

Japanese Studies course descriptions 2020-21

Part IB (second year)

Students take the following:

Compulsory courses:	J.4 Modern Japanese 2 J.5 Modern Japanese Texts 2 J.6 Japanese History J.O Japanese Oral
Option 1:	One of the following courses: J.7 Literary Japanese J.8 Japanese Literature J.9 Japanese Society [Not offered 2020-21] J.10 Japanese Politics
Option 2:	One of the following courses: J.7 Literary Japanese J.8 Japanese Literature J.9 Japanese Society [Not offered 2020-21] J.10 Japanese Politics C.7 History of dynastic China* C.8 Globalization in China* AMES.1 Cinema East X.3 Structures and meanings

For descriptions of the Chinese Studies courses marked with * please see the second year Chinese Studies course descriptions.

Descriptions

J.4 Modern Japanese 2 (Dr Kawabata, Mrs Boulding)

Supplementary Regulation

The main aims of this course are that students: (a) acquire the ability to understand intermediate written and spoken Japanese; (b) acquire the ability to express themselves in Japanese in a limited range of topics; (c) increase competence in written skills.

Course Description

The main aims of this course are that students: (a) acquire the ability to understand intermediate written and spoken Japanese; (b) acquire the ability to handle oral communication effectively to express themselves in Japanese in a limited range of topics; (c) increase competence in written skills.

Lectures and Classes

Taught in Michaelmas, Lent and Easter

Total of 92 language classes and 20 hours of supervisions

Form and Conduct

This paper consists of four sections: section A tests candidates' kanji knowledge and ability to translate Japanese into English; section B requires candidates to answer questions that test their knowledge of Japanese grammar; section C contains a passage for translation into Japanese; section D requires candidates to write a composition in Japanese.

J.5 Modern Japanese Texts 2 (Dr Moretti, Mr Tso)

Supplementary Regulation

Reading selected contemporary Japanese literary and non-literary texts, with attention to style and content, the aim being to gain proficiency in reading, pronouncing, translating, and interpreting modern prose.

Course Description

This paper is designed for second-year students and exposes them to a wide range of real-world texts in Japanese, written in a variety of styles on diverse topics. Classes expose you to two main activities.

1. Close reading and translation of texts in a variety of genres.
2. Fast reading of long passages from beginning to end and reading comprehension in English.

The paper as a whole trains you in reading a variety of Japanese texts in an independent manner.

The learning outcomes for the course are as follows:

1. Gain proficiency in reading a variety of unedited, real-world texts.
2. Gain some proficiency in translating from Japanese to English.
3. Develop techniques to read long passages with a view to grasp the meaning.
4. Consolidate and expand grammar knowledge.
5. Think about Japanese culture, language, and society from a Japanese perspective.

All classes take the form of seminars, but the teaching style will change over the course of the three terms to allow a gradual learning progress. Students are expected to come to class have read the primary sources and having done the necessary preparations (translation and/or reading comprehension). In Easter Term students will work on a project-based activity, working in groups to translate one or multiple short stories from 20th century Japanese literature.

Lectures and Classes

Taught for 20 weeks over Michaelmas, Lent and Easter terms.

Total of 40 classes. Number of supervisions to be confirmed.

Form and Conduct

This paper consists of three sections. In section A (35%) candidates will be required to translate from Japanese to English from unseen text. In section B (35%) candidates will be required to answer comprehension questions in English on unseen text. In section C (30%) candidates will be required to translate from Japanese into English one out of two passages taken from texts covered during the year.

J.6 Japanese History (Dr Batts)

Borrowed by Part II History students as their Paper 18.

Supplementary Regulation

This paper explores a variety of narratives and approaches to understanding Japan's history. Topics will include power politics, religions and ideologies, gender, warfare, and modernity, as well as Japan's place in the world.

Course Description

J6 offers a critical survey of Japan's history from its early beginnings to the present with a broad focus on political, intellectual and social history. For Michaelmas, we will cover Japan's classical, medieval and early modern eras, up to the 1850s, whereas Lent Term will be devoted to Japan's modern age (1850s to the present). This course is split into two meetings a week - one lecture and one seminar. Through the lectures, students will be offered narratives based on the latest research, which frequently challenges conventional wisdom. It is therefore important that students attend all lectures, engage with the material covered and stay active in class.

Lectures and Classes

Taught in Michaelmas and Lent

Total of 16 lectures, 16 seminars and supervisions.

Form and Conduct

This paper is assessed by a thirty-minute viva voce examination in Easter Term, and a portfolio of two essays to be selected by the students from among the paper's three written assignments. Two hard copies and one electronic copy (pdf) of each essay shall be submitted to the Programmes Administrator in the Faculty Office at the division of Easter Term.

The viva will cover the full range of material addressed in lectures and seminars from Michaelmas and Lent Terms.

The essay portfolio will constitute 50% of the final grade and the viva will constitute 50%.

