Each portion (objective and essay) will be worth 50% of the exam. The exam will be worth 20% of your total grade.**

Academic Honesty Policy:

I abide by all the regulations outlined in the Missouri Western State College Catalog and Student Handbook:

Academic Honesty Policy and Due Process

Academic honesty is required in all academic endeavors. Violations of academic honesty

include any instance of plagiarism, cheating, seeking credit for another's work, falsifying documents or academic records, or any other fraudulent activity. Violations of academic honesty may result in a failing grade on the assignment, failure in the course, or expulsion from the University. When a student's grade has been affected, violations of academic honesty will be reported to the Provost or designated representative on the Academic Honesty Violation Report forms.

Please see the 2006-07 Student Handbook and Calendar on page 21 for specific activities identified as violations of this policy and the student due process procedure. This handbook is also available online at <http://www.missouriwestern.edu/handbook/index.pdf>

I will not tolerate plagiarism, cheating, or claiming another's work as your own. Please don't cheat! If I find evidence of academic dishonesty, I will automatically assign that student an "F" for the course.

Course grading scale:

100-90% = A
80-89% = B
70-79% = C
60-69% = D
59- 0% = F

Tentative Course Schedule

NB: This schedule is tentative. We are trying to cover quite a bit of material here, and we may have to adjust our schedule accordingly. I will also add other essays from Nancy Hume's book as they apply.

Aug.	25	Overview, class expectations, etc., beginning Buddhism
	27	Buddhism/Shinto
Sep.	1	Buddhism/Shinto
	3	Read Donald Keene's essay, "Japanese Aesthetics," in Hume's book
	8	In-class writing
	10	<i>Genji</i>
		Read Donald Keene's essay, "Feminine Sensibility in the Heian Era," in Hume's book
	15	<i>Genji</i>
	17	<i>Genji</i>
		Take-home exam #1—due 09/24
	22	<i>Heike</i>
	24	<i>Heike</i>
	29	Waka
Oct.	1	Waka
	6	Read Donald H. Shively's, "The Social Environment of Tokugawa Kabuki" in Hume's book.
		Kabuki
		Mid-term take-home—due 10/15
	8	Kabuki
	13	<i>Snow Country</i>
	15	<i>Snow Country</i>
	20	<i>Snow Country</i>
	22	<i>Temple of the Golden Pavilion</i>
	27	<i>Temple of the Golden Pavilion</i>
	29	<i>Temple of the Golden Pavilion</i>
Nov.	3	<i>Silence</i>
	5	<i>Silence</i>
		Take-home exam #2—due 11/12
	10	<i>Silence</i>
	12	Haruki stories

17 Haruki stories
19 Haruki stories
24 *Out*
26 Thanksgiving
Dec. 1 *Out*
3 *Out*
Journal due

Final Exam:
Wednesday, December 9, 8:30-10:20.