

Spring Book Studies for Teachers were four weeks of studies of arts-based, primary source texts, relevant to Asian cultural studies.

The were funded by the Freeman Foundation as part of the National Consortium for Teaching Asia (NCTA) with additional support from the US-Japan Foundation. Both of these organizations offer support programs for professional educators, intended to aid practicing teachers of all disciplines in US schools to develop deeper understandings about Asian cultures to equip them to share those understandings with their students in meaningful ways..

The book studies were offered as opportunities for teachers to 1. Receive free literary resources for use in their classrooms and 2. Receive free professional development based on developing lessons using those resources. In-depth Asian study content and thoughts for integrating that content into classrooms was offered by expert instructors.

Four different books and workshops were offered using a format that allowed teachers to learn:

1. background information about the texts, authors, historical settings, regions, and influences of the book
2. how to expand the scope of students' learning to include multiple disciplines
3. how to integrate the book and new information learned about it in alignment with the new Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy in History and Social Studies.

Workshops were especially designed to address areas of “understanding other perspectives and cultures,”¹[1], a Common Core learning target, so that students may:

appreciate that the twenty-first-century classroom and workplace are settings in which people from often widely divergent cultures and who represent diverse experiences and perspectives must learn and work together. Students actively seek to understand other perspectives and cultures through reading and listening, and they are able to communicate effectively with people of varied backgrounds. They evaluate other points of view critically and constructively. Through reading great classic and contemporary works of literature representative of a variety of periods, cultures, and worldviews, students can vicariously inhabit worlds and have experiences much different than their own. ²[2]

¹[1] Common Core State Standards Initiative @ <http://www.corestandards.org>.

²[2] *Common Core State Standards Initiative*, quoted in Jackson, Anthony. “Common Core: Preparing Globally Competent Citizens.” *Education Week*, 27 January 2012. Accessed at edweek.org/edweek/global_learning/2012/01/the_common_core_state_standards.html on 10/2/12.

The arts were key to the inter-disciplinary aspect of these workshops, as “organizing principles” for connecting them. We were privileged to have four very gifted instructors with expertise in the areas of visual, performing, and literary arts as well as literature, history, and East Asian Studies.

Workshop One. *Title:* Modern Japanese Concepts in Children’s Literature. *Dates:* January 11 (evening) and January 12, 2013. *Book resource:* *Hachiko*. *Specialist/historian:* Elyssa Faison.

Elyssa Faison is associate professor of Japanese History at the University of Oklahoma-Norman and a 2003-2004 post-doctoral fellow at the Yale Council on East Asian Studies. In June 2012, she was invited to serve as a Visiting Professor at **Yamaguchi University**, where she taught a graduate seminar, conducted research, and collaborated with the faculty of the Graduate School of East Asian Studies. She received her Ph.D. from UCLA in 2001. She is author of *Managing Women: Disciplining Labor in Modern Japan* (University of California Press, 2007) and co-editor with Dr. Ruth Barraclough (Australian National University) of **Sexing Class: Gender and Labor in Korea and Japan** (Routledge, 2009). She is currently working on two book-length projects, the first tentatively titled *Transnational Technologies of Remembering: Atomic Experiments in Cold War America, Japan, and the South Pacific*. The second is a social history in the form of a biography of the socialist feminist Yamakawa Kikue (1890-1980).

Workshop Two. *Title:* Asian Literature Performed in Various Media. *Dates:* January 18 (evening) and January 19, 2013. *Book resource:* *Monkey King: Journey to the West*. *Specialist/performer:* Ghaffar Pourazar.

Ghaffar Pourazar is the first Westerner to complete the arduous training required by the National Academy of Beijing Opera and the first non-Chinese director of the National Opera Troupe of China. He has been a performer of Beijing Opera for more than 20 years and *The Monkey King* is one of Pourazar’s signature roles.

Workshop Three. *Title:* Asian Visual Arts. *Dates:* February 15 (evening) and February 16, 2013. *Book resource:* *Marco Polo’s Journeys*. *Specialist/artist:* Alan Atkinson.

Alan Atkinson is an independent artist, scholar and curator based in Norman Oklahoma who holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Film & Video and MA and Ph.D. in the History of Chinese Art. He has also studied Museumology at Nankai University in the People’s Republic of China. A dedicated student of traditional Chinese art, Atkinson is an accomplished calligrapher and seal carver, as well as an expert on Chinese tea culture. He teaches Asian art at the University of Oklahoma and has traveled between Oklahoma and China for over thirty years.

Workshop Four. *Title:* Contemporary Chinese Poetry Workshop. *Dates:* February 22 (evening)

and February 23, 2013. *Book Resource: Shi Zhi's Winter Sun. Specialist/reader: Jonathan Stalling.*

Jonathan Stalling is a professor of English Language at OU-Norman and Editor of Chinese Literature Today. He is a published author and scholar specializing in Chinese literature and arts with a special focus on performative poetry.
