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ABSTRACT

This curriculum outline illustrates the components of a course which introduces students to an understanding of short stories and novels and emphasizes the broadening of their world view through the use of Asian and Asian-American stories. First, the goals, student objectives, and methodology of the course are presented. Next, a syllabus of the assigned readings is provided, highlighting the following four major course themes: (1) initiation; (2) love, marriage, families, and relationships; (3) cultural diversity and dilemmas; and (4) old age, meaning of life, and appearance versus reality. Assignments, evaluation tools, and teaching strategies for a specific collections of short stories, short stories, film, and an oral interpretation of various Japanese and Chinese tales are then illustrated in detail. The remainder of the outline contains an annotated bibliography of Japanese, Chinese, and Korean literature, suggestions to help students make personal and critical connections between stories, a list of materials used in the course, the pre-test and post-test evaluation, and additional sources for the course. The pre-test survey, film notes, sample assignments, and curriculum material are appended. (TGI)

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ED 407 961

ENGLISH

**"AN INTRODUCTION TO ASIAN AND AMERICAN ASIAN FICTION"**

Use In: Introduction to Fiction

BY

**MARY ANGELIDES**

Asian Studies Instructional Module  
St. Louis Community College at Meramec

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TC 970 288

**ST. LOUIS COMMUNITY COLLEGE - Meramec**

**Curriculum Module: "An Introduction to Asian  
and Asian-American Fiction"**

**Time allocation for module: 9 hours**

**Course: ENG. 201 - Introduction to Fiction**

**Professor Mary Angelides**

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ST. LOUIS COMMUNITY COLLEGE - Meramec

Professor Mary Angelides  
English Department

**Curriculum Module: An Introduction to Asian and  
Asian-American Fiction**

**Approximate time allocation: 9 hours**

**Course: Introduction to Fiction (ENG. 201)**

**GOALS:** The purpose of this course is to introduce the student to an understanding and enjoyment of short stories and novels. This module will emphasize broadening the student's world view by reading non-western literature - more specifically, Asian and Asian-American stories.

**STUDENT OBJECTIVES :**

- to read critically and better understand the basic elements of fiction: 1) plot/conflict 2) setting 3) character 4) point of view and 5) theme
- to share insights and to write concisely of those insights
- to think and write critically using textual evidence
- to broaden our understanding of the human condition in all its diversity and to better understand ourselves as we relate to others
- to identify cultural differences
- to recognize cross-cultural or universal aspects

To achieve these objectives we will take a thematic approach, one that we can all relate to as human beings. We will read stories of 1) initiation and identity, 2) love, marriage, families, 3) cultural diversity and dilemmas, and 4) old age, meaning of life, and distinguishing reality vs. appearance.

**METHODOLOGY:** Reading journal, large and small group discussion, collaborative assignments, films, essay exams, critical paper, pop quizzes, games, slides.

Specific assignments, strategies, and evaluations for each story are on the following pages.

**CONNECTIONS:** it is important to help students make connections between others and themselves, from their own as well as other cultures. Not only does this effort help students personally but also in developing critical thinking skills. A separate section on "Connections" is included.

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Syllabus - Readings

Introduction, pp. 1-16;  
Crane - "Open Boat"

Theme I: INITIATION

Updike - "A & P"  
O'Connor - "Everything that Rises Must Converge"  
Faulkner - "Barnburning"  
Olsen - "I Stand Here Ironing"  
Lawrence - "Rocking-Horse Winner"  
Oates - "Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been?"

\* Asian addition:

R. A. Sasaki - "Another Writer's Beginnings"  
Amy Tan, either Joy Luck Club or Kitchen God's  
wife (optional selection for all reading  
levels)

Theme II: LOVE, MARRIAGE, FAMILIES, RELATIONSHIPS

Hemingway - "Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber"  
Fitzgerald - "Babylon Revisited"  
Boyle - "Astronomer's Wife"  
McCullers - "A Tree, a Rock, a Cloud"  
Malamud - "The Magic Barrel"  
Munro - "How I Met My Husband"  
Steinbeck - "The Chrysanthemums"  
Thurber - "The Catbird Seat"

\*Asian additions:

Sasaki - "First Love";  
Kawabata - **Snow Country** (novella and film;  
optional honors project)  
McCunn - Thousand Pieces of Gold (novel and  
film; optional project, all reading levels)

Theme III: CULTURAL DIVERSITY AND DILEMMAS

Baldwin - "Sonny's Blues"  
Bambara - "The Lesson"  
Walker - "Everyday Use"  
Naylor - Women of Brewster Place - novel  
Allende - "Two Words"  
"Walimai"  
Garcia Marquez - "A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings"

\* Asian additions: Sasaki short stories  
"Wild Mushrooms"  
"Ohaka Mairi"

"The Loom"  
Oe's "The Catch"  
Saiki's "Suspect Alien"

Theme IV: OLD AGE, MEANING OF LIFE, APPEARANCE VS. REALITY

Porter - "Jilting of Granny Weatheral"  
Faulkner - "A Rose for Emily"  
Walker - "To Hell with Dying"  
Welty - "A Worn Path"

Tolstoy - "The Death of Ivan Ilytch" - short novel  
Singer - "Gimpel the Fool"  
Godwin - "Dream Children"

\* Asian additions:

Sasaki - "Driving to Colma"  
"Seattle"

Akutagawa - "Rashomon" and FILM; "In a Grove"  
Japanese Folk Tales, a presentation by the Oral  
Interpretation class of Professor Breitwieser

\*\*See Optional Selections, an annotated bibliography for  
additional readings.

**ASSIGNMENTS, EVALUATIONS, AND TEACHING STRATEGIES FOR:****R. A. Sasaki's The Loom and Other Stories.**

Graywolf Press, 1991.

This collection of short stories works perfectly with the basic themes of the course:

- initiation and identity;
- love, marriage, families;
- cultural diversity and dilemmas
- old age, meaning of life, appearance vs. reality

The stories can either be used one or two at a time, as shown in the sample syllabus, or read all at once toward the end of the course as a summary and linking strategy to develop synthesis.

1. Collaborative discussion and writing strategy for any of the stories. The objectives are to develop critical reading skills; to write an analytical paragraph with textual evidence with an emphasis on learning to use both paraphrase and short quotations to support conclusions; and to understand cultural differences.

Divide class into groups of 3 or 4. Assign each group a different topic from the stories to discuss and then write a well-developed paragraph with evidence to support the topic sentence they have agreed upon. They are to write two drafts, the final one on a transparency which will then be used to show the entire class for discussion and possible editing.

Classroom computers would make this assignment more efficient.

Sample small group topics:

a) "Another Writer's Beginnings" - Contrast the mother's view of her daughter and the writer's view of herself.

b) "Ohaka-Mairi" - Have three different groups write on how the Japanese father, the American boyfriend, and the Japanese-American sister handle the death of the other sister to show the cultural differences.

c) "Wild Mushrooms" - Have groups deal with the following questions: How does the setting relate to the theme of the story? What role does food play in establishing the relationship between the father and the daughter? In what sense is this story a journey "into the past" and whose journey is it? What do the historical events of the internment camps and the A-Bomb add to the story?

d) "Driving to Colma" - How does the sunroom illustrate

the difference in taste between Gracie and her father vs. her sister Nancy and her mother? Contrast Gracie and Nancy in other ways? Describe Gracie's attitude about leaving Japan? Trace the stages Gracie goes through from the initial preoccupation with her father's physical health to an understanding of his emotional health and deeper feelings.

