

# Sophia University – Summer Session 2024

June 28<sup>th</sup> – July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024 \*June 28<sup>th</sup>: Orientation \*July 5: No-class day

Date: February 9, 2024

Course Title	Japanese Theater
Course Code	LIZ450
Instructor	Mark Oshima
Class Period	3rd period (13:30-15:10)
Course Format	In-Person
Language of Instruction	English
Course Description	<p>Japan today has rich cultural traditions like noh, kyogen and tea ceremony from the Muromachi period (1333-1568) and the kabuki and Bunraku puppet theaters in the Edo period (1600 – 1868). In past times, these and other traditions have served as a way of uniting very different times and social groups. But in this modern age, this history and tradition has become unfamiliar. This course will explore these cultural forms by looking at how they exist today, their internal mechanics and how they have impact on us. It will also look at the historical context of their creation.</p> <p>The course will center on lectures featuring Power Point slide shows and will have short, required readings. There will be no final exam, but grading will be based on one 2-page paper (50 pts.) and a 5-page final essay (100 pts.). Attendance and class participation will be also taken into account. The core of the final grade will be the written material.</p>
Course Objectives	To understand some of the basic issues of Japanese cultural history through some icons of traditional Japanese theater.
Expected work outside of class	The readings are divided into required and recommended. For the most part, the required readings are the theatrical pieces and are mostly relatively short. Students are expected to read the required readings carefully and this should probably take about 1 hour per class. But hopefully the students will want to take a deep dive in the recommended readings or material on the guides for reading and explore the history, or art, or other examples of Japanese theater. The written material should be submitted by e-mail.
Course Materials	<p>All the readings and visual materials will be posted, probably on Moodle, but I will have to investigate the best method.</p> <p>Purchase of textbook: not necessary</p> <p>e-book: not applicable</p>

Moodle	Required readings and suggested readings will be posted on Moodle.
Contact Instructor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•via Email</li> </ul> <p>*The email address will be available at CGED office or informed by the instructor in the first class if needed.</p>
Evaluation (Attendance, Class participation, in-class assignments, final exam, quizzes, etc.)	<p>There will be no final exam, but grading will be based on one 2-page paper and a 5-page final essay. Attendance and class participation will be also taken into account.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- attendance and class participation (10%)</li> <li>- one 2 page paper (30%)</li> <li>- 5 page final essay (60%)</li> </ul>
Other comments	-
Class schedule	<p>*June 28: Orientation</p> <p>*July 5: No-class day</p>
	<p>Class 1 (July 1): Traditional Forms in the Present, How They Work on Us, and What That Means</p> <p>Art works like paintings and sculptures and works of literature obviously exist in the modern world in a different way than theatrical forms like noh, kyogen, kabuki and Bunraku puppet theater that depend on an intricate matrix of bodily techniques, crafts and institutions to be recreated in performance today. But they also share many things, the riddles of the times in which they were originally created and how we see them and are perhaps moved by them today.</p>
	<p>Class 2 (July 2):</p> <p>How Can We Know the Historical Context? Possible Clues in the Present: Archaeology and Anthropology</p> <p>Understanding tradition and the past has been handicapped because of the unconscious reliance on the story told in the ancient chronicles. But the knowledge that can be gained by archaeology and anthropology can question this narrative.</p>
	<p>Class 3 (July 3)</p> <p>Formation of the Imperial State and the Written Record – The Asuka (538 – 710), Nara (710 - 794) and Heian Periods (794 - 1185) and the Ancient Chronicles (Kojiki and Nihon Shoki).</p> <p>These periods mark the consolidation of the Japanese state. In literature this created the historical chronicles and a great poetic anthology.</p>

Class 4 (July 4):

Classical Aristocratic Court Culture: Waka Poetry

In the Heian Period (794 - 1185), culture centered on the aristocratic class around the imperial court. This created a poetic language and stories like “The Tale of Genji” that became the standard for classical culture until the present.