J.O Japanese Oral (Dr Kawabata, Mrs Boulding)

The oral examination consists of three parts. All oral tests will be recorded.

Supervisions: see under J.4

Form and Conduct

The examination will contain three sections:

- (a) Listening comprehension: candidates are asked to listen to recorded passages in Japanese and answer questions in English and/or in Japanese.
- (b) Reading: candidates prepare a short text and then read it aloud to the examiners.
- (c) Role play.

Optional courses

J.7 Literary Japanese (Dr Moretti)

Supplementary Regulation

An introduction to the grammar of literary, pre-modern Japanese, followed by readings of simple prose and poetry. Some essay work on aspects of classical literature is also required.

Course Description

This is an introduction to the world of pre-modern and early-modern written Japanese. We shall read a variety of primary sources, starting from the Edo period (graphic prose, humorous prose, didactic prose) and going backwards through the Muromachi period (otogizōshi), the Kamakura period (Tsurezuregusa and Hōjōki) to the Heian period (Ise monogatari and/or Genji monogatari and waka poetry). Students will gain an in-depth knowledge of Japanese classical grammar that will allow them to read any text produced up to the 1910s, while developing an understanding of pre-Meiji culture and literature (both learned and popular). Students will be also trained in translating literary texts into English and have a chance to practice translation from classical Japanese into contemporary Japanese. This will help improve modern Japanese at the same time as learning pre-modern and early-modern Japanese.

Lectures and Classes

This course meets regularly for a total of 16 weeks (8 each in Michaelmas & Lent terms) with 3 hours per week. The classes are taught in seminar format and all students are expected to attend seminars regularly and prepare the analysis of the texts and their translation in advance. Sessions to practice working on unseen texts will be scheduled in each term.

Taught in Michaelmas and Lent

Total of 48 classes and 6 supervisions

Form and Conduct

This paper is assessed by two coursework assignments, to be handed in on the first Tuesday of Lent and Easter Terms respectively, and a viva voce examination to be conducted online at the end of Easter Term. Each coursework assignment will consist of translating unseen pre-modern texts, contextualising them within their cultural context, and delineating the translation strategies. The length of the contextualisation should be around 1,000 words. The first assignment also involves the analysis of selected grammar patterns. For the first assignment, the text(s) will be announced on the first day (Thursday) of the sixth week of Michaelmas Term. For the second assignment the text(s) will be announced on the first day (Thursday) of the sixth week of Lent Term. In the viva students will be asked to translate and discuss the classical grammar of one or multiple seen texts as well as to work on an unseen text. The unseen text will be accessible on Moodle one hour before the viva time. The coursework assignments will together constitute 60% of the final grade and the viva will constitute 40%.

J.8 Japanese Literature (Dr Moretti, Dr Young)

Supplementary Regulation

This paper is a survey of Japanese literature. By reading a wide selection of primary sources in English translation, students will learn about authors, genres, texts, and themes that populate Japanese literary culture.

Course Description

This syllabus presents an opportunity for students to read a fascinating range of canonical and lesser-studied works of Japanese literature in English translation. It follows a chronological order, with MT covering pre-modern literature from its origins to the mid-19th century and LT moving from the advent of the 'modern novel' in the Meiji era to very contemporary texts. The close reading of primary sources will be complemented by secondary readings and lectures that help to familiarize students with the historical and cultural context of the selected texts.

Our aims are as follows:

- 1) Gain insight into the chronological development of Japanese literature based on selected key Japanese literary works (in English translation) from within and beyond the canon.
- 2) Learn to read and situate these literary works within the historical, social, political, and cultural contexts that inform them.
- 3) Learn to read and discuss literary works critically by drawing on relevant concepts and theories.
- 4) Challenge the canon by paying attention to celebrated works as well as texts that challenge the dominant perceptions of specific writers, periods, genres, etc. You are encouraged to reflect upon a) how and why a literary canon is fixed in a certain way and b) how close analysis might equip us to affirm, challenge and deconstruct that canon in meaningful ways.
- 5) Challenge received views of what is literature and what makes texts "literary".
- 6) Explore Japanese literature not from a Eurocentric point of view.
- 7) Develop communication skills through in-class discussions and presentations. The benefits of seminars include: a) providing a non-judgmental space in which to test out/rehearse tentative ideas; b) being interactive, dialogic, and therefore a lot of fun!; c) encouraging students to work collaboratively in assembling thoughts and receiving immediate feedback; and d) helping students to develop valuable transferable skills such as critical discussion and public speaking.
- 8) Cultivating good writing and research skills by preparing for timed essays under exam conditions as well as providing training for developing longer essays on texts and topics of your choosing.

Lectures and Classes

The course will be taught in two weekly sessions for a total of 16 weeks (8 each in Michaelmas & Lent terms). Sessions will comprise participatory lectures and seminars. Students may be asked on occasion to lead seminars and make presentations based on the weekly readings that should stimulate discussions about the literary texts and the issues that they raise.

