

Final Exam

In-Class Exam (Thursday, May 9)

1) Kanji & Vocabulary (20) 20

At-Home Exam (Tuesday, May 14)

Please email your answers in a word document by 11:59 pm, May 14.

I will email this word document to you. Please use this as a base to answer questions. For essay questions, Japanese is preferred. However, English is accepted.

2) Match-up on the Japanese literary history. (2x17=34) 34

Please find most relevant keywords for the writers below.

100/100

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Writers	Keywords	Writers	Keywords
ださいちきよ 太宰治	K.	こばやしきよじ 小林多喜二	H.
なかしまあつし 中島敦	B.	みつしまゆきお 三島由紀夫	P.
ひらゆき 平塚らいてう	C.	おおいけんざぶろう 大江健三郎	M.
たにざまじゆんいちろう 谷崎潤一郎	O.	はらたみき 原民喜	N.
せんぞう 梁石日	J.	しがなおや 志賀直哉	L.
あくたがわりゅうのすけ 芥川龍之介	I.	いふせますじ 井伏鱒二	E.
はやしふみこ 林芙美子	G.	かわばたやすなり 川端康成	D.
なかがみけんじ 中上健次	Q.	あべこうぼう 安部公房	A.
つしまゆうこ 津島佑子	F.		

- A. 『砂の女』 B. パラオ C. 「元始、女性は太陽であった。」 D. 『雪国』 E. 『黒い雨』
 F. 太宰治の娘 G. 『浮雲』 H. 『蟹工船』 I. 新現実主義 J. 在日コリアン K. 『人間失格』
 L. 白樺派 M. 1994年ノーベル文学賞 N. 被爆者 O. 『痴人の愛』 P. 楯の会 Q. 被差別部落

3) A short essay on haiku (10) 10

Choose one haiku from what we studied in class. You write a short essay on what is about and how you think about it. The required length for the essay is one to two paragraph(s).

Your choice of haiku: 正岡子規- さらさらと 竹に音あり 夜の雪

Essay:

The haiku by Masaoka Shiki that discusses the sound of snow falling from bamboo stalks at night seems to convey a lonely and pensive tone. Masaoka Shiki suffered from tuberculosis most of his life, and because of this, would have spent time alone when he was very ill. The haiku clearly takes place in winter because of the reference to snow falling. Winter may have been a lonelier time for Masaoka because of his illness. The haiku feels as if someone who is stuck in bed is sitting listening to the snow falling, only to realize that periodically, when the bamboo gets too weighed down, a large amount of snow falls at once, slightly louder than the rest of the snow fall. If he was sick, he probably would have been unable to connect with people the way that others could and would have been left to his own thoughts frequently. The sound of heavier snowfall could also have stirred a person who was deep in thought and unable to sleep, so the sound of snow falling heavier during a quiet night may also cause them to think about their situation. Someone who spent much of their time alone due to illness may realize too, that despite the strength of bamboo, it too cannot take the weight of snow and the winter season also causes it extra strain. The haiku is telling of Masaoka's life and the loneliness that he would have faced when he was ill and lost in thoughts.

4) A short essay on poetry (10) 10

Choose one poetry from what we studied in class. You write a short essay on what is about and how you think about it. The required length for the essay is one to two paragraphs(s).

Your choice of poetry: 与謝野晶子-君死にたまふことなかれ

Essay:

Yosano Akiko's poem, "Don't Lay Down Your Life," discusses her unhappiness towards her brothers desire to fight in the Russo- Japanese War. She discusses that the emperor is not fighting in the war and that dying for the emperor is pointless. She attacks many of the promoted ideas at the time regarding the war and what should be expected of a man who is able to fight in the war. Her directly discussing that the emperor is not fighting in the war himself is one of the stronger parts of the poem. Often, when writing about why going to war is wrong, people do not discuss the fact that the person who declared war is not fighting it themselves, and she does. She also brings up the emperor not fighting during a period of national myth building, regarding the idea that the emperor is the descendant of Amaterasu and that gives him his right to rule. By challenging why, the emperor himself is not fighting in this war, she is also bringing it to attention that a man who is supposed to be a bridge between the divine and the ordinary is unwilling to fight in a war he claims is righteous. This challenging of ideas is continued when she discusses what her brother fighting is doing to their family.

Yosano talks about the effects that her brother fighting in the war is having on their family and the way that she does this further dismantles the positives ideals surrounding the war. She discusses that her mother is going grey and that the stress of him being gone is difficult for his recently married wife.

The argument against the idea that her brothers fighting would bring honor to her family, and that they would be simply proud to have him at war, is challenged here. The ideas promoted during the war about how fighting for the emperor should be valued is dispelled when clearly her family is suffering from the situation. Similarly, the description of her mother and her brother's wife having to hide their unhappiness about his fighting shows that others whose family members left to fight may have been supporting the war in public but not necessarily while they were alone. The inability to show a dissatisfaction with the war, and the effects that it had in the lives of those whose family went to fight, is also a challenge to the idea that everyone supported the war and believed that it was a righteous and justified war. Yosano's whole poem is a dismantling of the justifications for the war, as well as the reality that those who fought in the war, or were connected to it, somehow faced.

5) A short essay on 『夕鶴』 (10) 10

Compare the folklore 『鶴の恩返し』, which you watched in class, with Kinoshita's 『夕鶴』 and describe the differences between the two. The YouTube link to 『鶴の恩返し』 is posted on iLearn under Kinoshita's 『夕鶴』 . You are required to write at least one paragraph.