2. EVALUATION: Another approach is to use the entire collection of short stories at the end of the semester as a review of the major themes of the course. The objectives would still include textual analysis and synthesis, but by this point students' skills in critical reading and writing should enable them to work more independently or collaboratively without as much assistance by the instructor, thus making the assignment part of the course evaluation for each student; and finally a review of the major elements of fiction.

a) Assign a different story for complete discussion and analysis to a group of 3 or 4 students. They are to arrive at the theme of each story by thoroughly analyzing the major components of short fiction--setting, point of view, character, plot/conflict, and ultimately theme.

b) After thorough discussion, each student would be required to write a 3-paged paper based on the group's analysis, displaying skill in using literary evidence both paraphrased and short quotations.

c) A final aspect could include an oral presentation by the group, seminar style, to the larger class.

3. EVALUATION: Another assignment for a critical paper would be a comparison/contrast between one story from The Loom and one chapter from The Women of Brewster Place with one objective being to show cultural differences or similarities. For example, analyze the mother/daughter relationships in "Seattle" and "Kiswana Browne."



## NOTES - Sasaki, Ruth A.

The Loom and Other Stories. Graywolf Press,  
1991.

This collection of short stories by a third generation Japanese-American writer covers many of the themes in the course and would be a good addition as a summary. Easy to read and short. These stories make an interesting introduction to many subtle aspects of Japanese culture and could include other arts to illustrate - painting, calligraphy, flower arranging, tea ceremony, etc.

"Another Writer's Beginnings" - identity.

"Ohaka-Mairi" - on a visit to the cemetery two years after the death of her sister, we get two views of male grief--the Japanese father and the American boyfriend.

"The Loom" - the mother's story; raised in San Francisco during the 1930s, educated at Berkeley, survived the humiliation of internment camps; raises family, and her own identity seems lost to her daughters.

"Independence" - relationship between sisters.

"American Fish" - two Japanese women meet at the fish market and are embarrassed by the stigma that remains of being part of the camps in the 40s.

"Wild Mushrooms" - her father comes to visit her in Japan; they go to his old neighborhood in Hiroshima where so much has changed; learns of father's identity.

"Driving to Colma" - father dying of cancer, the unspoken illness; she returns from Japan to visit and experiences reversal in roles, sees him in new light.

"First Love" - middle-class Jo (the "brain") falls in love with F.O.B. (fresh off the boat) lower-class hood/swinger. "Only love or drama could bring together two people cast in such disparate roles."

"Seattle" - ends with the mother and daughter coming to terms with one another, about pathos and self-sacrifice, and how the daughter will never have the values of the mother simply by being third generation Japanese-American rather than second generation. Realistic ending but sad.

Summary: These are stories of a young woman who tries to fit into

the fabric of American life. According to the author, they are about the "cultural amnesia inflicted on my parents' generation by the internment and the A-bomb," about a Japanese culture that lay buried like a lost civilization.

**ASSIGNMENTS, EVALUATIONS, AND TEACHING STRATEGIES FOR:**

Ryunosuke Akutagawa's short stories "Rashomon" and "In a Grove" (or Bush, or Woods) and Akiru Kurosawa's film Rashomon

The film is based on both stories and all three work well with the theme of appearance v. reality and subjective point of view. What is the truth and where does reality lie? Is there more than one truth? one reality?

1. Have students read the two stories before viewing the film. Then view the film together. This 88 minute film can easily be shown by breaking it into two parts, stopping before the medium tells the husband's version. Then during the second class finish viewing the film and discuss the stories and film by first asking for similarities. Discuss the significance of the similarities. For instance,

- what does the gate represent in the story? is it the same in the film? is the meaning constant?
- is there a connection between the pimple that festers on the servant/thief's cheek and the pestering gnat on the neck of the film's bandit?
- who speaks for the law of the jungle in both story and film?
- how does the film simulate the direct testimony technique in "In a Grove"?

Then the differences and the affect on the stories:

- how does the film change the way we hear individual stories?
- how has the film changed the character and role of the Buddhist priest?
- contrast the affect of the six testimonies and who they represent from "In a Grove" with the film version
- contrast the endings of all three stories and the affect on theme
- in the film which character is most like us, hearing the stories for the first time?

These questions can easily be used for group work depending on time.

2. One or all three versions could be used with Singer's "Gimple the Fool" or Godwin's "Dream Children" or Kawabata's "The Grasshopper and the Bell Cricket."
3. Fun activity: take five minutes at the beginning of class and play the whisper game. Whisper a statement in the ear of one student; then have each student pass on the message until

all students have heard it. Have the last student write the message on the board. Be sure the message is a few sentences long to begin with.

Usually the message will be distorted in some way. Discuss the elements that might account for the distortions - differences in memory, language skills, cultural contexts.

4. EVALUATION: These stories serve as an excellent opportunity to help students understand the technical aspects of "point of view," one of the major criteria in reading critically. Sample topics for in-depth study of point of view are:

a) Write a short (500 words) critical analysis of the effect of omniscient narration in the short story "Rashomon" and the first person narration in "In a Grove." First, define the technique with examples and then analyze the effect on theme, character, setting, etc.

b) Analyze the various narrative techniques used in the film version, including testimonies, flashbacks, questions, and even non-verbal techniques, such as setting and music.

**ASSIGNMENTS, EVALUATIONS, AND TEACHING STRATEGIES FOR:**

Jessica Saiki's "Suspect Alien - short story from collection Once, a Lotus Garden. New Rivers Press, 1987.

This story works well in the unit on "Cultural Diversity and Dilemmas." The larger theme illustrates how the old ways of traditional Hawaiian/Japanese culture are eclipsed by the modern life-style of 1930s and 40s America.

Simply told story of a fine Japanese teacher in Hawaii who is interred after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, and the lasting affect his love of haiku has on one student.

A) A student could read the entire collection and write a paper on related themes. Or the the collection could be used as the basis for a collaborative project with each student taking one story for analysis, yet everyone would read the collection and discuss the related themes.

B) Discussion questions:

1. What kind of teacher was Azawa? What was his attitude toward inattentive students? give examples.
2. How does the wife act as a mirror, or shadow, of Azawa?
3. Defend the position that his preferring the "company of books to people" and his "cocooning" himself from "harsh reality" led to his downfall.
4. In what ways did the neighbors "care" for him?
5. How does the poem at the end suggest the theme?

EVALUATION:

The above questions could be used for a short quiz.

C) An alternative classroom strategy that works well to get all students involved is to use the "agree/disagree" technique.

--on each wall of the classroom put the following signs: agree, mildly agree, disagree, mildly disagree.

--while students are still in their seats make a statement about the story that they must take a position on (use discussion question #3 for instance)

--students are to go to the wall with the sign that

best represents their position

- one by one going from agree/mildly agree to disagree/mildly disagree students are to give, in one sentence only, their reason and evidence for their position
- alternate the two basic positions; give everyone a chance to respond before calling on a student who has already responded
- at the end of the discussion, have students write a short statement following the prompt, "I learned that . . . "
- read some of the responses

**ASSIGNMENTS AND TEACHING STRATEGIES FOR:**

An oral interpretation of various Japanese and Chinese Tales. Those presented in the past include:

- "The Crab and the Monkey"
- "Urashima Taro"
- "Monkey-Dance and Sparrow-Dance"
- "Mr. Lucky Straw"
- "The Chinese Mirror"

I have been fortunate to have the help of Dr. Dianne Breitwieser and her class in Oral Interpretation of Literature in presenting these Asian folk tales to my class.

1. One objective is to illustrate the difference between tales or myths and the short story as a specific genre. In so doing students focus on the criteria of the modern short story-- character development, plot/conflict, setting, point of view, and theme--in contrast to the looser structure of the tales.

