

Winter 2007 • LIT 225  
Lec: M•W•F, E (12:20-1:15pm)  
Office hours: M•W 2-3pm

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## Japanese Poetry and Drama

Throughout Japan's literary history, poetry and drama have followed parallel courses. As living art forms, both naturally reflected their shared world, but the connection between the two goes far deeper, with drama frequently incorporating poetic conventions and poetry often treated as a performed rather than simply a written art. This course tracks the development of poetry and drama over more than a millennium, from their mutual origins in Japanese ritual practice, through the lofty elegance of the Heian era, the austere Buddhism of the medieval period, the commoner culture of the Edo, and finally the reaction of traditional forms to Western culture in the modern period. Throughout, the focus of the course will be on the ways in which the forms interact as they both reflect and affect the aesthetic world of their time.

This course makes extensive use of the university's Blackboard online learning environment, both to distribute readings and other materials and as a forum for submitting and responding to reaction papers. Access Blackboard at [blackboard.wlu.edu](http://blackboard.wlu.edu), and login using your W&L Username and Password. The Blackboard interface is fairly straightforward, but if you have no experience using the system or are uncomfortable with computers, let me know immediately so we can help you get started. Becoming experienced with using Blackboard is vital to your success in this course.

Grades will be assessed as follows:

Attendance and Participation		10%
Assignments		10%
Six Online Reaction Papers	6 x 5% =	30%
Twelve Online Responses	12 x 1% =	12%
Eight Wiki Edits	8 x 1% =	8%
Midterm Exam		15%
Final Exam		15%

Think of the class as being divided into two halves, with half of the required assignments falling in each half. Thus, half of the online reaction papers (3), online responses (6), and wiki edits (4) must be completed by the time of the midterm exam (Feb. 15th). Most important, both to your grade and to the success of the class, is keeping up on the assigned readings and being ready and willing to discuss them, both in the classroom and online. I do take attendance, as well as take note of your participation in class, and these factors do affect your grade. Throughout the semester you will also be required to post reaction papers and responses to the Blackboard online discussion board. A reaction paper should be approximately two pages long and should articulate your reaction to that day's readings. It does not need to be a formal argumentative essay, but it should be more substantive than mere summary. It is intended to give your interpretation of the material in light of your own experience and the issues we raise in class, and should show an active engagement with the text. Remember: you aren't expected to be an expert on the topic, just an engaged reader. Reaction papers must be posted online **by midnight the**

**night before** the class in which the readings are to be discussed, in order to give your fellow students time to read them and respond before class. Late reaction papers are useless to fostering online discussion and thus will not be accepted. Three of these papers are required in each half of the semester (6 total) and you may choose any of the readings to which you wish to respond, but you may not write more than one in any given week. When a video is assigned you may write primarily about the video, but you should relate your discussion to the written assignments as well as the video itself. Although there will be many days when you do not write a reaction paper yourself, other students' reaction papers are considered a part of the required reading for all students, and you should make a point of reading the other students' reactions, and perhaps writing an online response to them, before coming to class. There is no set length for these responses, but they should respond not only to the text itself, but to the other students' reactions and show a willingness to engage with other students' ideas rather than relying only on one's own interpretation. The deadline for writing a response is the beginning of each class, and a minimum of twelve of these responses are required over the course of the semester (six per half), though you are encouraged to write more. These online discussions are intended to act as a forum for discussion of the texts prior to hearing about them in the lectures, and they will provide the basis for in-class discussion of the texts.

The class wiki is intended to help students share resources as they process material, study for exams, etc. A wiki is a communally created website, in this case focused on the material covered in this course. I have set up the framework, including an outline of authors, works, genres, and key terms, and the students in LIT 221 began to fill in the content based on the materials we covered during that course. It is up to you to provide the content from this semester. You are required to make eight edits to the wiki over the course of the semester (send me an e-mail describing what you did in order to insure you receive credit), but it is intended to serve as a resource for your study, so the more time and effort are put into it, the more valuable it will be. You can access the wiki through Blackboard or at:

