

ANS 379: Art of Autobiography in Japan (#32380)

Fall 2018, MW 11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m. in WCH 4.118

Professor Kirsten Cather, WCH 4.112, kcather@austin.utexas.edu

Office Hours: M 10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m., W 1 – 2:30 p.m.

This seminar examines autobiographies written by prominent and marginalized individuals in Japan from the tenth century to the present. Our primary goal will be to consider how they negotiated their lives and their legacies through the act of self-portraiture. We will look at how these works are informed by both the historical and cultural contexts in which they were written and by the genre itself. Examples include works by highborn ladies-in-waiting and imperial consorts in the premodern era; samurai men who found their class on the verge of extinction in the mid-19th century; and avant-garde artists and filmmakers in the 20th and 21st centuries. In order to consider in depth how the form or medium guides the content of these self-portraits, our objects of study will encompass a wide variety of mediums that go beyond the traditional book form including films and manga.

As a small capstone seminar, the success of this class depends on the active and consistent participation each of us. Come each week prepared and ready to engage fully with the materials and with each other in vigorous, productive debate and discussion. This is also a Writing Flag and Global Cultures Flag course. In this class, you can expect to write and revise regularly during the semester, complete substantial writing projects, and receive feedback from your instructor and your peers to help you improve your academic writing. You should expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from your written work. It is also designed to increase your familiarity with practices, beliefs, and histories of at least one non-U.S. cultural group, past or present.

Required Materials:

1) Books to Purchase (avail. at UT Co-op for purchase):

**Lady Kagerō, *The Kagerō Diary: A Woman's Autobiographical Text from Tenth-Century Japan*, trans. Sonja Arntzen (#9780939512812) (NOTE TRANSLATOR/ISBN# TO ENSURE YOU GET CORRECT VERSION)

**Lady Nijō, *Confessions of Lady Nijō* (#9780804709309)

**Katsu Kokichi, *Musui's Story: The Autobiography of a Tokugawa Samurai* (#9780816512560)

**Jun'ichi Saga, *Confessions of a Yakuza: A Life in Japan's Underworld* (#9781568365046)

**Mishima Yukio, *Confessions of a Mask* (#9780811201186)

2) Course Reader is available for purchase at Jenn's Copy Shop NORTH branch (2518 Guadalupe St, 482-0779).

3) A packet of 3"x5" index cards to be used for frequent in-class pop quizzes and group activities.

4) Additional secondary readings to be posted on Canvas as announced in class and/or by email.

Grading Policy

Grades will be assigned according to the UT +/- system as follows: 93-100 = A; 90-92.9 = A-; 87-89.9 = B+; 83-86.9 = B; 80-82.9 = B-; 77-79.9 = C+; 73-76.9 = C; 70-72.9 = C-; 67-69.9 = D+; 63-66.9 = D; 60-62.9 = D-; below 60 = F. As a rule, I do not grade on a curve or round up grades. If you receive an 89, you will receive a B+. One exception to this rule is that a grade that is very close to the next grade level, such as an 89.9 or 79.9, may be rounded up to the higher grade if the student has consistently attended class and participated fully in class discussions. There are no planned extra credit assignments.

Grading Breakdown:

Attendance/Participation/Contribution = 20% TOTAL

Note that this is based on both your participation (active engagement in all classes) and contribution (quality of your participation) rather than merely on attending classes. To earn the maximum points, you will need to be a consistently active and good participant in class discussions. Each unexcused absence beyond one freebie will result in an automatic 1% point drop in this grade.

Homework and In-class Writing/Thinking Exercises = 15% TOTAL

A series of scheduled homework assignments (see HW on schedule), additional in-class short writing and thinking assignments, and pop quizzes designed to improve your analytical and writing skills and to check if you have done the reading assignments carefully. Absolutely no lates accepted because we will often workshop these in class on the day they are due and participation in those workshops counts as part of your grade. These are “low stakes” in terms of your grade, but crucial to developing the necessary skills for success in this class. These will sometimes be open-book, so be sure to bring your texts with you to class regularly.