2. Another objective is to introduce the concept of archetypes. Before the performance, distribute a handout on Jung's Theory of Archetypes and discuss the definition so that when students watch the performances they can look for similarities despite the cultural difference in the context of these tales. It also helps students see how the oral tradition of handing down literature affects the type of literature produced, whereas modern fiction comes from the written tradition.

3. After the performance, focus the discussion on these two aspects: differences in genre and similarities in themes. For example, "The Chinese Mirror" illustrates some of the same themes as "Rashomon," "Dream Children," and "Gimple the Fool" from the larger unit of the course dealing with subjective reality; or the similar theme on gender differences as found in "Monkey-dance, Sparrow-dance" and Thurber's "The Catbird Seat" and "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty."

This is a good opportunity for some team teaching and interdisciplinary exchanges - most stimulating.

## Annotated Bibliography

**OPTIONAL SELECTIONS: short stories, films, novels**

Any of these selections could be added to the course or used for individual projects by students. The more challenging pieces could be used for Honors Contracts. The films could be useful to students with certain disabilities such as dyslexia.

## JAPANESE LITERATURE

**Akutagawa Ryunosuke (1892-1927)**

1. "Kesa and Morito" - short story in Rashomon and Other Stories. Trans. Takashi Kojima; Intro by Howard Hibbett. Liveright Publishing, 1952.

A reinterpretation of a 13th century Japanese tale, about the affair between Lady Kesa and the soldier Morito. Two interior monologues are used to tell the macabre tale.

(Students would like this story; could be used along with "In a Grove" to teach point of view. Or along with Edgar Allan Poe's "The Cask of Amontillado" - both plots dealing with murder and evil.)

**Kawabata Yasanari (1899-1972)**

1. Snow Country -Perigee Books, Putnam 1956. Nobel prize-winning novel of an ill-fated love story beautifully written; visual imagery central to the theme.

Film version: Snow Country, directed by Shiro Toyoda starring Ryo Ikebe, Keido Kishi, and Kaoru Yachigusa. English subtitle version, East-West Classics, 1987. Captures in black and white the imagery of the novel; 134 minutes.

Film version gives a comprehensive view of the Japanese aesthetic - scenes are like paintings, tableaus, depicting kimonos, flowers, rooms at the country inn, views of the snow covered mountains.

A good analysis on the thematic and stylistic differences between the novel and the film version is by Keiko McDonald in Japanese Literature on Film (see bibliography.)

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2. Thousand Cranes, trans. Edward G. Seidensticker. Alfred A. Knopf, 1959.

Short novel that might easily be read with Nathaniel Hawthorne's "The Birthmark".

The tea ceremony is the backdrop for this novel and a short



film of the ceremony before students read the novel would be interesting and helpful.

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3. "The Grasshopper and the Bell Cricket" - short story (widely anthologized i.e. Fiction's Many Worlds by Heath). A fairy-tale quality on the theme of appearance v. reality, perceptions and expectations.

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4. "Up in a Tree" - short, short story in McGraw-Hill reader, Bridges: Literature across Cultures, 1994. The setting helps establish the theme concerning the restrictive roles of women and the resulting adult conflicts that two fourth graders try to escape for a time. A story of exploration and discovery.

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5. The Master of Go - novel. Trans. Edward G. Seidensticker. Alfred A. Knopf, 1972.

Entire novel centers on a single game of Go between the Master and his younger challenger, who represent different worlds--old Japan and new, tradition and change.

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### Mori Ogai (1862-1922)

1. The Wild Geese - novella. Trans. by Sanford Goldstein and Kingo Ochiai. Charles E. Tuttle, 1959.

The story of unfulfilled love, about a girl forced by poverty to become a moneylender's mistress during a time of great social change in Japan, 1880. Ogai provides us with a world full of students, matchmakers, shopkeepers, geishas, landladies, etc. A woman is trapped by family, position, economics yet yearns for freedom and to marry for love.

2. The Mistress - film version of The Wild Geese. 106 min. b&w; Japanese with English subtitles. Daiei Film Production, Embassy Home Entertainment, L.A. Calif 1986. Janus Collection. Orig. motion picture 1959.

Essentially the same thematically but with some embellishment of the plot at the end.

3. Sansho, the Bailiff - film of Ogai Mori story. 1954, b&w, 132 min. Produced by Daiei. Directed by Kenji Mizoguchi. Cast: Kinuyo Tanaka, Yoshiaki Hanayagi, Kyoko Kagawa, Eitaro Shindo, Akitake Kono, Chieko Naniwa. "Mizoguchi's retelling of a famous folkloric story focuses on the transfiguration of Zushio, who is forced to separate from his parents, struggles with feudalistic slavery at the sacrifice of his sister, but still

hopes for freedom and mercy in spite of his destiny."

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**Natsume Soseki (1867-1916)**

1. Kokoro - classic novel. Novel captures the major cultural conflicts of the Meiji period, carving out meaning in a changing world. Told primarily through interior monologue of ineffectiveness, feeling of helplessness, especially with women. (Would be difficult for most student; Honors project possibility).

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**Oe Kenzaburo (1935-**

1. A Personal Matter - psychological novel. Protagonist wrestles with the post-WW II world of Japan, a misshapen universe that he ultimately must join, symbolized by the birth of his misshapen child.

2. "The Catch" - long short story. With pervasive animal imagery Oe tells the story of a poor Japanese boy's relationship with an American airman who is imprisoned by the villagers during the final days of WW II.

(See discussion questions for this story in appendix.)

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**Murasaki Shikibu early 11th century**

The Tale of Genji. Trans Edward G. Seidensticker. Alfred Knopf 1976; Vintage Classics 1985, 1990.

The first novel (1010) and great classic romance of the life at court during the Heian period over 75 years of the life of Prince Genji.

See also the video in our library on Genji.

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**Tanizaki Junichiro (1886-1965)**

1. "The Tattooer" - short story in Seven Japanese Tales.

2. The Makioka Sisters - novel. Trans. E. Seidensticker, NY, Knopf, 1957; Also Tuttle 1983.

Often seen as the modern version of the Japanese classic The Tale of Genji.

3. The Makioka Sisters - film version. (see Notes)

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**Yukio Mishima (1925-1970)**

1. Spring Snow - novel. Trans. Michael Gallagher. Alfred A. Knopf, 1972.

Love story set in 1912 Tokyo. The aristocratic protagonist is caught in a world of change, his own paralysis and eventually his own passions. A classic beautifully written.

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FILM: The Burmese Harp. 1956, B&W, 116 Min. Produced by Nikkatsu. Directed by Kon Ichikawa, based on a story Michio Takeyama.

Set in Burma during the last days of WW II, the film is a humanistic dramatization of the odyssey of a young Japanese soldier who is separated from his company and comrades on a mission. Eventually, decides to stay in Burma as a Buddhist monk to console the spirits of dead soldiers.

Interesting to contrast the view of the Japanese soldier in this story and in the film Red Sorghum.

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#### CHINESE LITERATURE

Lu Hsun (1881-1936)

1. "The New Year's Sacrifice" - short story. Modern Chinese Stories and Novellas 1919-1949. Eds. Joseph S. M Lau, C. T. Hsia, Leo Ou-Fan Lee. Columbia Univ. Press, 1981.

A story about a downtrodden peasant woman forced to marry man she doesn't love; ultimately she loses both her husband and son and is forced to become a beggar, uncared for by society. Lu Hsun reveals his love and sympathy for the unfortunates in semi-feudal China prior to the communist revolution in a realistic, minimalist style.