Essay:

Kinoshita's play differs from the folklore tale in several ways. Kinoshita's play focuses on a man who has married a woman who asks to be his wife and overall is not very hardworking. The folk tale is about two older people who let a young woman stay with them because she has nowhere else to go. The older couple work hard, and in the story, they take caring for the young woman very seriously.

Kinoshita's play highlights that the woman who comes to live with the man as his wife does most of the work. There are also bandits who grow jealous of the wealth that the woman is producing for her new husband and try to find a way to steal what she is producing. The bandits ultimately are the reason that the man ends up seeing that his new wife is actually a crane. In the folktale the older couple discover the young woman is a crane because they want to peek at her weaving the materials that she has been giving them to sell. In both stories the young woman comes to live with the people because they save her from being hunted and she uses her own feathers to weave the fine items that support the people that save her. The biggest difference is that in the Kinoshita play, the wife is slowly killing herself by weaving the materials for the man to sell. She also suffers because she feels that the man is not capable of understanding her or loving her. The folktale is less focused on what the repercussions of the crane woman helping the older couple is, and more on the ways that the older couple needed her help and earned it. Kinoshita's play looks at the repercussions for the crane woman and how she suffers from trying to help the person who saved her, as well as the way that living in a world that expects her to give and compromise constantly can cause harm.

6) A summary of 『^{はくじょう}薄情くじら』 (10) 10

Write a summary of the story. It should consist of two parts: 1) a brief summary of the story (1 paragraph) and 2) historical backgrounds that we discussed in class and/or you find (1 paragraph).

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In the story the main character is a man who gets a vacation from his job and starts to relive his childhood. He sees the ways that his daughter and wife live their lives and starts to remember aspects of his childhood that make him feel that his family does not understand him. His wife and daughter do not try and reuse everything that they have and, in his eyes, are wasteful and spoiled. He remembers that his mother growing up would never throw anything away and would reuse everything that she could. These comparisons remind him of the whale meat that him and his mother would eat, which was considered poorer people meat. The whale meat was the only time that his mother would talk about his father who abandoned them when he was young, and he enjoys the meat because it is a connection to his father in an indirect way, as well. He tries to find the whale meat so that his family could eat the meat and relive that part of his childhood. He buys whale meat in Kyoto but does not know how to cook it. One day a nurse shows up to tell him that his father had been in a nursing home and passed away. The nurse had found pictures of the main character from his childhood and with his mother's handwriting on the back saying where he worked. The main character realizes that his mother and father were still in contact, even though his mother talked like she was not. The nurse tells him that not long before his father passed away he asked for the whale meat and the nurse had prepared it for him. The main character feels relieved to know that his father also liked the whale meat and ends the story feeling hopeful.

The story takes place during the bubble economy in Japan. Because of this, his family has different views on money than the main character does. The main character grew up following World

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War II and he also had a single mother. What was already an economically difficult time for the country would have been even worse for a single mother, and this heavily shaped the ways that he sees money. The man's family though, sees money during the 1980's as expendable because during this time it would have been more readily available. They also value eating more western style foods because that is what would have been popular during that time. They are shaped by the environment that they are living in, while the main character is stuck in the past. When the man and his daughter discuss eating the whale meat this is equally obvious. The daughter sees the practice as bad because the whales were in decline and there were other meats that they could eat without hurting the whales, while her father sees the whale as an essential part of his life. The mother and daughter also see activities such as ballroom dancing as fun and cool, while the father sees it as awkward and inappropriate. This divide in ideals comes up almost every time that the father and his family interact with each other. This feeling of separation that the man feels is only remedied when he talks to the nurse who understands his connection to the whale meat and to more traditional ways of living life. The whale meat in the story could also be emblematic of the intervention by the United States. During World War II and afterwards, the U.S. made life difficult for the Japanese people, and then after they entered the country, they ended certain traditional practices that were important to the people. Later the U.S. would play a part in ending the whale hunting in Japan. The family is often shown partaking in a more western lifestyle, and the

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division between that part of the country that accepted these changes and the part that wanted to hold onto traditional lifestyles, like the main character, is highlighted.

7) Reflections on class (6) 6

Write what you learned throughout class in one paragraph.

Throughout the class I learned how to look up words and kanji that I would not have previously been able to find. I feel much more confident looking up kanji and recognizing radicals to look up kanji online. I also learned some new phrases that I did not realize that the Japanese language had. I also learned how different the Japanese writing style is to the American way of telling stories. There are different kinds of references that are made in Japanese writing than in American writing. A lot of different mythologies get referenced, as well as seasonal references that are very different in the U.S. than in Japan. There also is a lot of literature that discusses certain historical and environmental events that are not mentioned in literature outside of Japan. The discussions about the triple disaster in Japan and the different ways that different writers talked about what happened is also seen in discussions about other earthquakes that occurred in Japanese history. The ways that Japanese writers discuss natural disasters is also different from the U.S. because there is often some kind of animal in that story versus in the U.S. which focuses solely on people suffering through the disasters. There are also a lot of references to a divide between an older more traditional way of seeing the events around them and a more contemporary mindset that could be seen in some of the poems that we read about World War II. The

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class allowed for me to feel more comfortable approaching a story that is written in Japanese and understanding the references that are made, as well as being able to understand how to look up parts of the story that are confusing.