<http://library.wlu.edu/wiki/index.php/JapanLitWiki/JapanLitWiki>

There are three required texts for this course, indicated by abbreviation on the schedule:

<i>Traditional Japanese Arts and Culture</i> , Stephen Addiss, etc.	<i>TJAC</i>
<i>Traditional Japanese Poetry</i> , Steven Carter	<i>TJP</i>
<i>Traditional Japanese Theater</i> , Karen Brazell	<i>TJT</i>

Additional readings will be made available in pdf format in the "Materials" section of Blackboard, and are identified on the syllabus with a 📖 mark. On any given day, there may be assigned readings, poems, audio clips, or videos marked on the schedule. For each day we work on poetry, select at least one poem from the required readings and come to class ready to discuss its significance and your reasons for choosing it. Frequently, one of the readings will be a page of multiple translations of certain poems, provided to give a sense of the various possibilities in rendering meaning, style, and aesthetic effect from Japanese into English translation. On many days you will also be required to view videos or images, or listen to audio clips. Shorter clips and images will be provided via Blackboard, while longer videos can be viewed on the computers at the Tucker Multimedia Center (TMC) beginning one week prior to the date they are scheduled.

# Course Schedule

## Week One                    **Beginnings**

M 1/7                    Introduction and Syllabus

W 1/9                    Poetry and Performance as Ritual Practice

Readings:            “Introduction” and “Early Japan,” *TJAC* pp. 1-21

Excerpt from *Kojiki* pp. 65-73 📖

“Shamanic Dance in Japan” excerpt, Averbuch pp. 293-300 📖

View:                    Video clips and images on Blackboard 📖

F 1/11                    The *Man'yōshū* – poetry from ritual to literature

Readings:            “Early Japan” continued – *TJAC* pp. 21-32

*TJP* pp. 17-41

Multiple translations 📖

## Week Two                    **The Rise of Court Poetry**

M 1/14                    The *Man'yōshū* – continued

Readings:            *TJP* pp. 41-71

Multiple translations 📖

W 1/16                    The Heian Period and the *Kokinshū*

Readings:            “Courtly Japan” – *TJAC* pp. 33-43

*TJP* pp. 73-89

Multiple translations 📖

F 1/18                    Heian poetry - continued

Readings:            *TJP* pp. 90-95, 100-124

Excerpt from *Izumi Shikibu nikki*, Miner pp. 95-133 📖

Multiple translations 📖

## Week Three                    **Poetry and Performance in the Heian Period**

M 1/21                    Heian Music and Dance

Readings:            “Music and the Beginnings of Theater” – *TJAC* pp. 65-80

“Emperor Go-Shirakawa and *Imayō*” Kim pp. 1-22, 46-58 📖

Excerpts from Saibara and *Ryōjin Hishō*, Satō pp. 152-162 📖

Listen to:            Gagaku and Saibara samples on Blackboard 📖

W 1/23 Poetry as Competition  
Readings: Kintô's *Shinsen Zuinô*, pp. 154-159 [☰](#)  
Kintô's *Waka Kuhon*, pp. 160-164 [☰](#)  
"The Muse in Competition" Ito pp. 201-222 [☰](#)  
Fujiwara no Tadamichi *uta-awase*, Ito pp. 146-186 [☰](#)  
Excerpt from *Japanese Court Poetry*, Brower & Miner, pp. 249-253 [☰](#)  
In Class: Begin *uta awase* assignment

F 1/25 Mock Convention – Class Cancelled

#### Week Four Into the Medieval Period

M 1/28 Performing literature  
Readings: "Samurai Japan" – *TJAC* pp. 81-92  
"Medieval Jongleurs" Ruch pp. 279-309 [☰](#)  
"Between Literature and Music" Ueda pp. 114-127 [☰](#)  
*Heike Monogatari* excerpts Watson pp. 35-42, 98-100, 126-130 [☰](#)  
View: Heikyoku clips on Blackboard [☰](#)

W 1/30 Changing Poetic Ideals  
Readings: "Samurai Japan" – *TJAC* pp. 93-99  
Excerpt from Chômei's *Mumyôshô* pp. 404-409 [☰](#)  
Preface to Teika's *Kindai Shûka* pp. 41-47 [☰](#)  
Teika's *Maigetsushô* pp. 409-424 [☰](#)  
*TJP* pp. 145-168  
Multiple translations [☰](#)