Personal Response (PR) Essays (2 total, 3 pages maximum) = 30% TOTAL

These two essays, worth 15% each, are on texts of your choice to be submitted on a day that we are discussing that text. For example, if you choose to write on *Confessions of Lady Nijō*, you can submit anytime between Mon, Oct 1st and Wed, Oct. 10th. Your first PR essay is due by Wed. Oct. 31st and your second one by Wed. Nov. 28th at the latest. This will ensure that you get early and timely feedback on your writing and ideas. Earlier submissions are welcome. I strongly recommend you try to choose texts that you think might want to write your final analytical paper on. In your PR, you should focus on an in-depth exploration of one (or two, at most) questions from our Expanded Toolkit with concrete evidence from the text to make your case. On the day you submit your PR essay, come prepared in class to discuss your ideas in a short 5-minute oral presentation to the class. The key is to aim for an engaging, enriching presentation that stimulates discussion & debate.

Final Analytical Paper (5-7 pages) = 35% TOTAL

For this formal analytical paper (5-7 pages), you will submit a 3-page first draft along with a detailed outline that will be workshopped in class to help you improve the final version. Paper grades will be based on your final submission, but 5% will automatically be deducted from your final grade if you do not submit a first draft/outline and participate in peer workshop.

**Whenever time permits, you are encouraged to share new materials from outside class that enrich our discussions:

- an example of another person's autobiography from the same culture/time period or an entirely different context to compare/contrast with our text (for example, a mafia boss memoir during our yakuza week or the Manhattan Madam's tell-all memoir about Eliot Spitzer during the week on Court Ladies' Chronicles);
- some relevant and enriching background information relating to autobiography we are reading (for example, on yakuza or samurai culture or a consideration of “women's hand” in Heian era Japan);
- an example of autobiography that stretch the definition of the term in interesting ways (for example, contemporary media, like Facebook & blogs, self-portraits, songs, diaries, etc.);
- one of your favorite autobiographies from any era/nation in any medium that most interests you;
- a news article or posting that relates to autobiography in an interesting way.

Standards and Expectations:

- Careful, thorough reading of assigned texts by date indicated on schedule. Reading requires your active engagement. Merely highlighting or skimming the text will not be sufficient for close analysis. Detailed note-taking is essential. Always bring your marked up copy with you to class.
- Attendance at all classes and active and considerate participation in class and group discussions. Common courtesy is expected. Sleepers and disruptive students will be asked to leave. No one should monopolize the class discussion or shrink into the background.
- You are welcome to use a laptop for note-taking, but please avoid surfing the web, Facebook, etc.
- Timely completion of assignments. No lates accepted. Extensions granted in only very rare cases for legitimate reasons (i.e. religious holidays), but even in these cases, arrangements must be made with the instructor one week prior to the examination date. Last-minute family or medical emergencies will be considered, but no guarantees and will require proof. No exceptions.

Official Policies

Academic Integrity: You are expected to adhere to university requirements on academic honesty and integrity. Behaviors, such as plagiarism, copying of another student's work, or cheating on an exam, are serious offenses that will result in the grade of an "F" for the course and will be reported to the office of Student Judicial Services, where further disciplinary action may be taken. Please refer to the following website for information on how to avoid plagiarism in your work and/or discuss this with the instructor:

http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/acint_student.php.

University Electronic Notification Mail Policy: In this course, e-mail will be used as a means of communication with students. As per the University Electronic Notification Policy, it is your responsibility to update your email address and to check your e-mail regularly for class announcements/assignments.

<http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.html>

Accommodations for Students with Documented Disabilities: Students who require special accommodations may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities (471-6529 voice or 471-4641 TTY). This letter should be presented to the instructor at the beginning of the semester so that appropriate accommodations can be made at that time. For more information, please see: <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>.

Use of Canvas in Class: Many of our readings are available on Canvas. You should print these out and bring with you to class. Please allow yourself enough time before an assignment is due. As with all computer systems, there are occasional scheduled downtimes as well as unanticipated disruptions. Canvas is available at <http://canvas.utexas.edu/>.

Religious Holidays: If you will need to miss class, tests, or other assignments due to the observance of a religious holy day, you will be given an opportunity to complete the work you have missed provided you notify me at least one week prior to the absence.

Schedule (subject to change; updated version posted on Canvas):

** Readings/viewings marked with a -- should be completed by the day listed on the schedule. Additional supplemental readings to be posted and announced on Canvas as needed.

** All authors are listed last name first following the Japanese practice. Date of original in parenthesis ().

** All films listed with call number on schedule are available for re-viewing at Fine Arts Library (DFA, 3.200).

Week One (Aug. 29): Approaching Autobiography: Theory and Practice

Wed: Self-Introductions

Week Two (Sept. 5; Mon. OFF for Labor Day):

Mon: No class (off for Labor Day), but HW#1 due by class time

HW #1: Autobiography, Writing the self.