2. Film version: The New Year's Sacrifice (library has video).

3. "My Old Home" - (same anthology as above). The writer returns from the city to his village to sell his furnishings now that his home is sold and encounters a childhood friend upon whom he sees the effects of the Chinese feudal system and the resulting poverty.

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Amy Tan

The Joy Luck Club - popular novel. "Two Kinds" chapter is widely anthologized.

The Kitchen God's Wife - popular novel.

Tan writes about the conflicts growing up as a Chinese-American. Most readable. Students could easily compare and contrast these stories with either Gloria Naylor's The Women of Brewster Place or R. A. Sasaki's The Loom and other Stories.

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FILM: Red Sorghum - Director Zhang Yimou tells the tale of a poor Chinese woman sold/married to a leper who eventually finds love but ends tragically when the Japanese invade the area.

(See Notes)

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McCunn, Ruthanne Lum

1. Thousand Pieces of Gold. - novel. Beacon Press, 1981.

This biographical novel is based on the life of Polly Bemis (nee Lalu Nathoy) who came from China in 1870s, sold by her family to a brothel, then a slave merchant bound for American, and auctioned to a saloon keeper. Despite her fate she struggles to achieve dignity and freedom in the American West.

2. Thousand Pieces of Gold - film version by American Playhouse Theatrical Films, starring Rosalind Chao and directed by Nancy Kelly.

KOREAN LITERATURE

Modern Korean Literature: an Anthology. Peter H. Lee ed.  
Univ. of Hawaii Press, 1990. Introduction has a  
overview of modern Korean fiction and is especially  
good on poetry.

1. "Potato" by Kim Tongin. Short story about a poor couple - a lazy husband and a wife who goes from a moral, traditional background to the new hedonism through prostitution, ending in her grotesque death, while the two men in her life, husband and the killer, exchange money in the end to keep her death quiet. Kim Tongin's characters try to create a utopia of dissipation and luxury, while disregarding morals and customs.
2. Poems of Han Yongun and the "nim" - beloved, king, God (object of one's love can be the nation, life, the Buddha or enlightenment.)

"The Silence of Love" is lovely. . . "I am deafened by  
love's fragrant words and blinded by love's  
blossoming face."

"A Ferryboat and a Traveler"

When you don't come, I wait from night to day,  
exposed to the wind, wet with snow and rain.

**CONNECTIONS:**

Suggestions to help students make personal and critical connections between stories are:

1. A critical paper comparing and contrasting one story from The Loom and one chapter from The Women of Brewster Place with one objective being to show cultural differences and similarities. For example, analyze the mother/daughter relationships in "Seattle" and "Kiswana Browne."
2. Contrast the attitudes toward death by the Japanese father and the American boyfriend in Sasaki's "Ohaka-Mairi" with those of the black family in Walker's "To Hell with Dying." For class discussion.
3. A journal entry might be: After illustrating the difference in aesthetic taste between Gracie and her father vs. sister Nancy and the mother from "Driving to Colma", describe your own aesthetic taste either in interior design or any of the arts.
4. World War II is the backdrop for "Suspect Alien" and "Wild Mushrooms", yet the two protagonists face being Japanese immigrants in different ways. Discuss these differences and what effect it has on their outcomes. Show SLIDES (from my field trip to Hiroshima) to enhance the discussion.
5. Or have students write a journal entry after discussing WW II with a participant, possibly a grandparent, to reveal attitudes toward the Japanese internment camps.

**MATERIALS:**

I have already listed the bibliographic information for all materials in previous pages of this module and in the annotated bibliographies.

1. Fiction: Stories and novels have all been listed and those not in our library collection have been ordered.
2. Films: a list of those in our St. Louis Community College Library and Video collection is in the Appendix. Those not in the collection have been ordered.
3. Slides: the Art Department at SLCC - Meramec has a large collection of Asian art slides, particularly Chinese and Japanese landscape painting.

Slides on Hiroshima and other places in Japan are in my personal collection and can be borrowed; just call me at 984-7557 or come to room CN 211.

**EVALUATION:** Pre-test and Post-test

Pre-test: Sample survey is in the appendix.

In previous pages I have used various forms of evaluation for the specific works under ASSIGNMENTS, STRATEGIES, and EVALUATION, such as pop quizzes, journal entries, and analytical essay papers. In many of these the topics give students opportunities to compare and contrast elements of fiction that show various cultural influences, a major objective of this curriculum module.

In addition a suggestion for a final essay exam topic could be:

In William Faulkner's Nobel Prize acceptance speech he writes of the struggles of mankind and how individuals will not merely endure but will prevail. Yet we have read stories where some characters neither endure nor prevail - some because of personal weaknesses, others because of an overwhelming social environment. Using examples from the Japanese as well as the American stories we have read analyze at least two characters who endure, two who do not, and two who prevail and any cultural conditions that shape their lives.

Organize your essay with an introduction, several unified, well-supported paragraphs with textual evidence, and a thoughtful conclusion.



**ADDITIONAL SOURCES:** (other bibliographies are in the Appendix)

Japanese Aesthetics and Culture: a Reader. Ed. Nancy G. Hume. State Univ. of New York Press, 1995.

A good starting point in understanding the Japanese way of looking at things. It is a collection of essays about Japanese aesthetics, literature, and culture. These are well-known and standard in the critical canon by Donald Keene, Thomas Rimer, Kenneth Yasuda, Makoto Ueda, Paul Varley and Roger Ames, for instance.

Keene, Donald. The Pleasures of Japanese Literature. Columbia University Press, 1988. Excellent introduction for beginning scholars of literature and Japanese aesthetics. Five chapters on Japanese Aesthetics, Japanese Poetry, The Uses of Japanese Poetry, Japanese Fiction, and Japanese Theater.

McDonald, Keiko and Thomas Rimer. Japanese Literature on Film.

A teaching guide published by Japan Society, New York; part of the series Japanese Society Through Film. (Films covered: Double Suicide, The Face of Another, Snow Country). Excellent teaching tool. Other guides available for Rashomon and The Burmese Harp.

Synopses of Contemporary Japanese Literature II, 1936-1955  
Compiled by Kokusai Bunka Shinkokai (Japan Cultural Society). Tokyo: General Printing Co., 1970.  
Short plot summaries as well as brief biographies of the authors.

Approaches to the Modern Japanese Novel. Kinya Tsuruta and Thomas E. Swann, eds. Tokyo: Sophia Univ. Press, 1976.

Richie, Donald and Joseph L. Anderson. The Japanese Film: Art and Industry. Foreward, Akiru Kurosawa. Princeton U. Press, 1982. Encyclopedia of Japanese Film to 1959.

Sullivan, Michael. The Arts of China.  
\_\_\_\_\_. The Birth of Landscape Painting in China. These two sources give an excellent foundation for integrating painting with the concepts often found in the literature - i.e., Confucian idea of harmony and balance, nature, heirarchy.

**APPENDIX**

This appendix has a variety of additional materials that might be useful to other instructors exploring Asian materials.

Included are a pre-test, notes, summaries, on some of the pieces used in this module as well as optional possibilities.

**EVALUATION: Pre-test survey**

1. List three Asian writers:
  
2. Who won the Nobel Prize for Literature for 1995?
  
3. Have you read any Japanese stories? Chinese? If so, list them.
  
4. List any Asian films you have seen.
  
5. Have you had any courses that included Eastern religion or philosophy? Explain.

NOTES - FILM Rashomon

Film - 1950, b&w, 88 min. Director, Akira Kurosawa. Based on a story by Ryunosuke Akutagawa "In a Bush (Grove, Woods)". Cast: Toshiro Mifune, Masayuki Mori, Michiko Kyo, Takashi Shimura, Minoru Chiaki. English subtitled version: 1988 Janus Films, Embassy Home Entertainment distributor.