Class 5 (July 8):

“Ise Monogatari” and Visual Arts

“The Tales of Ise” are a series of poems that grow into short episodes about the legendary lover Ariwara no Narihira. Many of the episodes feature iconic images that were both the foundation of classical culture and show the changing views of the images of the tradition.

Class 6 (July 9):

The End of the Hegemony of the Imperial Court: The Late Heian Period, the Kamakura Period (1185 - 1333) and “The Tales of the Heike (Heike Monogatari)”

A war between the Genji and Heike military clans moved the center of political power away from Kyoto to Kamakura dominated by the warrior class. On the one hand, there was the continued cultural dominance of imperial aristocratic culture. On the other hand, there was the gradual creation of a warrior class with a distinctive character.

“The Tales of the Heike” tells the story of the rise and fall of the Heike clan and the wars that ended the Heian period. But far from being just a war tale, it is an epic novel that treats the enemy with compassion and gives full expression to the stories of the women involved.

Class 7 (July 10):

Muromachi History and Culture

The Muromachi Period (1333 - 1568) is a key period in Japanese cultural history that saw the creation of the Noh and Kyogen theaters and the tea ceremony. But it also was a very turbulent age and even with these touchstones of Japanese culture, there was an immense range of variety

and depending on what is valued as iconic, the picture of Japanese culture changes dramatically.

Class 8 (July 11):

Noh Theater

Techniques of expression and representation.

This unit will focus on the history and conventions of noh, and two noh plays, “Atsumori” a play focusing on the world of warriors based on an episode in “The Tales of the Heike” and “Izutsu” based on the “Tales of Ise.”

Class 9 (July 12):

Kyogen Theater

This unit will focus on the history and conventions of kyogen and two kyogen plays, “Two in One Hakama (Futari Bakama)” and “The Moon Viewing Blindman (Tsukimi Zato).”

2-page paper due.

Class 10 (July 15):

Edo History and Culture

After a period of warring domains, in the Azuchi-Momoyama Period (1568 - 1600), Japan was gradually reunified under the warlords Oda Nobunaga and then Toyotomi Hideyoshi. They created a brash, florid form of Muromachi culture. In turn, Japan was controlled by Tokugawa Ieyasu who began a long period of peace ruled from his capital in Edo (the old name for Tokyo).

The Edo Period (1600 - 1868) was marked by a refinement of Muromachi culture as elite culture of the samurai class, but also the creation of a distinctive commoner culture that included the kabuki theater and the Bunraku puppet theater. But over the course of the Edo period, all these cultural forms changed with major social and economic changes that led to the modern world.

Class 11 (July 16):

Kabuki: Constructing Gender through Technique

This unit will focus on the development of the kabuki theater and the development of two acting styles, the bombastic *aragoto* style and the acting of *onnagata* (men specializing in female roles).

Class 12 (July 17):

Kabuki: "Narukami (The Thunder God)"

This unit will focus on a representative kabuki play that is structured as a confrontation between an *aragoto* character and a female character played by an *onnagata*.

Class 13 (July 18):

Puppet Theater

Creation of stories and characters through multiple channels: playwrights, narration, shamisen and puppets.

The Bunraku puppet theater was a sophisticated, adult theater which created some of the monuments of Japanese drama and literature. This unit will also examine a masterpiece of puppet theater by Chikamatsu Monzaemon, "The Love Suicides at Sonezaki (Sonezaki Shinju)."

Class 14 (July 19):

Meiji Transition and After: The Restoration and Death of the Traditional Memes

With the Meiji Restoration in 1868, Japan embarked on an ambitious program of modernization and Westernization. Japanese tradition was once more reconsolidated, and the images and characters of the past were mobilized to support the new state. But the tradition was once more discredited with defeat in World War II. The conclusion will look at this process as we can see it in songs created for use in the schools.

5-page paper due.

\*Course format, evaluation methods and class schedule may be subject to change.