Taught in Michaelmas and Lent (final supervision at the beginning of Easter Term)

Total of 32 participatory lectures and seminars, plus 6 supervisions

Form and Conduct

The coursework that constitutes this paper's assessment will consist of two essays, each of 3,000 words including footnotes and excluding bibliography. One essay will focus on the topics and contents covered in Michaelmas Term and the other on the topics and contents covered in Lent Term. Each student will develop the topics of their two essays in consultation with the respective instructors. Two hard copies and one electronic copy (pdf) of the research essay shall be submitted to the Programmes Administrator in the Faculty Office so as to arrive not later than the division of Full Easter Term by 5pm. At the end of

Easter Term, a viva voce examination will take place online. In the viva each candidate will answer questions about the contents covered in class in both terms. The coursework assignments will each constitute 40% of the final grade and the viva will constitute 20%.

J.9 Japanese Society [Not offered 2020-21]

Borrowed by Social Anthropology students.

J.10 Japanese Politics (Dr Nilsson-Wright)

Supplementary Regulation

An introduction to post-1945 Japanese politics examining Japan's political parties and institutions from a comparative perspective. In considering the distinctiveness of the Japanese political system, it addresses a number of central issues including Japan's economic growth, central-local government relations, the legal system, and the politics of defence and foreign policy. The paper pays particular attention to the nature of domestic political change since the mid 1990s as well as the economic and security policy challenges for a country that is increasingly active both globally and regionally. In analysing Japan's politics comparatively, the paper also addresses the issues of authorization and democratization in Korea, Korea's post-1945 political economy, and the security aspects of the Korean peninsula.

Course Description

Topic for 2020-21: Japanese and Korean Politics.

Lectures and Classes

Taught in Michaelmas and Lent

Total of 12 to 14 participatory lectures, seminars and 4 supervisions

Form and Conduct

This paper will contain ten essay questions. Candidates will be required to attempt three.

AMES.1 Cinema East (Dr Peleg, Dr Young et al)

Supplementary Regulation

This course provides students with the opportunity to explore the film traditions of East Asia and the Middle East through a number of possible themes, including modernity, identity and nation, and genre. These broad concerns encompass common themes of comparative significance, such as gender, city and countryside, love, marriage, and family and violence and are expressed in genres such as melodrama.

Course Description

Cinema was the major globalizing cultural medium of 20th-century modernity, at once transnational and yet deeply embedded in the lived experience of particular societies. East Asian and Middle Eastern countries have developed indigenous and independent film industries since the very early days of cinema, and film has played an important role in the cultural imagination of the different modern nations. The importance of cinema has, if anything, increased in this new century of the internet and a wide area of electronic means of conveying, storing, consuming (and stealing) moving images. All have combined to significantly broaden access to film and film culture for individuals and audiences around the world. Apart from being a subject of study in its own right, film can be an invaluable adjunct to the study of literature and history. It can offer a window on social reality and visual culture, and, like literature, can pose new questions or offer new perspectives. Finally, although this is not a language-based course, it can offer as by-product a record of living

voices exercising the widest range of linguistic expression for students working with films from the area of their specialisation.

This course provides students with the opportunity to explore the film traditions of East Asia and the Middle East through a number of possible themes, including modernity, identity and nation, and genre. These broad concerns encompass common themes of comparative significance, such as gender, city and countryside, love, marriage, and family and violence and are expressed in genres such as melodrama. Students will be given access to a range of interesting classic and less well-known films while developing the skills and vocabulary to perform good cinematic analysis. Secondary readings and lectures will help to familiarise students with the historical, social, political and cultural contexts behind each film and thus deepen their understanding and appreciation for the films discussed.

Lectures and Classes

The course will be taught in weekly sessions for a total of 16 weeks (8 each in Michaelmas & Lent terms). Sessions will comprise participatory lectures and seminars, with some content provided in a pre-recorded form. Students may be asked on occasion to lead seminars and make presentations based on the weekly readings that should stimulate discussions about the films viewed and issues that they raise. Each student will also write a minimum of two essays each term. Feedback on these will be given in supervisions or in group discussions.

Taught in Michaelmas and Lent (final supervisions may be held at the beginning of Easter Term)

Total of 16 participatory lectures and seminars, plus 4 supervisions.

Form and Conduct

The examination paper will consist of ten questions divided between two sections. Candidates will be required to attempt three questions in total, including at least one from each section.

X.3 Structures and meanings (Paper Li.2 from the Modern and Medieval Languages Tripos)

For details consult the Faculty of Modern and Medieval Languages and Linguistics www.mml.cam.ac.uk

Places on this course are limited. To book a place on the course contact the Undergraduate Programmes Administrator (ug_progadmin@cam.ac.uk)