F 2/1 The *Shinkokinshû*  
Readings: *TJP* pp. 168-205  
Multiple translations [☰](#)

#### Week Five Nô theater – Women & Warriors, Gods & Demons

M 2/4 Zeami and the rise of Nô  
Readings: "Theatrical and Musical Performance" – *TJAC* pp. 111-128  
"Vocabulary of Japanese Aesthetics II" deBary pp. 364-383 [☰](#)  
"Elements of Performance" *TJT* pp. 115-125

W 2/6 Nô plays  
Readings: : *Shunkan TJT* pp. 179-192  
*Atsumori TJT* pp. 126-142  
*Izutsu TJT* pp. 143-157  
View: Video *Izutsu* at the TMC

F 2/8            Nô plays  
Readings:     *Dôjôji TJT* pp. 193-206  
                  *Kanawa (The Iron Crown)* Keene pp. 193-204 📖  
                  *Aoi no Ue* Goff pp. 134-139 📖  
                  *Nô Performance Guide: Aoinoue* 📖  
  
View:           Video *Aoi no Ue* at the TMC

## Week Six            Kyôgen and Renga

M 2/11            Kyôgen  
Readings:     “The Making of the Comic” Ueda pp. 101-113 📖  
                  *Two Daimyô TJT* pp. 226-234  
                  *The Delicious Poison TJT* pp. 235-244  
                  *Mushrooms TJT* pp. 245-254  
                  *The “Sickley” Stomach TJT* pp. 267-275  
View:           Video *Busu (Delicious Poison)* at the TMC

W 2/13            Renga  
Readings:     “Renga” – *TJAC* pp. 99-102  
                  “Verse-Writing as a Game” Ueda pp. 37-54 📖  
                  *TJP* pp. 275-281, 285-326  
                  Multiple translations 📖  
In class:       Begin online Renga sessions – Continue until Feb. 24<sup>th</sup>, midnight

F 2/15            **Midterm Exam**  
Take exam in the TMC sometime today – Bring blue book

•• February 18<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> • Washington Break ••

## Week Seven            Poetry from the Medieval Period into the Edo

M 2/25            From haikai renga to haikai  
Readings:     “Haikai in the Journal,” Horton pp. 253-282 📖  
                  “Haikai Language, Haikai Spirit,” Shirane pp. 53-73 📖  
                  *TJP* pp. 331-344

W 2/27            Bashô  
Readings:     “Merchant Japan” – *TJAC* pp. 137-147  
                  “Poetry and Prose of Matsuo Bashô” Shirane pp. 178-206 📖  
                  *TJP* pp. 345-375  
                  Excerpt from *One Hundred Frogs*, Satô pp. 147-175 📖

F 2/29            Comic Verse  
Readings:        “Comic and Satiric Poetry” Shirane pp. 520-537 ㊦  
                      *TJP* pp. 407-422  
                      Multiple translations ㊦  
Assignment:     Bashô’s frog poem

**Week Eight            Jôruri / Bunraku – The Puppet Theater**

M 3/3            Edo Music and Theater  
Readings:        “Music” and “Theater” – *TJAC* pp. 193-210  
                      “Early jôruri and kabuki”. Shirane pp. 233-237 ㊦  
                      “Elements of Performance” *TJT* pp.303-313

W 3/5            Jôruri / Bunraku  
Readings:        “Jôruri” – *TJAC* pp. 210-214  
                      “Battles of Coxinga” *TJT* pp. 314-332  
                      “*At the Farmhouse*” *TJT* pp. 376-392  
                      “Miracle of the Tsubosaka Kannon” *TJT* pp. 408-417  
View:             Video *Bunraku* at TMC

F 3/7            Chikamatsu and the Golden Age of Bunraku  
Readings:        “Chikamatsu Monzaemon” Shirane pp. 237-242 ㊦  
                      “The Courier for Hell” Keene pp. 161-194 ㊦  
                      “Love Suicides at Amijima” *TJT* pp. 333-363  
View:             Video *The Lover’s Exile* at TMC