Imagine you were to start writing your own autobiography. Write the first few pages or so. In an accompanying personal response reflection essay (about 2 pgs.), explain what you started with and why. Reflect upon your choices here. For example, how does this opening episode set the tone for the rest of your (imagined) autobiography? What kind of character would you be? What kind of story would you want to tell? How might you end it or title it, and why? Was it difficult to know what to start and/or end with? To pick a title? How does who/where you are today (or who you want to be in the future) influence your choices? Your intended audience? If you just can't figure out a satisfying way to start the autobiography, write up a section that you know you would want to include somewhere in it and explain how/why this section/episode is important to your self-fashioning. On Canvas, turn in your reflection essay. Turning in your autobiography on Canvas is optional. Consult Guidelines for ANS 379 papers on Canvas for formatting & style requirements for this and all other papers.

Wed: --Smith & Watson, "A Toolkit: Twenty Strategies for Reading Life Narratives" (pp. 165-179)

--Smith & Watson, "Getting a Life: Everyday Uses of Autobiography" (pp. 1-24)

HW#2: Creating & Expanding our Toolkit.

Read "A Toolkit" and "Getting a Life." Choose two questions/ideas about autobiography that most interest you. For HW#2, first rephrase and elaborate/expand on these two questions. Aim for a meaty paragraph that has a series of related rich and interesting questions/ideas. Second, come up with one question about autobiography of your own. We will collectively compile a list of these questions to make an expanded toolkit that we can build upon over the course of the semester. Submit HW#2 on Canvas and add your toolkit questions to the collaborative document on Canvas.

Week Three (Sept. 10 & 12):

Mon: --Tendo Shoko, *Yakuza Moon: Memoirs of a Gangster's Daughter** (2004), p. 1-44 (up to Chapt. 6);
*posted on Canvas

HW #3: Applying Theory to Text.

Using the expanded Toolkit posted on Canvas, pick 2-3 of the most interesting toolkit questions as they apply to Tendo's memoir. Do at least one question for Tuesday's reading/class and at least one other for Thursday. For each question, sketch out your tentative thoughts and answers, citing evidence from the primary text to make your point. Your answers can be in the form of informal sentences and bullet point lists, but be sure to cite concrete evidence from the text (with page #s in parentheses). Have a copy of your HW available to consult in class for discussion both days.

Though not required, I suggest you do this work for each text we will read this semester to help prepare you for class discussions and for the final paper.

Wed: --Tendo, *Yakuza Moon*, pp. 45-79 (to end); **Hand in HW #3 on Canvas.**

Unit One: Court Ladies' Chronicles

Week Four (Sept. 17 & 19):

- Mon: Background lecture on Heian court & culture
--Preface & Introduction, *The Kagerō Diary: A Woman's Autobiographical Text from Tenth-Century Japan* (ca. 974), (trans. Sonja Arntzen), pp. ix-50
- Wed: --*The Kagerō Diary*, Book One

Week Five (Sept. 24 & 26):

- Mon: --*The Kagerō Diary*, Book Two
- Wed: --*The Kagerō Diary*, Book Three

Week Six (Oct. 1 & 3):

- Mon: --*The Confessions of Lady Nijō* (1307), Introduction, vii-xxvii & Book One, pp. 1-66

HW #4 Part One: Quote Exercise.

Over the course of her diary, Lady Nijō depicts herself in a strikingly different number of poses or personas (as daughter, lover, poet, religious devotee, etc.). As you are reading each Book, identify what you think are the most important personas she projects. Come up with a catchy and apt phrase that captures your ideas about this persona (for example, for Kagerō, one might be "Woe-is-me wounded one"). For each key persona, find a couple of rich illustrative quotes from the text that support your point. Copy these out in their entirety citing the page numbers correctly in parenthesis after each quote. (No need to cite the author or title since we are dealing with just one text here). After each quote, explain briefly in informal language why you think it's important. What point(s) does it help you to make? Have a copy available to discuss with the class; submit a final version on Canvas by Mon. 10/8.

- Wed: --*The Confessions of Lady Nijō*, Book Two & Three, pp. 67-180
See HW#4 above. Do also for Books 2 & 3.

