

Syllabus for
**Words Spun Out of Images: Visual and Literary Culture in Nineteenth Century
Japan**

Online course via Coursera (<https://www.coursera.org/learn/visual-literary-culture-in-japan>)

School of Asian Studies, Faculty of World Economy and International Affairs

Meeting Minute # ___ dated _____ 20__

1. Course Description

a) Pre-requisites

Students are required to be able to listen and comprehend English at beginner level. (Videos have English subtitles.)

b) Abstract

Course “Words Spun Out of Images: Visual and Literary Culture in Nineteenth Century Japan” is an online course available on platform “Coursera” (<https://www.coursera.org/learn/visual-literary-culture-in-japan>). It is offered to the 3-rd year students of School of Asian Studies, Faculty of World Economy and International Affairs in the 1st module.

The course offers learners the chance to encounter and appreciate behavior, moral standards and some of the material conditions surrounding Japanese artists in the nineteenth century, in order to renew our assumptions about what artistic “realism” is and what it meant.

Learners will walk away with a clear understanding of how society and the individual were conceived of and represented in early modern Japan. Unlike contemporary western art forms, which acknowledge their common debt as “sister arts” but remain divided by genre and discourse, Japanese visual and literary culture tended to combine, producing literary texts inspired by visual images, and visual images which would then be inscribed with poems and prose. Noticing and being able to interpret this indivisibility of visual/literary cultures is essential in understanding the social and psychological values embedded within the beauty of Japanese art.

2. Learning Objectives

During the course “Studying at Japanese Universities” the participants will:

- learn about the basic formal aspects of samurai portraiture, and at the same time begin to interpret poems and prose inscribed onto the image
- be shown several portraits of women who actually existed in society, and painted or printed images of idealized “beauties”, and learn how contemporary viewers used these images and their texts as a tool to understand the world

- learn how photographic modes of representation were assimilated into the literary tradition of portraiture
- understand how visual and written modes of representation colluded, and combined to produce powerful documents of social and psychological actuality

3. Learning Outcomes

The outcomes of the course “Studying at Japanese Universities” are as follows:

- Student understands how society and the individual were conceived of and represented in early modern Japan
- Student can interpret the indivisibility of visual/literary cultures (visual images which were inscribed with poems and prose)

4. Course Plan

Topic	Hours	Details	Forms of Assessment
	lectures		
	seminars		
	onl/homework		
Topic 1. Samurai Portraits	0	Portraits of samurai are rich in information about how men at the top of the social ladder wished to be “viewed” as physical entities, and how they expressed themselves as moral actors within society. We will learn the basic formal aspects of samurai portraiture, and at the same time begin to interpret poems and prose inscribed onto the images themselves. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Portrait of Satō Issai" by Watanabe Kazan 2. Representation of Reality in Literatures 3. Watanabe Kazan's Representation of Reality 4. Chinese Quatrain by Rai Mikisaburō 5. "Portrait of Yoshida Shōin" by Matsura Shōdō 6. Yoshida Shōin and His Writings 	13 quizzes
	0		
	35		
Topic 2. Painted Beauties	0	Visual images of women produced in Japan before the introduction of photography can be divided into two types: portraits of women who actually existed in society, and painted or printed images of idealized “beauties,” whose resemblance to physical reality was subsumed often to an intense interest in mode and situational aspect. Like samurai portraits, images of women, both real	15 quizzes
	0		
	35		

		<p>and imagined, would often be inscribed with texts which instruct viewers how to understand and appreciate them. We will overview several painted and printed images, and learn how contemporary viewers used these images and their texts as a tool to understand the world.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Portrait of a Geisha" by Watanabe Kazan" 2. A Courtesan" by Takahashi Yuichi 3. "The Courtesan Usugumo of the Miura House at the Age of 89" 4. Beauties in Ukiyo-e 5. Beauties in Writings 6. "Beauty in the Painting" by Matsumoto Fūko 7. Beauties in Photographs 	
Topic 3. The Literary Photograph I	0	<p>What methods did early modern Japanese artists and writers have at hand to “capture the moment,” and how did these methods influence the introduction and adaption of western photography in the mid-nineteenth century? We will see how photographic modes of representation were assimilated into the literary tradition of portraiture.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Calligraphy and Painting Gathering in Satte Post Town" by Yoda Chikkoku 2. "On Reading" by Miyaoi Yasuo 3. "Calligraphy and Painting Gathering in Satte Post Town" by Yoda Chikkoku 4. Inscribed Photographs 5. Masaoka Shiki and Post Meiji-Restoration Writers 	9 quizzes
	0		
	38		
Topic 4. The Literary Photograph I I	0	<p>We trace the trajectory of the literary photograph from the end of the long nineteenth century into Japan’s modern era. Photographic images of the human figure in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Japan were often accompanied by literary writing inscribed either on the image itself, or on its reverse side. Modern novelists sometimes published photographs with short poems as captions. We will wrap up our course with a summary of how visual and written modes of representation colluded, and combined to produce powerful documents of social and psychological actuality.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inscribed Photographs 2. Portrait of Niijima Yae 3. Picture Postcard 4. Letters from Nagai Kafū 5. “Strange Tale from East of the River” by Nagai Kafū 	10 quizzes
	0		
	40		