**Week Nine            Kabuki – Theater for the Masses**

M 3/10          Kabuki  
Readings:        “Kabuki” – *TJAC* pp. 214-224  
                      “Sukeroku: Flower of Edo” Brandon pp. 51-97 ㊦  
View:             Video *Sukeroku edo no yukari zakura* at TMC

W 3/12          Kabuki (Adjusted Schedule: 1:10-1:55pm)  
Readings:        “A Message of Love from Yamato” Brandon pp. 140-157 ㊦  
View:             Video *Koibikyaku Yamato ôrai – Fuinkiri* at TMC







F 3/14          Kabuki  
Readings:        “Shukan on Devil Island” *TJT* pp. 418-441  
                      “Suma Bay” *TJT* pp. 442-455

**Week Ten                    The late Edo period**




M 3/17            Later Kabuki

- Readings:    “Yotsuya Ghost Stories” *TJT* pp. 456-483  
                  “The Hamamatsu-ya Scene” *TJT* pp. 484-505  
View:            Video *Shiranami Gonin Otoko* at TMC

W 3/19            Rakugo


- Readings:    “Rakugo” Shirane pp. 961-968   
                  “Birth and Growth of Modern Rakugo” Morioka pp. 232-252   
                  “Basic Stage Conventions” Morioka pp. 32-40   
                  “The Flamboyant Drum” Morioka pp. 10-20   
                  “Praising a Child” Morioka pp. 61-68   
View:            Rakugo clips on Blackboard 

F 3/21            Later Edo poetry

- Readings:    “Merchant Japan” – *TJAC* pp. 147-151  
                  “Yosa Buson” Shirane pp. 538-547   
                  “Kobayashi Issa” Shirane pp. 932-933, 939-941   
                  “Waka in the Late Edo Period” Shirane pp. 947-960   
*TJP* pp. 390-407, 416-437

**Week Eleven                Modern Japanese Poetry**

M 3/24            Traditional Poetry in Modern Japan

- Readings:    “Poetry in Traditional Forms” Rimer pp. 305-314, 610-620   
*TJP* pp. 439-456




W 3/26            Modern Japanese Poetry

- Readings:    “Poetry in the International Style” Rimer pp. 293-304, 583-609 




F 3/28            Class Cancelled

**Week Twelve                Modern Japanese Theater**

M 3/31            Shingeki and Takarazuka

- Readings:    *The Two Daughters of Mr. Sawa* Kishida pp. 109-147   
                  “Theatrical Resistance...” Robertson pp. 165-177   
View:            Takarazuka clips on Blackboard 

W 4/2            “Angura” and Butô

- Readings:    *The Virgin’s Mask* Kara pp. 258-290   
                  “Butoh” Stein pp. 107-126   
View:            Butô clips on Blackboard 

F 4/4            New interpretations of traditional theatrical forms  
Readings:     *The Lady Aoi* Mishima pp. 145-171 📖  
                  *Dôjôji* Mishima pp. 119-138 📖  
                  “New Directions in Kabuki” Bach pp. 77-89 📖  
                  *Mudskippers* Salz pp. 253-269 📖  
View:            Video *Yamato Takeru* at TMC

**Final Exam Period: April 5<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup>**

Final exams are proctored through the German Department on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of Tucker, and should be taken in the TMC. Bring a blue book.



## Assignment 1: *uta-awase*

The competition:

Mon, Jan. 28: Spring, Summer, Autumn, Winter, Love, Love, Travel, Parting  
Wed, Jan. 30 : Spring, Summer, Autumn, Winter, Love, Love, Travel, Grief

The competition will be held in two rounds, in the last part of class on each day. For each topic, two poems will be read, the poets' identities kept secret, and the judges will render their judgment, after which the class – and the poets themselves – are free to comment or protest the decision. After class, the poems (with poets identified) and judgments will be posted to the discussion board for further response.

