

Classical Japanese: Language, Text and Context 2 (A005128)

Course size (nominal values; actual values may depend on programme)

Credits 6.0

Study time 180 h

Course offerings and teaching methods in academic year 2026-2027

A (semester 2)

English

Gent

peer teaching

independent work

Lecturers in academic year 2026-2027

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LW21

lecturer-in-charge

Offered in the following programmes in 2026-2027

Master of Science in Teaching in Languages(main subject Oriental Languages and Cultures)

crdts

6

offering

A

Master of Arts in Oriental Languages and Cultures(main subject Japan)

6

A

Exchange Programme Oriental Languages and Cultures

6

A

Teaching languages

English

Keywords

Classical Japanese, classical Sino-Japanese (*kanbun*), Japanese history and society, gender and women's history, religions, politics, economics, everyday life

Position of the course

This specialized course discusses the varieties of premodern Japanese language, such as *bungo*, *kanbun*, *man'yōgana* and *kuzushiji*, on the basis of historical texts and primary sources dating from pre-1900 Japan as well as secondary scholarship. Each year's course is based on a selection of particular texts and research questions, linked to the materials discussed in other courses. Research results are discussed in class. Students also analyse a topic of their choice in small groups and present their results in class.

This course meets the following learning outcomes: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, LWDC 2.2, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 4.3, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.5

Contents

This course focuses on reading Japanese primary sources which cast light on the lives of women as historical actors and decision-makers, particularly, in the context of religion, politics, and everyday life. A selection of passages written primarily in *bungo* and *kanbun* and (less so) in *man'yōgana* and *kuzushiji* and ranging from early mythohistories and ritual codes to Buddhist scriptures, poems, medieval court records and woodblock printed books, will be used to reconstruct and investigate the ideological frames which made major impacts on the lives of both women and men in premodern Japan. Many of these texts seem to observe women from outside, telling them "how to be." However, a closer analysis will point to overlooked historical details and women's persisting positions, dilemmas, and agency in Japanese history. The course will therefore discuss a variety of premodern texts with emphasis on gender, religion, and culture in class. In addition to these major themes, students will also select additional topics which they will discuss individually or in small groups. These results will be presented in class, as a part of individual oral examination.

Initial competences

The course 'Classical Japanese: Language, text and context' requires a thorough knowledge of 'Classical Japanese (BA 3 level), and a good knowledge of the

Japanese history, literature as well as East Asian religions/philosophy.

Final competences

- 1 To be able to translate, analyze and interpret Classical Japanese texts.
- 2 To be able to conduct research on the basis of primary sources.
- 3 To be able to relate primary sources to a historical, religious-philosophical, social and cultural framework.
- 4 To be able to use academic secondary literature.
- 5 To be able to report on research results in a critical and academic way.

Conditions for credit contract

Access to this course unit via a credit contract is determined after successful competences assessment

Conditions for exam contract

This course unit cannot be taken via an exam contract

Teaching methods

Group work, Seminar, Independent work, Peer teaching

Extra information on the teaching methods

Classical texts are interactively related to previously acquired knowledge, and are discussed on the basis of scientific studies. Students are intensively involved, and receive guidance for the interpretation of primary and secondary sources. Individually or in small groups a so-called student class is prepared which has to be presented to the entire group during the semester. There are no class recordings; teacher's lecture PowerPoint slides are provided.

Study material

Type: Handouts

Name: Text samples, handouts, articles, book chapters, images, provided by teacher and freely downloaded from Ufora

Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty

Optional: no

Language : English

Available on Ufora : Yes

Online Available : Yes

Available in the Library : Yes

Additional information: Tekstvoorbeelden, hand-outs, artikelen, hoofdstukken uit boeken, afbeeldingen, aangeleverd door de docent en gratis te downloaden van Ufora Text samples, handouts, articles, book chapters, images, provided by teacher and freely downloaded from Ufora

References

Course content-related study coaching

Discussions in class provide a constant feedback. The presentation can be discussed with the lecturer during the course of the semester.

Assessment moments

end-of-term and continuous assessment

Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the first examination period

Written assessment with open-ended questions

Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the second examination period

Written assessment with open-ended questions

Examination methods in case of permanent assessment

Participation, Presentation

Possibilities of retake in case of permanent assessment

examination during the second examination period is possible in modified form

Extra information on the examination methods

The written examination focuses on studied and not studied text passages, as well as on knowledge and interpretation of these texts within the historical, philosophical, religious, cultural and sociological context of Japan.

Calculation of the examination mark

Written examination (60%)

Permanent evaluation (40%)

In case one does not participate in one or more parts of the evaluation, one cannot pass the examination. If the average final score in that case totals 10/20 or more, the score will be reduced to the highest non-pass score (= 9).

Facilities for Working Students

Facilities:

- 1 Student attendance during educational activities is required
- 2 Possible rescheduling of the examination to a different time in the same academic year
- 3 Feedback can be given during an appointment during and after office hours

Extra information:

For more information concerning flexible learning: contact the monitoring service of the Faculty of Arts and philosophy