Set in 12th-century Japan, a mystery murder told from four different points of view.

Setting: Under the Rashomon gate in Kyoto, it is raining - the gate is half destroyed; it is a time of disasters, fire, earthquakes, bandits. . . dismal scene. Three men seek shelter at the gate - a priest, a woodcutter, and a commoner. "I don't understand it" says the woodcutter, thus setting up the theme of "where does truth lie"?

A man has been killed and his wife raped.

Woodcutter tells the first version:

Walking through the forest, he looks up and sees leaves, shadows, sunlight, and then the hat of the woman. Farther he finds an amulet, then some rope and finally the body of the dead man. He runs and tells the police what he found. He testifies directly to the audience.

Next the priest tells his version that three days ago he saw the woman and man as they went through the forest (the woodcutter is sitting in the background).

Another witness, a police agent, testifies he was walking along the river and found the bandit who had the arrows and bow of the dead man and brought the bandit here to police.

Bandit's version: admits killing the man but does it as a samurai hero would. . . sees the woman veiled at first, then unveiled and wants her. Thinks she's an angel. Will kill for her. He keeps swatting gnats all the while. He leads her into the forest on the pretense of showing her some swords, etc. and ties her up; then he comes back to get the woman and show how he has humiliated her husband. She tries to stab him, not an angel after all. They struggle and she succumbs; she returns his advances. She says one of them must die, even though he had no longer intended to kill her. Unties husband and they sword fight to the death as two fierce samurai.

Wife's story: she tells of her strength and virtue. She testifies with the other two in the background. Says the bandit took advantage of her; feels sorry for her husband. Yet her husband condemned her for having been raped. She unties him and says to kill her rather than condemn her; she faints and when she awoke he was dead, stabbed with a dagger in

the chest. She runs through the forest to a pond and throws herself in but fails at the attempted suicide.

Dead man's version told through a medium: She testifies with the others in the background. After the bandit raped the wife he tries to talk her into leaving with him because he loves her. She says she will go with the bandit and they start to leave but she makes the bandit go back and kill the husband, which shocks the bandit and will kill her if the husband wants it so; she runs away and the bandit pursues her; bandit returns without her, unties the husband, sister she got away and might talk; bandit leaves; the husband hears someone crying and in despair sees the dagger and kills himself. Someone came by and drew the dagger out.

At the gate the woodcutter says not true; he was killed by a sword, not a dagger. The commoner says he lies and probably stole the dagger.

Woodcutter's version II; Hears a woman crying and sees the bandit and wife together. He wants her to marry him, on his knees. He'll even stop being a bandit and work to make her happy, anything to please her. Or he'll kill her; she unties the husband for the two men to fight for her; husband refuses to fight for her; calls her a shameless whore and she should kill herself; gives her to the bandit, regretting the loss of his horse more. Enraged she confronts the cowardice in both men, calls it a farce, both are weak; neither is a real man worthy of a woman's love. She laughs and mocks them as they pull their swords. They fight and bandit kills husband. Frightened, she refuses to go with the bandit and runs away.

At the gate, the commoner says he doesn't believe it; all men lie. The Priest optimist doesn't want to hear of the horrors men do.

They all hear a baby crying and the commoner steals his blankets; the woodcutter pushes him away; the commoner rationalizes someone else would take them; woodcutter says he's evil, selfish; but the commoner says survival of fittest only way to live. They struggle; commoner/thief confronts him saying even the woodcutter lied to the police. Who took the pearl-handled dagger? implying he too is selfish and like all other men, as he laughs and walks away into the rain, leaving the priest holding the baby and the woodcutter stunned at the realization of himself. Rain stops and as an act of atonement he wants to take the baby and raise it with his own 6 children; the priest's faith in man is restored and gives the baby to the woodcutter; they bow and woodcutter walks through the gate and into the sunlight with new life in his arms.

Remarkable film.

**NOTES - Film Burmese Harp**

1956, b&w, 16 min. Directed Kon Ichikawa based on a story by Michio Takeyama. 1988 Janus Films. Part of the series "Self and Society" in Japan: Module IV, by Japan Society. Japanese Society Through Film.

July 1945 a Japanese company of soldiers is marching across Burma to Thailand. The soil is red, so are the rocks across the country - scenes of the soil and the bleak setting.

The Co. leader studied music and asks one of the soldiers Mizushima to play his Burmese harp; he does and they all sing a lovely song of a pilgrim's journey & nostalgia for his home. It helps the co. get thru their suffering & struggles. M, the harp player, has never studied but plays from the heart & composes.

He is sent out on a scouting mission dressed as a Burmese; the harp will be used to signal the all clear or danger signal.

He goes off and encounters natives & signals the all clear. He is held up & his clothes stolen. They get to a village & they feed them. Can't see the Himalayas from here - the home of our soul, says the elder. Villagers sing & entertain them, welcome them. They leave unexpectedly, with the Japanese wondering. They sing to show they are not suspicious & prepare to leave. (afraid the British are near).

Frightened but still singing they move the powder boxes to a safe place. They hear singing echoed by singing from the dark & then they come walking & singing back; M. says they are not our enemies. and plays his harp to their song. "There's no place like home . . ."

War ended 3 days before they gave up their arms. Realize they have surrendered.; J. has been bombed; homeland ruined; must wait their fate now as prisoners heroically; if fate lets them go home they will work for the reconstruction.

Poverty of village. In the mts. one J. unit is holding out & the British want someone to go talk them into surrender. M. goes - 200 miles- while the others go to the prison camp. M. takes his harp .

He gets to the mt. & is told he only has 30 min. to persuade them; will be bombed out then. Brit. officer wishes him success.

J. shoot at him at first as he scales the cliff. The leader says no, it would be cowardly; lets the men decide; time running out; they will fight to the last. He goes to ask for more time & they call him a coward; he ties a white flag to his harp but they prevent him from doing it; bombing begins. M is trapped with the unit & shot. The unit is massacred; scenes of death but M. arises

with his harp still. He Falls down the cliff leaving the harp in the cave.

At Mudon, the prison camp, the others wait for him; POW camp scenes miserable. But they are treated fairly well by the British but must work.

A woman comes to trade sweets, fruit - broom, bamboo flute. socks; they want her to find out about M.

The villagers come to see them & sing with them. Buddhist priest comes & throws fruit for them over the fence but they return it.

They see a monk on the rd. who looks like Mizushima; rains come & they run for shelter.; find the old woman's house. She tells them they all died; she has bird like the priest's brother; the one who looked like M. Leader wants to buy her last parrot; bird is smart learns Burmese & Japanese.; they feel M. has died with the others.

In the mts. at the B. shrine we see M. being taken care of by a monk. He says Burma is Buddha's country; makes no difference if the British or the Japanese come; whatever you do is useless.

While the monk is bathing, M. steals his clothes & leaves for the camp; shaves his head; walks barefoot over the rocks; prays on knees "God, I'm hungry" & is found & fed by three peasants who think he's a monk; tell him the way to Mudon & bow. They give him what little they have.

Days pass, long journey - he finds Jap. cartridges; vulture flies by & he sees the valley of the dead with vultures picking at the bodies. He cremates the bodies of some but can't do all; salutes & departs as the vultures caw.

Finds another dead soldier & a photo of his family. Salutes moves on thru jungles & marshes. More hideous scenes of dead bodies; hides face & runs by horrified; sees boat coming toward him; monk who says many dead in Burma are unburied; gives him a ride to Mudon, but the monk does not go with him.

