

The Kyoto Consortium for Japanese Studies (KCJS)

KCJS is an in-country program for the intensive study of Japanese language, humanities, and social sciences. Established in 1989, the thirteen institutions that govern KCJS include Boston University, Brown University, University of Chicago, Columbia University/Barnard College, Cornell University, Emory University, Harvard University, University of Pennsylvania, Princeton University, Stanford University, Washington University in St. Louis, Yale University, and University of Virginia. For more information, see www.kcjs.jp

Gender in Japanese Culture

Professor Galia Petkova

Spring 2020

Meeting Time: Friday 13.10 – 16.20

Instructor Contact: 128255@alumni.soas.ac.uk

Course objectives

This course introduces students to the workings of gender roles and images in Japanese culture and society from ancient times to the present day. We will begin with a general introduction to key terms: the notions of gender and the body, gender relations, power, performance, cultural re/presentation, sexuality and eroticism. Then we will address various gender issues in Japan from a historical and cultural perspective, focusing on the complexity of gender images and functions in Japanese history, exploring in particular the role of women in the cultural processes. We will also make references to similar gender topics in Western and other Asian societies.

Students should gain a comprehensive overview of Japanese culture and society and deepen their understanding of the intricate workings of gender.

A supplementary goal is to increase students' exposure to Japanese language by integrating specific expressions and vocabulary related to gender studies. Students are welcome to expand their independent reading to include Japanese-language source materials, and will be supported in class to share this research with classmates.

Format

Class meetings will include lectures, student-led discussions, performance and film showings, and several field trips, utilizing the many resources that Kyoto has to offer. The course will also include performance observations – the all-female Takarazuka Review (in Takarazuka, Nishinomiya) and Miyako Odori (performed by maiko and geiko at Minami-za Theatre in Kyoto).

Requirements and grading policy

1. Reading assignments

Students are expected to complete reading assignments on time to prepare for classes. Interested students can supplement these readings with optional Japanese-language source materials in consultation with the lecturer.

2. Attendance

Attendance counts for 10% of the course grade. Regular attendance at all scheduled class meetings and fieldtrips is mandatory.

3. Class participation

Active student involvement in discussions and other planned activities is essential to the success of this course. Students will be graded on two types of class participation:

- (a) Oral comments and questions during class discussions and fieldtrips count for 10% of the course grade.
- (b) A PowerPoint presentation of their Research Project during the final week of classes counts for 20 % of the course grade. A copy of the PowerPoint document must be submitted to the lecturer electronically on the date of the in-class presentation.

4. Writing assignments

- (a) *Midterm paper*: Students will prepare a paper (1000~1500 words) on a topic based on the assigned readings and fieldtrips. This paper will count for 20% of the course grade. Deadline March 9.
- (b) *Research Paper*: students are required to do additional research on a topic related to gender in Japanese culture and society, present the results of their Research Project at end of the semester, and write an essay (2000~2500 words). This paper will count for 40% of the course grade.

Class schedule (subject to change based on the needs of the class; more readings will be added)

Week 1

INTRODUCTION

Core topics of the class will be introduced: gender studies, women's studies, masculinity studies, queer studies – their development in Japan; the notions of gender and the body, gender relations, power, performance, cultural re/presentation, sexuality, eroticism.

Reading:

Romit Dasgupta and Mark McLelland, "Introduction." *Genders, Transgenders, and Sexualities in Japan*. London: Routledge, 2005: 1-15.

Further reading:

Judith Butler, "Preface." *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. New York and London: Routledge, 1999 (1990): vii – xxxiii.

Fiona Carson, "Feminism and the Body." In Sarah Gamble (ed.). *The Routledge Companion to Feminism and Postfeminism*. London: Routledge, 2001: 117-128.

GENDER IN JAPANESE MYTHOLOGY

Overview of Japanese mythology from a gender perspective: Izanagi and Izanami, Amaterasu Ōmikami, her brother Susanō-no Mikoto as anti-hero, the myth of the Heavenly Rock Cave (Ama-no Iwato), the deity Ame-no Uzume.

Video: "Ama-no Iwato," male-only *kagura* performance.

Reading:

Excerpts from *Kojiki*, transl. by Donald Philippi. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2015.

Excerpts from *Nihongi: Chronicles of Japan from the Earliest Times to A.D. 697*, transl. by William Aston. London: Japan Society of London, 1896 (available online)

Week 2

GENDER AND SHINTO

Shinto rituals from a gender perspective, the roles of men/women over history and at present, the early shamaness and present-day *miko*. Comparison of Japanese and Okinawan shrine maidens: *miko* and *tsukasa*. Female and male body in Shinto.

Video: rituals of Okinawan *tsukasa*, *miko* dances, Shinto priests' rituals.

Reading:

Yusa Michiko, "Women in Shinto: Images Remembered." In Arvind Sharma (ed.), *Religion and Women*. Albany, N.Y., 1994: 93–119.

Kawahashi Noriko, "Seven Hindrances of Women? A Popular Discourse on Okinawan Women and Religion." In *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*, 27-1/2, Apr 2000: 85-98.