Composition:

Each student (except for the judges) will be randomly assigned a topic and a place in the competition. They should compose a poem on that topic to be e-mailed to the professor (robinsonj@wlu.edu) by midnight, Friday, January 25<sup>th</sup>. Although poems need not maintain a strict syllable count, they should resemble the *tanka* form (i.e. – five lines, in a short-long-short-long-long structure) and they should reflect the Japanese poetic tradition we have examined in class. Reread some of the poetry in *Traditional Japanese Poetry*, especially that on your assigned topic, to get a feel for the traditional diction and imagery.

Judging:

After all the poems have been submitted, the judges will be sent the poems in pairs with the names of the poets removed. They will then compare each set of two poems on the same topic and render judgment based on their assigned persona. They are not to determine the “quality” or “value” of the poem so much as its adherence to the following criteria:

The conservative judge will be primarily concerned with consistency of the diction and treatment of the poem with the tradition of the past. Freshness of spirit is valued, but only within the narrow range of traditional poetry. Precedent is important.

The liberal judge will value creativity over tradition and be more tolerant of deviations from earlier poetry. Appropriateness of topic and adherence to proper form will still be emphasized, and the poetic tradition valued, but working strictly within that tradition will not be the sole basis for evaluation.

The deadline for judgments is midnight of the day before each competition, and judges should send their evaluations to the professor in Word format as an e-mail attachment. After the competition is complete, the judgments will be posted to the discussion board and will be open to response.

## Assignment 2: Renga Session

The renga session will consist of two rounds, one *ushin* and one *mushin*, conducted over e-mail beginning just after class on Wednesday, Feb. 13<sup>th</sup>, extending over the course of Washington Break, and ending by midnight on Sunday, Feb. 23<sup>rd</sup>.

### Composition:

You have been assigned a spot in each of the two rounds and will write one poem for each, attempting to remain true to the spirit of the round. For the *ushin* round, poets should attempt to conform to the themes and styles of the elegant poetry we have read from the *Kokinshû*, *Shinkokinshû*, etc. Colloquial language, modern allusions, etc. are discouraged. In the *mushin* round, anything goes, and creativity is prized. You may introduce modern imagery, themes outside the accepted range, etc. You don't need to make an explicit attempt to use humor, though humor is welcome. The ideal in both rounds is to examine the preceding verse (*maeku*) closely and attempt to respond to it in a creative way. Try to draw out new or previously unrecognized meaning from the *maeku*, and especially avoid going backwards by duplicating the theme of the verse which preceded it. As in the earlier *uta awase* activity, you do not need to compose using a strict syllable count, but do make an attempt to emulate the length of the lines. In other words, the session will consist of alternating verses of three lines (short-long-short) and two lines (long-long).

### Process:

Poetry exchange will be conducted over e-mail, and we will need to cooperate in order to keep things moving smoothly. When you receive your *maeku*, try to compose a response and send it off as quickly as possible (ideally within a few hours) in order to keep the flow going. If I find the process is moving too slowly or has stalled, I may contact you to try and jumpstart the process, or even rearrange the order to keep things going. In the e-mail you receive, there should be listed both the *maeku* to which you will respond and the verse which preceded that *maeku*. If the two verses are on the same theme, make an effort to change the theme with your own verse in order to keep things fresh. Try to introduce something to the *maeku* which was not there in its relation to the verse which preceded it. When you have composed your verse, send an e-mail containing it and your *maeku* (but NOT the verse which preceded your *maeku*) to the next person on the list AND to Robinson Daimyô (robinsonj@wlu.edu). The resulting renga sequence will be revealed in class on Monday, Feb. 25<sup>th</sup> and posted to the discussion boards, where you may write responses (not reaction papers) to it up until class time on Friday, Feb. 29<sup>th</sup>.

## Assignment 3: Another Bashô Frog

After having discussed the various potential meanings in Bashô's poem in class and examined various translators' attempts to render it in English, attempt a translation of your own. Submit your translation to the instructor via e-mail by midnight, Feb. 28<sup>th</sup>. You may draw on existing translations, but try to remain conscious of the choices you are making in deciding what aspects you attempt to evoke, and be prepared to explain your choices in class.