

EARLY JAPANESE HISTORY THROUGH LITERATURE

Coordinator: Susan Goldman

As early as the 10th century, Japan enjoyed a flourishing and vibrant culture, expressed in the arts and in unparalleled literary masterpieces, which are as readable today as they were a thousand years ago. The study group examines these major works from earliest times to 1100, set against a detailed examination of historical events. Starting with the creation myths and court poetry, we move to Pillow book and the Tale of Genji, fascinating narratives that contrast the world of the court. Historical information is presented by the coordinator and through supplementary readings. This study group was previously presented two years ago.

Readings and other Required Materials:

Coursepack, approximately \$40.00

Susan Goldman, after spending a decade in Japan, founded the Japanese Information Sciences Project at NYU and designed the three-year Japanese language curriculum. She has coordinated three study groups on modern Japanese society and early Japanese literature.

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Introduction to Japanese history and literature

The Kojiki - A Record of Ancient Matters

Fudoki - Records of Wind and Earth

The Maon'yōshū - A Collection of Myriad Leaves, and other early poetry

Tosa Nikki - The Tosa Diary

Ise Monogatari - Tales of Ise

Makura no Sōshi - The Pillow Book

Genji Monogatari - The Tale of Genji

Tsutsumi Chūnagon Monogatari - Tales of the Riverside Middle Counselor

Sarashina Nikki - As I crossed the Bridge of Dreams -

The Diary of Lady Sarashina

Tsurezuregusa - Essays in Idleness

Summing Up