At the POW camp at night he arrives with the parrot on his shoulder but goes to a monastery instead for the night. Hears a harp in the night & sees a beggar boy playing there's no place like home; British give him money if he plays that song for them. British hospital workers (nuns) sing hymns for another dead Japanese; he & the boy go to the cemetery to hear them & are moved; unknown warrior; nuns & priest say Amen. crosses are everywhere; M. enters the cemetery, returns to the monastery; but doesn't go to the camp. Scenes of all the dead he's seen passes before us. He leaves in the opposite direction & that is when he passes his company on the road but does not acknowledge them. Decides not to return to Japan.

He goes back to the river's edge to bury the corpses while the peasants watch him. & then join him. He finds a burmese ruby on one & they say it must be the spirit of the dead.

Beautiful shrines at the great temple are shown with the Jap. company working there. Hear the harp; identify the way it's played; beggar boy has been taught to play as M. did. But they are called back to the prison line.

In the temple sq. British soldiers & Jap. soldiers stand to attention while the monks go by & they identify M. carrying a box.

The J. soldiers teach the parrot to say, "Mizashima let's go home together." At night the parrot says it. Leader can't forget it & must know if he is Mi. says the one monk was carrying the only box, a box of ashes, a J. custom. The other J. soldiers want him to forget it, as it makes them homesick even more.

In the British Repository for the ashes of the dead the J. leader finds the box & talks to the box, what happened in the mts. sympathizes with M. & his decision to be a monk (M. is in the shadows crying) while the leader salutes the box, opens it & finds the red ruby. Leaves.

Leader leads the company singing amidst the beautiful shrines & flowers. M. hears them, he has the box. M. plays the harp & they hear it coming from inside the sleeping Buddha. He recognizes their voices as they call for someone to open the shrine; they are led away he sees them through the hole in the shrine. He buries the box with the ruby.

Night scene with people lighting many candles at the shrine. The company learns it is going home in 3 days; the parrot says M. come home with us. They decide to call him one more time by singing in hopes M. will hear them; at the barbed wire fence. Old woman comes along congratulates them & wishes them luck. They want to give her things to remember them by & will tell their mothers of her. - Nippon woman.; says she will give their parrot to the priest if she sees them. He has become a much revered travelling priest.

M. is outside the fence with the two parrots, the boy & the harp. They sing to him for signs of recognition.. "no place like home" boy plays the harp & then the priest plays for them, making them happy & they sing even louder.

Then he plays the song of farewell to them bows & leaves disappears into the mist of the trees.

Old woman brings them fruit as presents for their departure. And the parrot who says No I can't go back with you, the one that was the priest's. Also an envelop for the leader but he says he'll read it later. They form ranks & leave as the British & the villagers watch. The red earth of the yard is shown;

They look out from the ship at Burma as little boats float by. Capt. reads the letter.

He will miss them and Japan but asks himself - Why this tragedy?



men will never know the answer, but we must relieve the world of suffering; stay to pray for the souls of the dead; only then will her return for J. Maybe not; parrot is with him to remind him of them & home. He will be a penitent wanderer & when he thinks of them he will take up his harp. And pray for them.

Later the men talk of what they'll do when they get home. . .  
.Down in Burma soil is red, so are rocks. We see M. wandering among the rocks.

NOTES - film, Sansho, the Bailiff

The film is based on an Ogai Mori story; the setting is medieval Japan.

The father of the aristocratic family is exiled as a revolutionary, the mother is sold and taken to an island to be a courtesan, and the brother and sister are captured by bandits and sold to Sansho, who is unsympathetic, cruel & says, "Don't show them any sympathy. Make them work hard," even they are young children. (The bailiff is like an overseer for the Lord of the region, Kyoto).

Before the family is separated, the wise and kind father give an amulet, a statue of the goddess of mercy to the son Zushio with the advice "Without mercy, man is like abreast. Be sympathetic to others. Everyone is entitled to happiness. Be kind to your sister."

At the bailiff's the boy is separated from the sister; he is shown no mercy by the other slaves, but she is shown kindness by the other women slaves.

Bailiff tortures a woman slave who tried to escape by branding her forehead. His son Master Taro, however, sympathizes with the two children and gives them new names, and rice cakes. We see him leave his father's home by the gate. Later he has become a Buddhist priest.

Ten years pass, now the boy is 23 and the girl 18. Another slave, a 70-yr.old man, tries to escape and is branded this time by the brother. Sister feels remorse for his actions. She has learned that the mother is a courtesan in Sado, alive after hearing a song from a new slave that uses the names of the brother & sister in it.

Scene changes to Sado where the mother, now enslaved as a courtesan, tries to escape & her overseer has the tendons in her feet cut so she can't run away again.

Back at the bailiff's Anju, the sister reprimands Zuchio and he throws off the father's amulet from his neck and takes on the bailiff's philosophy of survival of fittest.

Meanwhile one of the slaves is abandoned alive in the forest to die; Anju begs for mercy. The kind women & Anju tie the amulet of mercy around her. She and her brother have been given the job of disposing of her but cannot leave her to die without shelter & begin cutting branches to make a shelter. They reenact a similar scene from their happy childhood and the brother begins his regeneration with Anju's help. Anju tells his to escape with the woman while she distracts the guard thus sacrificing herself for her brother's escape. He goes with the woman on his back.

Anju is to be punished but an old woman guard has mercy on her & helps her escape before they brand her. Anju is seen walking into a lake, committing suicide in her despair.

Brother escapes to Buddhist temple where Taro is a monk, a place of temporary safety. Taro tells his story of going to Kyoto to tell the Lord of the cruelty of men but to no avail & retreats to the temple life. Brother still must try to change the system & goes to Kyoto with a letter from Taro & his amulet for safety & identification. At first he is rejected but the Lord is given the amulet by the guards and he hears the petition off Zushio. This Lord is kind, knew of Zushio's father, tells that he died in exile.

Lord appoints him as the minister of the region where Sansho is the Bailiff but tells him he can't free the slaves because it is not government land but private. Zushio visits his father's tomb first as the dutiful son. He asks who brings all the flowers & is told that the peasants do; father had sympathy for them, taught them the 3 r's and noble morality.

Then Z. becomes the minister of the region. He is quick to post a decree to free all slaves even though he would lose his position. He and his guards burn the bailiff's place and liberates all the slaves in the province. He asks forgiveness from the old man he had branded. Looks for the sister; old woman who freed her tells of her death; he goes to the lake and thanks Anju for her faith in rejuvenating him.

He resigns as governor of the province & seeks his mother, is told she was killed 2 yrs. ago by a tidal wave. He goes there & finds her; she doesn't believe he is her son; shows her the amulet, tells of husband's & daughter's death.

He chose father's teaching over keeping his position & asks her forgiveness. They embrace.

Themes: What happens to order & harmony when cruelty, slavery, and those in authority do not care for those below. Confucian concept of hierarchy & responsibility of those in control. Natural order destroyed; balance, order returns with right actions - sympathy, mercy.

Larger theme: soul's search for freedom (similar to The Wild Geese)

**STRATEGY, ASSIGNMENTS, AND EVALUATION FOR:****Ogai Mori's The Wild Geese and film  
Sansho, the Bailiff**

An interdisciplinary unit stressing the Confucian concept of hierarchy, order, balance vs. lack of order, disharmony, unmerciful superiors would be an interesting approach.

The role of women and the heroine's victimization by socio-economic forces could also be introduced. What happens to women outside the traditional role of wife and mother?

