LANG 3570: Narrative Ethics in Asian Literature and Film
TTR 12:00 – 1:15 pm, Engineering 206, Dr. Li Guo. (li.guo@usu.edu)
Office: TTR 8:00-8:50am, Main 073

Course Description:
What is narrative ethics? Briefly, narrative ethics “explores the intersections between the domain of stories and storytelling and that of moral values.”¹ Ethics endows us a choice and a challenge to think, judge, and act as narrators, authors, characters or audience in critical interpretation of narrative texts. In the Asian context narrative ethics provides us a critical lens in reflecting on thematic concepts, such as personal and social identity, traditional and modern aesthetics, individual moral beliefs, democracy and freedom, communal and social pursuits. We will discuss historical, thematic, societal and economical contexts of key literary texts and probe into questions such as: How do traditional philosophical and ethical systems for living influence people’s perceptions of the world? How does the process of modernization reveal man’s experience of social and religious conflict, and the balance between personal sacrifice and societal loss? How do traditional, modern and contemporary Asian literatures collectively help us understand globalization in a more nuanced and contextualized form?

Course Goals:
- To achieve in-depth understandings of narrative ethics in Asian contexts, by reading and interpreting excerpts from folklore, fiction, sci-fi, fantasy, diaspora literature, internet poetry and film.
- Through a range of national and cultural perspectives, to develop recognition of the social historical discourses that unified and distinguishes the countries and diverse cultures compromising Asia.
- To acquire skills in conducting undergraduate research projects on Asian literature, culture and film effectively using library resources, to prepare research projects with proper citation and style.
- To expand an integrated understanding of Asia across national, regional and ideological boundaries, and assess identity, nationhood, and agency for specific gendered, racial and ethnic groups of Asian heritage or connection.

Course Goals Corresponding to IDEA Evaluation:
- 5. Acquiring skills in working with others as a member of a team
- 7. Gaining a broader understanding and appreciation of intellectual/cultural activity (music, science, literature, etc.)
- 8. Developing skill in expressing myself orally or in writing

Textbooks:

Course requirements:
- Attendance, 5%
- Active participation, 5%
- Classroom etiquette, 2%
- 1 paired oral presentation, 8%
- 1 paired teaching demo, 10%
- 10 reading posts (150 words each), 20%
- 3 essays, 15% each, 45%
- 1 final, 5%

Language: Because of the broad cultural contexts of the literature selected in this course, the course will be taught in English. Students are not required to know an Asian language. Literary texts in the original language, however, will be provided as supplementary materials for those who may be interested in conducting a comparative study of the original text and the English translation.

Grading: End of semester grades will be assigned based upon the following percentages:

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Students with ADA-documented impairments may be eligible for reasonable accommodations. Veterans may also be eligible for services. Accommodations are coordinated through DRC in Rm 101 of the University Inn, 7-2444 voice, 7-0740 TTY, or toll free at 1-800-259-2966. Please contact DRC as early as possible.

Alternate format materials (Braille, large print or digital) are available with advance notice.

Attendance: Regular attendance is extremely important and highly related to a student’s performance. You are allowed 2 absences. If you have more than 2, you will lose 1% for each additional absence. In case of illness, emergency, or university activities, please notify me beforehand and submit a university excused absence sheet.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism includes knowingly "representing, by paraphrase or direct quotation, the published or unpublished work of another person as one's own in any academic exercise or activity without full and clear acknowledgment. It also includes the unacknowledged used of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials." The penalties for plagiarism are severe. They include warning or reprimand, grade adjustment, probation, suspension, expulsion, withholding of transcripts, denial or revocation of degrees, and referral to psychological counseling.

Week 1: Ancestral Wisdoms
8/30: “The Tongue-Cut Sparrow: A Fairy Tale from Japan.”

Week 2: Out of This World: Liu Cixin’s Science Fiction
9/6: The Three-Body Problem, Chap. 3&4 “Red Coast 1” and “Frontiers of Science”

Week 3:
9/13: The Three-Body Problem, Chap. 7&8 “King Wen of Zhou” and “Ye Wenjie”

Week 4:
9/18 The Three-Body Problem, Chap. 9&10 “The Universe Flickers” and “Da Shi” Post 3.
9/20 The Three-Body Problem, Chap. 11&12 “Mozi and Fiery Flames” and “Red Coast II”

Week 5:
9/27 The Three-Body Problem, Chap. 16&17 “The Three-Body Problem” and “Three Body”
Week 6: Rethinking Meiji Modernity
10/2 Hattori Bushō: “The Western Peep Show.” (Keene, 34-37)
   Nagai Kafū “The River Sumida” (Keene 159-178) Post 5.
10/4 Nagai Kafū “The River Sumida” (Keene 179-200)
   Tsubouchi Shōyō: “The essence of the novel.” (Keene, 55-59)

Week 7: Emotions and Surrealism
10/11 Banana Yoshimoto: Moonlight Shadow (128-150)

Week 8: Contemporary Taiwanese Women Writers
10/16 “Wedding Date,” by Ping Lu Post 7.
10/18 “The Story of Hsiao-Pi” by Chu T’ien-wen, and “Taipei Train Station” by Tsai Su-fen

Week 9: Selections from Singapore Literature and Film
10/25 Christine Chia. A Luxury We Cannot Afford: Selections of Singapore poetry.
   Essay 2 workshop.

Week 10: Traditional Family in Modern Korea
11/1 Shin, “I’m Sorry, Hyong-chol” Essay 2 due.

Week 11: Mother and Daughter as Double-Mirrors
11/8 Shin, “I’m Home”

Week 12: Narrative Voices and Points of View
11/13 Shin, “Another Woman”
11/15 Shin, “Epilogue”

Week 12: The Immigrant Stories as Noir
11/20 Stories by Vietnamese author Vu Tran, “Dragonfish,” and others.
11/21-11/23 Thanksgiving break, no class.

Week 13: Selections from Malaysian Literature and Film
11/28 “Hantu: A Malaysian Ghost Story” by J.C. Martin
11/30 Film discussion: Bola Kampung: The Movie. Essay 3 workshop

Week 14: Review and Oral presentations
12/4-12/6 Oral Presentations; Review, Q&A. Essay 3 due at time of presentation.

Final Exam: December 13, TR., 12:00-1:50pm.