

JPTR 321/521
M•W 6:00-7:15 pm
Cabell Hall 340

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The Tale of Genji

The World's First Psychological Novel

The *Tale of Genji* is considered to be one of the supreme achievements of Japanese literature. Written by a court woman in tenth century Japan, the work has been hailed both for its literary value as a sophisticated psychological drama and for its historical importance as a detailed portrait of life in Heian era Japan. Its style was held up as the ideal of courtly elegance and the stories within inspired adaptation and reinterpretation by generations of later writers in genres as disparate as the vulgar gesaku fiction and the refined nô drama. In this class we will read the *Tale of Genji* in its entirety, and also examine its influence and read later works inspired by the work. We will explore the cultural climate of the Heian period and examine the importance of the tale both in its own time and to later generations.

This course makes extensive use of the University of Virginia's online Toolkit, both to distribute additional readings and as a forum for submitting and responding to reaction papers. Access Toolkit at <http://toolkit.itc.virginia.edu>, and login using your University of Virginia UserID and password. The Toolkit interface is fairly straightforward, but if you have no experience using the system or are uncomfortable using computers, let me know immediately so we can help you get started. Becoming comfortable using Toolkit is vital to your success in this course.

Evaluation will be on the basis of class attendance and participation, online reaction papers and responses, a final exam, and a 7-10 page final paper.

Attendance and Participation	25%
Six Online Reaction Papers	30%
Ten Online Responses	20%
Final Exam	15%
Final Paper	10%

* Note: For those students taking the course as 521, the requirements will be slightly different. See me after class for details.

Most important, both to your grade and to the success of the class, is keeping up on the readings and being ready to discuss them. For each day's readings, select at least one quote from the text and come to class ready to discuss its significance and your reasons for choosing it. Throughout the semester you will also be required to post reaction papers and responses to the Toolkit online discussion group. A reaction paper should be 1-2 pages long and should articulate your reaction to that day's readings. It does not need to

be a formal argumentative essay, but it should be more than simply personal musings or opinions. It is intended to give your interpretation of the material in light of the issues we discuss in class, and should show an active engagement with the text. Reaction papers must be posted online **by 9:00 pm the day before** the class in which the readings are to be discussed, in order to give me and your fellow students time to read them before class. Late reaction papers are useless to fostering discussion and will not be accepted. Six of these papers are required over the course of the semester and you may choose the readings to which you wish to respond, but you may not write more than one in a single week. These reaction papers are considered a part of the required readings for all students, and you should make a point of reading them, and perhaps writing an online response, before coming to class. The online responses are less formal than the reaction papers and should respond not only to the text itself, but to other students' reaction papers. There is no set length for these responses, but they should show a willingness to engage with other students' ideas rather than relying only on one's own interpretation. A minimum of ten of these responses are required over the course of the semester, but you are encouraged to write more if you like.

There are two required texts for this course. The first, Royall Tyler's translation of *The Tale of Genji*, is available now in the bookstore. The second, Enchi Fumiko's *Masks*, will not be needed until the end of the semester, and will be made available in the bookstore by that time. Over the course of the semester, there will also be various additional readings made available as pdf files on Toolkit. Though not required, the following works may also be useful in providing background and context for your reading:

Ivan Morris, *The World of the Shining Prince*

Richard Bowring, *Murasaki Shikibu: The Tale of Genji* (a student guide)

A more complete list of *Genji*-related works is available on Toolkit. As the course progresses, there will be in-class presentations on some of these works, and they may be useful in writing the final paper. A list of possible paper topics will also be posted to Toolkit later in the semester.

It should go without saying that plagiarism is a serious offense and will not be tolerated. There is a link to the UVA Honor Policy on Toolkit, and it is assumed that all assignments are bound by that policy.