Instructors could add various Chinese landscape paintings, such as Wei Hsien's "A Noble Scholar", Kuan Tung's "Travellers at the Mountain Pass", and Kuo Hsi's "Early Spring." Also some excerpts from the Analects the The Tao Tse Ching.

\*See notes on Ogai's Sansho, the Bailiff.

1. Start with the paintings to establish the Confucian ideal of harmony.
2. Then view and discuss the film Sansho, the Bailiff.  
(see notes)
3. Finally have students read and discuss the novella The Wild Geese.

- how does the novella depict life in 1880 Japan? student life? old people? geishas?
- contrast the wife and Otama, physically and morally
- contrast the relationship between Otama and her father with that of Suezo and his wife
- what is the significance of the birds, the cage and the snake?
- what does the wild goose represent and why is it that Okada is the one to kill it?
- does the desire for freedom transcend differences in cultural backgrounds?

**EVALUATION:**

Write a critical paper illustrating the Confucian ideal and what happens when disorder and misuse of power takes over in Sansho and The Wild Geese. Is order reestablished in the novella and the film? Be sure to contrast the endings.

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR Oe's "The Catch":**

1. The idea of shame is mentioned over and over. Describe the actions that result in feelings of shame by the boy and others. How does shame differ from guilt?
2. List the various uses of animal imagery in the story. Does a pattern emerge? What is the symbolic significance of the images? the boar trap? his nickname "Frog"?
3. What is the boy's relationship to his brother? to his father? In what ways are the Harelip and the younger brother the same? different?
4. What is the significance of the sledding incident?
5. How does Oe use the color "black" as well as light and dark imagery to enhance his theme?

AN OUTLINE OF THE HISTORY OF

KOREAN LITERATURE

*Prepared for*

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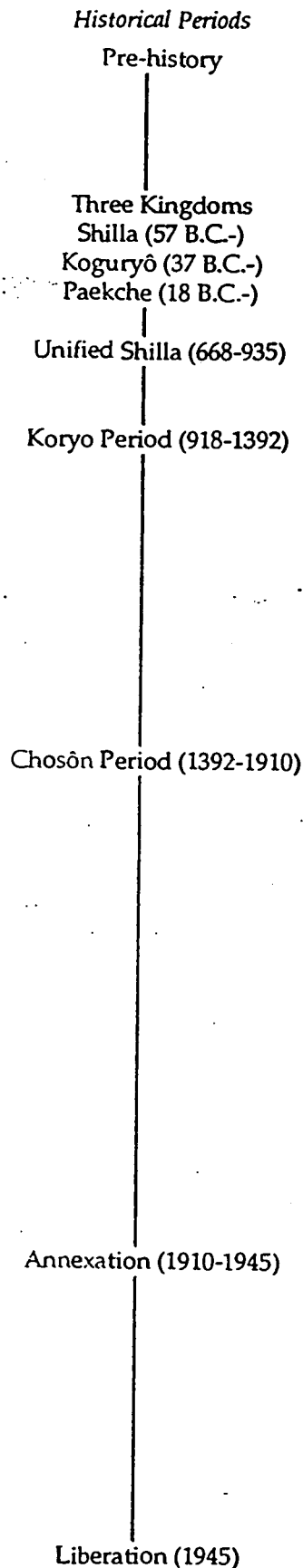
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## Korean History and Literature



### *Six Periods of Korean Literature*

- I. Primeval Literature  
Primitive language arts
- II. Ancient Literature (Neolithic and Bronze Ages)  
National foundation myths
- III. Early Medieval Literature (57 B.C.-1216)
  - A. Three Kingdoms (0-935)  
Chinese poetry, *hanshi*  
Korean poetry, *hyangga*  
Oral literature
  - B. Early Koryô (918-1216)  
Late *hyangga* by Priest Kyunyô
- IV. Late Medieval Literature (1216-1600)
  - A. Late Koryô (1216-1392)  
Academic-style poetry  
Essays and story collections in Chinese  
Poetry in Chinese  
Popular lyrics and court entertainment
  - B. Early Chosôn (1392-1600)  
Korean alphabet, *hangûl*  
Odes and translation project  
Brief *shijo* poetry  
Discursive *kasa* poetry
- V. Transition From Medieval to Modern (1600-1919)
  - A. Late Chosôn (1600-1860)  
*Tale of Hong Kil-tong*  
Mask dance drama  
Shaman Songs and P'ansori Narratives
  - B. 1860 to 1919  
Popular Religious Writing  
Modern Theatrical Productions  
Newspaper Fiction
- VI. Modern Literature
  - A. 1919 to 1945  
New Realism  
Early Masters  
Escapist Writing
  - B. 1945 to 1991  
Early Liberation Stories  
Rise of New Generation  
Industrialization and Literature

# Historical Survey of Korean Literature

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## I.

**Primeval Flickerings.** Korean literature, like any literature, began before human beings had devised any way to record their speech. It was oral before it was written and reaches back to the origins of the earliest cultures that rose on the Korean peninsula. We have no evidence to suggest the nature of this primeval period and can only surmise that it began with song sung while hunting or farming or simple oral literature like stories about daily life.

## II.

**Ancient Literature of Neolithic and Bronze Age.** The appearance of foundation myths, the introduction of Chinese writing and the growth of writing in Chinese, and the emergence of *hyangga* poetry mark the beginning of the ancient period. When the states were first taking shape, early rulers created myths and narrative poetry about the founding of their nations in order to assert their superiority and to establish a basis for civil order. When Chinese writing was first introduced, therefore, it was used to record a history which consisted of foundation myths. Then, as myths or narrative poems about nation-founding lost their function in the early medieval period, literature proper in Chinese took hold.

## III.

**Early Medieval Literature (57 B.C.-1216).** The beginning of the early medieval period is associated with literature written in Chinese—Chinese poetry in particular. This Chinese poetry co-existed with *hyangga*, a native poetry which borrowed Chinese characters to record Korean songs (Koreans had no script of their own until 1446). The

first *hyangga*, "Song of the Comet," was composed at the end of the sixth century and the form flourished through the end of the Shilla period (57 B.C.-935). Then, after being used extensively by the priest-poet Kyunyô in the tenth century, it gradually faded. One can find only glimpses of the declining *hyangga* in such poems as the twelfth century "Eulogy for Two Generals" and "Song of Chông Kwajông."

Oral literature continued to be as vigorous as ever even during the early medieval period, when recorded literature began. With nation-founding narrative poetry already a thing of the past, folksongs received attention in the written tradition when incorporated by the *hyangga* tradition. In addition to emerging Buddhist tales, we can note popular tales such as those that dealt with relationships between people of different social classes. While Chinese was widely used for government record-keeping and the teaching of Buddhism, it also played a crucial role as a means of self-expression for individual scholar-officials. While the Shilla state was ruled by a hereditary royal class, the principal bearers of literature were highly-ranked, non-royal nobility who made their way in life as scribes making both practical and artistic use of writing. They strived in particular to mold both Chinese verse and native *hyangga* into an expressive lyric poetry.

