

EALL 371C – Traditional Japanese Literature: Poetry and Drama  
Fall 2018 (rev. 8/20/2018; further tweaks to come)  
Class meetings: TR 10:30-11:45 AM; Sakamaki B103

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Office Hours: Mondays, 2:30-4:00 PM, Tuesdays, 2:00-4:00 PM, or by appointment

**Final Exam: 12/11/2013 (Tues); 9:45-11:45 AM; Sakamaki B103**

### **Background:**

Love is a common theme in pre-modern Japanese literature, but it is almost never “happily ever after.” Tied in with aesthetic and philosophical notions such as “the beautiful die young,” and “nothing is permanent,” the depiction of love relationship in traditional Japan tend to focus on separation and loss. Sometimes, it is a “natural” outcome of illness or old age, but often it is the result of things people do to each other. The theme this semester is “When Love Goes Wrong.” Most poetry collections through the 17<sup>th</sup> century included a large number of poems about love in many forms, and likewise this theme is prevalent in Japanese drama. In this course, we will look at some of the ways “love goes wrong” in poetry and drama – including suicide, murder, separation, and just plain fickleness. And when loves goes wrong, the consequences often continue from beyond the grave.

We will look at poetry, from the earliest collection (*Man'yōshū*, 759 A.D.) through poetry collections and diaries of the Heian period (794-1185). We will also read Nō and Kabuki plays that feature jealousy, suicide, and the unsettled ghosts of people who have been wronged in love. We will also look at some comic depictions of love gone wrong.

### **Course Goals:**

These goals will be used both by the instructor to assess the students, and by the students to assess the instructor.

1. To learn about the political and social structure of Japan in the 8<sup>th</sup> through 18<sup>th</sup> centuries as it relates to love and human relationships.
2. To learn about courtship and marriage customs in pre-modern Japan, both as they are depicted in literature, and as they actually were.
3. To learn to identify different poetic and dramatic forms.
4. To learn the narrative conventions surrounding love in pre-modern Japan.
5. To learn how gender roles affect(ed) the writing and reading of love gone wrong.
6. To learn about how narratives morph over time in different genres.
7. To compare our own contemporary expectations about love and loss with expectations pre-modern Japanese readers might have had.

### **Student Learning Outcomes:**

1. The student will be able to describe political and social conditions that affected human relationships in the 8<sup>th</sup> through 18<sup>th</sup> centuries in Japan.
2. The student will be able to describe courtship and marriage customs in pre-modern Japan, both as they are depicted in literature, and as they actually were.
3. The student will be able to identify certain poetic and dramatic forms and practices, and link them to historical time periods.
4. The student will be able to describe narrative conventions surrounding love and loss in pre-modern Japan.
5. The student will be able to identify certain aspects of gender politics in a text through examination of literary style, and characterization.

6. The student will be able to describe how a specific narrative changes over time in different genres.
7. The student will be able to articulate his/her expectations about love and loss and recognize their relationship to larger cultural patterns in American literature, music, and film. S/he will be able to map them onto selected Japanese literary works so as to compare them with the expectations traditional Japanese readers may have had.

In addition, the following EALL departmental SLOs and university-wide ILOs (Institutional Learning Objectives) apply, at least in part, to this course:

1. [SLO5: RESEARCH] Conduct independent research on topics in Japanese literature and/or linguistics, and effectively communicate the results.
2. [SLO7: LITERATURE] Identify and describe major authors, works, features, forms, and styles of Japanese literature, both premodern and modern.
3. [SLO8: LITERATURE] Analyze and interpret works of Japanese poetry, prose, and drama, read both in translation and in the original Japanese, using terms appropriate to each genre.
4. [SLO9: LITERATURE] Situate and evaluate Japanese literature in its social, historical, intellectual, and religious contexts.
5. [ILO1 – Know - Breadth and Depth of Knowledge, 1.a] “General Education,” and “Specialized study in an academic field.”
6. [ILO2 – Do - Intellectual and Practical Skills, 2.c] “Communicate and Report.”
7. [ILO3 – Value - Personal and Social responsibility, 3.b] “Respect for people and cultures.”

### **Grading Criteria:**

Grading will be based on class participation (including oral presentations), short written work, a final exam and a final paper. Each of these will count for 25% of the grade.

### **Schedule:**

- Weeks 1-2 – Background information on Love Gone Wrong as theme; Love and Loss as depicted in poems from the *Manyōshū* (MYS) poetry collection (759 AD) (posted readings) – brainstorming, background lecture on early Japanese history and the *Manyōshū* poetry collection
- Weeks 3-5 – Tracing the narrative of the Maiden Unai, from *Manyōshū* through Heian poem-tales, to a 15<sup>th</sup> century Nō play – three poems on the Maiden Unai from MYS; Episode 147 in *Yamato Monogatari* (c. 951 AD); the Nō play *Motomezuka*; background lectures on the Heian period, medieval Japan, and the genres of waka, poem tales (*utamonogatari*), and Nō drama
- Weeks 6-8 – More Heian period poem tales and *setsuwa* (folk stories) – background lecture on *setsuwa*; selected readings as posted on Lulima
- Weeks 9-12 – Selected Nō plays and the literary sources that inspired them (posted readings)
- Weeks 12-14 – Edo period, when “love gone wrong” becomes a popular entertainment – background lecture on the Edo period; readings from Kabuki plays (e.g., *Love Suicides at Sonezaki*); other readings as posted
- Weeks 14-16 – Class projects

### **Required Texts:**

Various readings as posted on Lulima