Course Schedule

•Week one•

Wednesday, September 1st Introduction, Course Syllabus

•Week two•

Monday, September 6th Labor Day – No Class

Wednesday, September 8th

Readings: Ivan Morris, *The World of the Shining Prince* (online)
ch I-II (pp. 17-55)
Richard Bowring, *Murasaki Shikibu: The Tale of Genji* (online)
“The cultural background” pp. 1-21
Genji introduction (pp. xi-xxix)
ch.1 (pp. 1-18)

•Week three•

Monday, September 13th

Readings: *Genji* ch. 2-3 (pp. 19- 52)

Wednesday, September 15th

Readings: *Genji* ch. 4-5 (pp. 53-109)

•Week four•

Monday, September 20th

Readings: *Genji* ch. 6-8 (pp. 111-161)

Wednesday, September 22nd

Readings: *Genji* ch. 9-11 (pp. 163-225)

•Week five•

Monday, September 27th Interlude – The *Genji* and *nô* drama
Readings: Janet Goff, *Noh Drama and The Tale of Genji* (online)
“Hajitomi” and “Yûgao” pp. 102-119
“Aoi no ue” and “Nonomiya” pp. 125-145

Wednesday, September 29th
Readings: *Genji* ch. 12-13 (pp. 227-277)

•Week six•

Monday, October 4th
Readings: *Genji* ch. 14-18 (pp. 279-344)

Wednesday, October 6th
Readings: *Genji* ch. 19-21 (pp. 345-404)

•Week seven•

Monday, October 11th Reading Holiday – No Class

Wednesday, October 13th
Readings: *Genji* ch. 22-26 (pp. 405-478)

•Week eight•

Monday, October 18th
Readings: *Genji* ch. 27-30 (pp. 479-522)

Wednesday, October 20th
Readings: *Genji* ch. 31-33 (pp. 523-574)

•Week nine•

Monday, October 25th
Readings: *Genji* ch. 34-35 (pp. 575-671)

Wednesday, October 27th
Readings: *Genji* ch. 36-38 (pp. 673-716)

•Week ten•

Monday, November 1st

Readings: *Genji* ch. 39-41 (pp. 717-779)

Wednesday, November 3rd Interlude – reception of the *Genji*

Readings: Ivan Morris, trans., *As I Crossed a Bridge of Dreams* (online)
ch. 1, 3 pp. 31, 44-49

Richard Bowring, *Murasaki Shikibu: The Tale of Genji* (online)
“Impact, influence and reception” pp. 76-95

Janet Goff, *Noh Drama and The Tale of Genji* (online)
“Praying for Genji” pp. 198-209

Haruo Shirane, *Early Modern Japanese Literature* (online)
“Seven Essays on Murasaki Shikibu,” pp. 360-362

“The Essence of the Tale of Genji,” pp. 618-622

“The Tale of Genji, a Small Jewelled Comb,” pp. 622-625

•Week eleven•

Monday, November 8th

Readings: *Genji* ch. 42-44 (pp. 783-825)

Wednesday, November 10th

Readings: *Genji* ch. 45-46 (pp. 827-867)

•Week twelve•

Monday, November 15th

Readings: *Genji* ch. 47-48 (pp. 869-926)

Wednesday, November 17th

Readings: *Genji* ch. 49 (pp. 927-971)

•Week thirteen•

Monday, November 22nd

Readings: *Genji* ch. 50-51 (pp. 973-1044)

Wednesday, November 24th

Thanksgiving Holiday – No Class

•Week fourteen•

Monday, November 29th

Readings: *Genji* ch. 52-54 (pp. 1045-1120)

Wednesday, December 1st Modern interpretations – *manga* and *anime*

Readings: Waki Yamato, *Asaki yume mishi* (online)

In class: Viewing *The Tale of Genji* animated film

•Week fifteen•

Monday, December 6th Modern interpretations – novels inspired by *Genji*

Readings: Enchi Fumiko's *Masks*

Wednesday, December 8th Modern interpretations – the *Tale of Genji* opera

Readings: Colin Graham, *The Tale of Genji* libretto (online)

In class: General review for final exam

Final Exam TBA

Final Paper due date TBA