## IV.

**Late Medieval Literature (1216-1600).** Academic-style poetry of the Koryô period (918-1392) heralded the arrival of the late medieval period. The first acknowledged work in the academic style, "Song of the Scholars," was composed in about 1216. The



academic style continued to be productive through the end of the sixteenth century, marking the furthest extent of the late medieval period. The bearers of literature in this period were a group who later became known as the "newly rising literati." They had originally served as functionaries in local government but then, on the occasion of the revolt of military officials in 1170, they began to emerge in central political circles and, later, went on to assume leadership roles in the formation of the Chosôn government (1392-1910) in the fifteenth century. While literature in Chinese was already in its heyday in late Koryô, Korean accomplishment at a level comparable to the Chinese, themselves, was handsomely demonstrated through the compilation in 1478 of the 154-volume *Anthology of Korean Writing*. Although poetry by Koreans in the Chinese *zu* and *ju* forms had nothing new to offer, we should emphasize that Korean poets of this period could hold their own in the area of Chinese *shi* poetry. Didactic fiction, such as the pseudo biography and dream adventure, went beyond its original instructive mission and showed evidence of opening up fertile areas for creative work.

One of the most notable achievements of the late medieval period occurred in the middle of the fifteenth century when a board of Korean scholars, under royal charge, carried out the first pre-modern phonemic analysis of a language and, on that basis, created an alphabet of symbols based upon the shapes of the human organs of articulation as appropriate to each sound. The existence of that alphabet, called *hangûl* today, altered the historical course of Korean literature. Starting in 1446, when the script was promulgated, Koreans embarked on a massive program of translation into Korean of major portions of the Confucian and Buddhist Chinese canon. In addition, lengthy Confucian and Buddhist odes were composed by the scholarly elite and a multi-volume prose biography of the historical Buddha, Sakyamuni, was composed by the crown prince. Since it was now possible for the first time in Korean history to record the sounds of the Korean language exactly as uttered, literati took advantage of this opportunity to record the texts of their orally-per-

formed poetry—the brief, three-line *shijo* and the longer, discursive *kasa*.

## V.

**Transitional Period (1600-1919).** Korean-language fiction, which is said to have begun with the *Tale of Hong Kil-tong* of about 1610, came into its own in the seventeenth century and played an important role in changes in the literary genre system. With the emergence of fiction, narrative literature in prose came to have a much greater relative importance. Prior to this there had not existed literary works that, being easily read and enjoyed, circulated widely as items of commerce but, starting with the seventeenth century, literature gives evidence of acquiring some fundamental similarity with the literature of today. The appearance of lengthy narrative *shijo*, as distinct from the standard, three-line lyric *shijo*, constituted another noteworthy change that emerged in the literary genre system.

The transitional period, furthermore, was also an age of oral literature. To begin with, a major change occurred from within oral literature, itself. Two very obvious examples of this are mask drama and oral narrative. Although the origins of mask drama must go exceedingly far back, the form gained a foothold in the city during this period, when it developed into a large-scale popular attraction. The secular oral narrative, called *p'ansori*, which was then making its first appearance, should be noted for giving voice to contemporary social issues and exerting a decisive influence on fiction written in Korean. Literature written in Chinese, on the other hand, did not relax its faithful advocacy of traditional norms.

Although we can easily identify the bearers of literature in earlier periods, it becomes a difficult to be so brief and explicit for the transitional period. To begin with, it is necessary to take note of a popular awakening and a questioning of the medieval ruling system. The bourgeoisie had a decisive role to play in grasping the trends of these times and in producing a unique literature for this period. Emerging as a considerable force behind the scenes of society, the bourgeoisie stimulated a movement in literature away from didactic writing meant to in-

struct and toward a commercial literature meant to entertain. But members of the bourgeoisie of this period—unlike their modern counterparts—were not a leading force in the society because they did not develop to the point where they could serve as bearers for the whole of literature.

The transitional period can be divided into two parts, with the second part beginning in about 1860. This second part saw Ch'oe Che-u's "seditious" 1863 collection of *kasá* poetry, a growth of popular awareness, the decisive emergence of the bourgeoisie, and direct expression in literature of dissatisfaction with the medieval ruling system. On the other hand, a modern national consciousness was taking shape as a broad range of citizens sought to protect their country from foreign encroachment. Although there appeared in the opening decades of the twentieth century such "enlightenment" literature as the new novel, new form poetry, and new wave drama, this did not mark the end of the transitional period.

#### VI.

Modern Literature (1919-). The modern period dates from 1919 and the early 1920s. Decisive changes come to literature in the course of the new literature movement that rose at that time. First of all, literature in Chinese, forced from its central position and reduced to a fragment of its earlier self, was now thought to lack significance as literature for the new age. In this process, the scope of literature was redefined as including only literature based on the spoken language, and its written style was expected to accord with the dictum, "identity of the spoken and the written." A wholesale change arose in the genre system as well. The age-old juxtaposition of didactic and lyric poetry disappeared and literature assumed the modern three-part organization of lyric poetry, fiction, and drama.

The liquidation of literature in Chinese and of didactic literature signaled the end of literature by the traditional literati. More than just the discontinuation of literati writing resulted from the abolition of the hereditary status system. When the ideology of the literati was discredited, the bourgeoisie naturally dropped their servile attitude and

made an effort to produce their own unique, now modern, literature.

#### Recommended Readings

Eckert, Carter et al. *Korea Old and New, A History*. Seoul: Ilchokak for Korea Institute, Harvard University, 1990. Most recent Korea history text. Earlier chapters based on Ki-baik Lee's *New History of Korea*. Sections commencing in late 19th and 20th century especially good with original analysis.

Kang, Sôk-kyông, Kim Chi-wôn, O Chông-hui. *Words of Farewell: Stories by Korean Women Writers*, tr. Bruce and Ju-Chan Fulton. Seattle: The Seal Press, 1989. Excellent translation of three outstanding contemporary Korean writers who display a wide range of style and storytelling techniques. Gives insights into contemporary Korean life.

Kim, Han-Kyo. *Studies on Korea: A Scholar's Guide*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1980. Bibliographic essays with an accompanying comprehensive, annotated bibliography of articles and monographs on Korean history, culture, language, literature, politics, economics and society.

Lee, Peter. *Anthology of Korean Literature: From Early Times to the Nineteenth Century*. Honolulu: The University Press of Hawaii, 1981. Wide-ranging survey of representative works of traditional Korean literature, with introductory commentary.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Modern Korean Literature*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1990. An anthology of 20th century Korean short stories and poetry; translated from Korean by Korean and American translators.

McCann, David. R. *Black Crane: An Anthology of Korean Literature I & II*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977 & 1980. Translations of traditional and contemporary Korean literature.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Form and Freedom in Korean Poetry*. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1988. The first English treatment of Korean prosody from a

modern perspective, this work liberates its reader from antiquated notions that had earlier dominated the field outside Korea.

\_\_\_\_\_. tr. *Selected Poems of So Chongju*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989.

The work of a significant modern Korean poet rendered into English by an accomplished American poet.

Pai, Inez Kong. *The Ever White Mountain: Korean Lyrics in the Classical Sijo Form*. Rutland, Vt.; Tuttle, 1965. A popular collection of Choson *sijo* verse, providing a poetic view into the warmth of traditional Korean culture and personality.

✓ Pihl, Marshall R. ed. *Listening to Korea: A Korean Anthology*. New York: Praeger, 1973. Translations of essays and short stories on themes and events in Korea's recent past, providing social and cultural insights.

\_\_\_\_\_. tr. *The Good People: Korean Stories by Oh Yong-su*. Hong Kong: Heinemann Asia, 1985. An anthology of heart-warming short stories by a master of the craft who flourished in the 1950s to 1970s.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Korean Singer of Tales*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, forthcoming. A study of the Korean oral narrative, *p'ansori*, and of its performers. A full and annotated translation of an original text of the "Tale of Shim Ch'ong" is appended.

Rutt, Richard. *The Bamboo Grove: An Introduction to Sijo*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971. The major collection of the brief *shijo* form—gathered, annotated, and introduced by the Western pioneer in *shijo* studies.



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