



This is an abridged sample syllabus. Information is subject to change. Full syllabus will be distributed to registered students when term begins.

ASIA_V 453 - Japanese Travel Literature

Christina Laffin

This course will build on students' knowledge about Japan to deepen our understanding of travel culture before the modern period (before the late nineteenth century) while practicing skills in research, writing, and presentation. We will read literary and historiographical accounts of travel and examine maps related to journeys.

We begin by interpreting poems about travel and considering these within Nitobe Memorial Garden, then examine travel diaries from the ninth through thirteenth centuries. We then turn to popular works about real and imagined travel from the seventeenth century onward and end by studying Japanese maps in the UBC Library's Rare Books and Special Collections.

Mode of Delivery: In Person

Sample Readings

Heldt, Gustav, trans. "Tosa nikki: Translation and Text." In *Navigating Narratives Tsurayuki's Tosa Diary as History and Fiction*. Harvard University Press, 2024.

Matsuo Bashō's *Narrow Road to the Far North* (Oku no hosomichi おくのほそ道, 1694)—read and shared through multiple translations.

Drake, Chris, trans. "The Modern Life of Shidōken." In *Early Modern Japanese Literature: An Anthology, 1600–1900*, edited by Haruo Shirane. Columbia University Press, 2002.

Assignments

Quizzes|20

Discussion|15

Material culture activities|20

Group comparative translation presentation|10

Map preparation interview and presentation|20

Map write-up|15