		6. Course Summary	
Topic 5. Classroom Discussion	2	Discussion of the online course in classroom.	
<i>Total no. of hours (in 1st module)</i>	150		

5. Reading List

a) Required

	Title
1	Guth, C. Art of Edo Japan: the artist and the city, 1615 - 1868 / C. Guth. – New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2014 (and earlier editions). – 176 с.: ил. – На англ. яз. - ISBN 978-0-300-16413-8
2	Written texts - visual texts: woodblock-printed media in early modern Japan / Ed. by S. Formanek, S. Linhart. – Amsterdam: Hotei Publishing, 2005. – 368 с.: ил. – (Hotei Academic. European studies on Japan; 3) . – На англ. яз. - ISBN 9789074822589
3	Impey, O. Japanese decorative arts of the Meiji period 1868-1912 / O. Impey, J. Seaman. – Oxford: Ashmolean Museum, 2005. – 112 с. – (Ashmolean handbooks) . – На англ. яз. - ISBN 9781854441980.

b) Optional

	Title
1	Breuer, K. Japanesque: the Japanese print in the era of Impressionism / K. Breuer. – Munich; Berlin; London; New York: DelMonico Books-Prestel; San Francisco: Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, 2011. – 156 с.: цв. ил. – На англ. яз. - ISBN 978-3-7913-5082-0.
2	Marks, A. Japanese woodblock prints: artists, publishers and masterworks, 1680-1900 / A. Marks; Foreword by S. Addiss. – Tokyo [etc.]: Tuttle Publishing, 2010. – 336 с.: цв. ил. – На англ. яз. - ISBN 978-4-8053-1055-7.
3	Weston, V. Japanese painting and national identity: Okakura Tenshin and His Circle / V. Weston. – Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2004. – 322 с.: цв. ил. – (Michigan monograph series in Japanese studies; 45) . – На англ. яз. - ISBN 9781929280179.

6. Grading System

The final grade (G_{final}) for the course “Studying at Japanese Universities” is calculated as follows:

$$G_{final} = 0,20 \cdot G_{topic 1} + 0,20 \cdot G_{topic 2} + 0,25 \cdot G_{topic 3} + 0,25 \cdot G_{topic 4} + 0,10 \cdot G_{discussion}$$

where $G_{topic 1/2/3/4}$ represent grades acquires for each topic
and $G_{discussion}$ represents grade for the final discussion conducted in class.

None of the grades are so called “Blocking grades”.

Students are awarded a pass certificate as long as the final grade is satisfactory.

Correspondence of ten-point to five-point marks

<i>Ten-point scale</i>	<i>Five-point scale</i>
0 — nothing to assess 1 — unsatisfactory 2 — very bad 3 — bad	Unsatisfactory — 2
4 – satisfactory 5 – quite satisfactory	Satisfactory — 3
6 – good 7 – very good	Good — 4
8 – nearly excellent 9 – excellent 10 - brilliant	Excellent — 5

7. Examination Type

Discussion on following topics:

- Basic formal aspects of samurai portraiture
- Visual images of women produced in Japan before the introduction of photography
- Methods of early modern Japanese artists and writers to “capture the moment,”
- How these methods influence the introduction and adaption of western photography in the mid-nineteenth century
- Trajectory of the literary photograph from the end of the long nineteenth century into Japan’s modern era
- Collusion visual and written modes of representation on photographs

8. Methods of Instruction

Course “Studying at Japanese Universities” is primarily an online course. Students are required to view videos, read materials and pass quizzes, all available online. At the end of the 1st module 2 hrs are reserved for a classroom discussion with an instructor.

9. Special Equipment and Software Support (if required)

Students are highly recommended to use their own laptops with pre-installed software, if possible. The computers in computer classes are also suitable for the online course.

	Software Support	Access
1.	Microsoft Windows 7 Professional RUS Microsoft Windows 10 Microsoft Windows 8.1 Professional RUS	<i>via university's local network (contract)</i>
2.	Microsoft Office Professional Plus 2010	<i>via university's local network (contract)</i>

<i>Internet resources</i>	
1.	Coursera https://www.coursera.org/