Week 3

GENDER IN EARLY JAPANESE HISTORY

Gender and power in legendary images of early emperors, queen Himiko, empress Jingu. Female emperors.

Reading:

Excerpts from *Kojiki*, transl. by Donald Philippi, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2015.

Excerpts from *Nihongi: Chronicles of Japan from the Earliest Times to A.D. 697*, transl. by Willian Aston, London: Japan Society of London, 1896 (available online)

Kiyoko Takagi, *The Eight Female Emperors of Japan: A Brief Introduction to Their Lives and Legacies*, transl. by Masaka Hamada, Tokyo: Fuzambo International, 2018.

Week 4

STRUCTURES OF GENDER IN THE NARA AND HEIAN PERIODS

Institutionalization of gender, division of female and male roles in society, Heian period women, women in literature, gender representation in art, early ideals of femininity in Japanese culture and their usage in contemporary Japan.

Gender in Japanese festivals – Girl's Day and Boy's Day.

Possible field trip to sites related to Murasaki Shikibu, eg. Roanji temple, her tomb, or a museum trip. Observation of St. Valentine's Day in Japan.

Reading: TBA

Week 5

JAPANESE MASCULINITIES

Classical ideals of masculinity in Japanese culture, Heian period aristocrats, samurai masculinity, the male body in martial arts, ninja.

Possible field trip to the Imperial Palace and Nijo Castle to observe modern representations of the classical male archetypal figures of aristocrats and samurai.

Reading:

R. W. Connell and James Messerschmidt, "Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept," *Gender and Society* 19: 6, Dec., 2005: 829-59.

Week 6

GENDER AND BUDDHISM

Buddhist priests, nuns, gender images in Buddhist paintings and sculpture.

Reading:

Kawahashi Noriko, "Feminist Buddhism as Praxis: Women in Traditional Buddhism." *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 30, nos. 3-4 (2003): 291-313.

Kawahashi Noriko, "Gender Issues in Japanese Religions." In Paul L. Swanson and Clark Chilson (eds.), *Nanzan Guide to Japanese Religions*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2006: 323-35.

Further reading:

Faure, Bernard, *The Power of Denial: Buddhism, Purity, and Gender*. Princeton, N.J., 2003: 1-20.

MEDIEVAL WOMEN

Samurai wives, women warriors, female performers (shirabyōshi, goze, etc.).

Screening of the Noh Play "Tomoe."

Reading: TBA

Week 7

GENDER IN PERFORMING ARTS I

Professional male actors; exclusion of women from official performance space; women in the early formation of noh and kabuki. Women's presence in traditional performing arts today. Takarazuka.

Screening of visual materials – bugaku, kyogen, kabuki and the onnagata body.

Week 8

PERFORMANCE OBSERVATION – TAKARAZUKA (subject to ticket availability).

Week 9

GENDER IN PERFORMING ARTS II

Female versions of the all-male performing arts and popular male characters. Female performance in "chamber" spaces (courtesans and geisha).

Screening of excerpts from the kabuki plays *Shibaraku* and *Onna Shibaraku* "The Female Shibaraku."

Reading:

Isaka Maki (Morinaga), "The Gender of *Onnagata* as the Imitating Imitated: Its Historicity, Performativity, and Involvement in the Circulation of Femininity." In *Positions: East Asia Cultures Critique*, 10.2, Fall 2002: 245-284.

Week 10

GENDER IN THE EDO PERIOD

Neo-Confucian teachings and manuals on ideal gender behavior and relations, gender fluidity in popular culture, representations of gender in woodblock prints.

Reading:

Leupp, G. P, *Male Colours: The Construction of Homosexuality in Tokugawa Japan*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995.

Mostow, Joshua, "The Gender of Wakashu and the Grammar of Desire in Late 17th Century Edo." In Joshua Mostow, Norman Bryson and Maribeth Graybill (eds.). *Gender and Power in the Japanese Visual Field*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2003: 49-70.

Nishiyama, Matsunosuke. *Edo Culture: Daily Life and Diversions in Urban Japan, 1600-1868*. Gerald Groemer (trans. and ed.). Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1997.

TRANSFORMATION OF GENDER DISCOURSE IN THE MODERN PERIOD

Gender discourse in the Meiji period and early 20th century. "Good wives and wise mothers." Changes in gender representation.

Reading:

Koyama Shizuko, *The Educational Ideal of "Good Wife, Wise Mother" in Modern Japan*. Leiden: Brill, 2013.

Week 11

GENDER IN CONTEMPORARY JAPAN

Maintenance of gender norms in the stereotypical images of salaryman and housewife, construction and preservation of traditional ideals of femininity and masculinity, changing perceptions of gender in depictions of women in TV drama, cross-dressing and gender-bending in popular culture.

Possible field trip to observe *taishū engeki* in Osaka or Takatsuki.

Reading: TBA

Week 12

PERFORMANCE OBSERVATION – MIYAKO ODORI

Week 13

PowerPoint presentations of Student Research Projects.