Week Seven (Oct. 8 & 10):

- Mon: --*The Confessions of Lady Nijō*, Books Four & Five, 181-264
HW #4 Part One: Quote Exercise on 5 Books. Submit via Canvas.

- Wed: Wrap-up Lady Nijō

HW #4 Part Two: One Point, One Paragraph.

Now imagine you had to write a formal analytical essay on the topic of what kinds of personas Lady Nijō projects, how, and why. Remember that formal essays differ from personal response essays (consult Guidelines for ANS 379 papers). Choose one (or two) of her key personas to describe and evidence coherently and persuasively. Write up a single paragraph of this mock essay in which you would use these quotes for your point. Here you need not consider other points of evidence (i.e. plot points, style, POV, narrative arc, etc.) since the focus of this exercise is quotes, but feel free to do so if it helps your paragraph flow. Be sure to choose and trim quotes wisely as well as to frame, integrate, and analyze the quotes sufficiently so that they work as part of your argument. Review Using Quotes Effectively Worksheet on Canvas under Assignments. Submit via Canvas.

Unit Two: Samurai Stories & Yakuza Yarns

Week Eight (Oct. 15 & 17):

- Mon: Background lecture on Edo Period SPAM
--"Introduction" and "Notes to the Translation," *Musui's Story*, ix-xxi and pp. 159-168
- Wed: --Katsu Kokichi, *Musui's Story: The Autobiography of a Tokugawa Samurai* (1843), pp. 1-70

Updated as of 8-20-18

Week Nine (Oct. 22 & 24):

Mon: --*Musui's Story*, pp. 71-158

Wed: Wrap up *Musui's Story*

Week Ten (Oct. 29 & 31):

Mon: --Jun'ichi Saga, *Confessions of a Yakuza: A Life in Japan's Underworld* (1989), Parts I, II, & III

Wed: --*Confessions of a Yakuza*, Part IV

Reminder: Today is the last possible day to submit Personal Response Essay #1 (15%).

Unit Three: Storying Sexuality

Week Eleven (Nov. 5 & 7):

Mon: --Tayama Katai, *Futon* (1907), pp. 35-96

--Uno Chiyo, "This Powder Box" (1966), pp. 208-236

--Supplementary readings* on Katai and Uno (posted on Canvas)

Wed: --Supplementary readings on Theories of Autobiography (NYT op-eds, "Politics (of Self)," de Man)

--Alison Bechdel, *Fun Home, A Family Tragicomic** (2006); posted on Canvas, also avail. on Kindle Unlimited

Week Twelve (Nov. 12 & 14):

Mon: In-class clips from *Mishima, A Life in Four Chapters* and background lecture on Mishima

--Mishima Yukio, *Confessions of a Mask* (1949), Chapters One and Two

Wed: --*Confessions of a Mask*, Chapters Three & Four

Week Thirteen (Nov. 19, Wed. off for Thanksgiving):

Mon: Wrap up *Confessions of a Mask*

--Mishima Yukio, "Patriotism" (1961), pp. 93-118

--Watch Mishima Yukio, *Rites of Love and Death* (1966) at <http://vimeo.com/41166505>

Week Fourteen (Nov. 26 & 28):

Mon: In-class watch Hara Kazuo (dir.), *Extreme Private Eros: Love Song* 1974, DVD 7839, 98 min.; also available at: <https://vimeo.com/176776589>

Wed: Discuss *Extreme Private Eros*

--Ruoff & Ruoff, "Filming at the Margins: The Documentaries of Hara Kazuo," pp. 115-126

--Ruoff, "Japan's Outlaw Filmmaker: An Interview with Hara Kazuo," pp. 103-113

Reminder: Today is the last possible day to submit Personal Response Essay #2 (15%).

Week Fifteen (Dec. 3 & 5): Final Paper Meetings & Workshop

Mon: Individual meetings for final papers

Wed: ***In-class Paper Writing Workshop: 3-page Draft & Outline of Analytical Final Paper Due.***

Detailed instructions on Canvas. Be sure to bring 2 printed out hard copies of your draft & outline to class for peer-editing. Paper grade will be based on your final submission, but 5% is automatically deducted from your final grade if you do not submit draft/outline and participate in peer workshop.

Week Sixteen (Dec. 10):

Mon: Individual meetings for final papers

Thursday, Dec. 13th by 9 a.m.: Final Analytical Paper Final Version Due (35%). Submit via Canvas. (due date pending registrar's confirmation of the final exam schedule)