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Annotated bibliography of Asian literature

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ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF
ASIAN LITERATURE

by
Lisa Brownback

A Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements of the Masters of Arts
Degree in the Graduate School
of Rowan University
May 1997

Approved by

Professor

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ABSTRACT

Lisa Brownback

Annotated Bibliography of Asian
Literature, 1997
Thesis Advisor: Lynne Levy
Graduate Program: School and Public
Librarianship.

Many changes have happened in the world. One change is the growing curiosity of other cultures. One way to learn about other cultures is through literature. The purpose of this thesis is to present an annotated bibliography of Asian literature for the public library. Since Asia covers a large area, this thesis will only view literature from India, China, and Japan.

Two public libraries, two college libraries, and reference books were examined to get an impression of books that should be in a public library. To be able to pick constantly the best books a library needs a selection policy.

Based on the information acquired, an annotated bibliography was made of literature from Asia. A discovery from this bibliography is that many of the books have old copyright dates. If the translations are the best available, then the age of the copyright should not matter.

MINI-ABSTRACT

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Many changes have happened in the world. One change is the growing curiosity of other cultures. One way to learn about other cultures is through literature. The purpose of this thesis is to present an annotated bibliography of Asian literature for the public library. Since Asia covers a large area, this thesis will only view literature from India, China, and Japan.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

The Purpose

The purpose of this thesis is a compilation of a bibliography of books of Asian Literature. This bibliography was assembled with the public library in mind.

Importance of the Bibliography

This bibliography lists books that are considered important to Asian Literature. The compiler has consulted public libraries, college libraries, and reference books and has selected from them books that will present a well balanced bibliography for a public library.

To get around in the modern world people will need to understand the cultures and people that are becoming important in today's world, like the countries in Asia. To be able to understand the different countries in Asia one needs to understand their cultures. One way to know different cultures and understand them is to read literature about them and by them. Karen Smith (1993, p. 336) writes that "While no medium may be as effective toward bridging the difference among people as the actual process of meeting, speaking, and getting to know one another, sharing

the cultures of others through the medium of literature can serve as a means toward creating a better understanding among individuals." Rasinski and Padak (1990, p. 577) similarly write "Literature has long been seen as a vehicle for fostering cultural awareness and appreciation. Because it tells the stories of human events and human condition, and not simply the facts, literature does more than change minds; it changes people's hearts."

Limitations

This thesis does not include Asian Literature books for children and is limited to books in English.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Search

As the world changes so do people. Over the past twenty years the world has gone through many changes, including the end of the Cold War and more open communications between the United States, China, Japan, and other countries in Asia. With these changes, people have become curious about, and want to know about, other cultures. Minority groups within the United States would also like that their cultures be understood. Karen Parrish (1993, p. 1) writes "With the arrival of a global economy, it has become more and more important that our population, both young and old, be aware of, respectful of, and knowledgeable about other cultures." A reason to learn about other cultures is that we would learn about our own culture of America. America contains many cultures and has learned to adopt parts of these cultures (Olds, 1990, p. 20).

With the change to know about other cultures and minorities, libraries have a responsibility to provide this information, and to make sure each group is represented

equally. In education this has developed as "multiculturalism."

A definition from a dictionary of "multiculturalism" is "many or more than one culture" (Webster's Dictionary, 1987, p. 779). Culture is defined as "the customary beliefs, social forms, and material traits of a racial, religious, or social group" (Webster's Dictionary, 1987, p. 314). In Gillian Leonard's article, "Multiculturalism and Library Services," multiculturalism is defined by Milton J. Gold as "the respect shown to the varied cultures and ethnic groups which continue today to contribute to its richness and diversity" (Leonard, 1993, p. 4).

The earliest appearance of the word "multicultural" was "in a 1941 Herald Tribune book review . . . where the book was described as 'a fervent sermon against nationalism, national prejudice and behavior in favor of a "multicultural" way of life'" (Smith, 1993, p. 341).

The crusade for multiculturalism began with the civil rights movement in the 1960's. "A major goal of the civil rights movement . . . was to eliminate discrimination in public accommodations, housing, employment, and education"(Banks, 1993, p. 5). One result of the civil rights movement was that ethnic groups wanted the curriculum and textbooks to be revised to teach about the diversity of people in America and the world. By the 1980's "multicultural became a college curriculum code word for

'not dominated by whites'" (Smith, 1993, p. 341).

One way to teach children or young adults about the diversity of people in the world is through multicultural literature. Literature is defined as "writings having excellence of form or expression and expressing ideas of permanent or universal interest: the body of written works produced in a particular language, country, or age" (Webster's Dictionary, 1987, p. 698). It is through literature that educators believe children and young adults "can learn about and learn to appreciate other cultures" (Padak & Rasinski, 1993, p. 68). As professionals "in a classroom, school media center, or public library, we are responsible for preparing young people to enter the world, not merely preparing them to exist within the environment in which they are currently being reared" (Smith, p. 344).

Multicultural literature should not be confused with multiethnic literature. Ethnic is defined as "of or relating to large groups of people classed according to common racial, national, linguistic, or cultural origin or background" (Webster's Dictionary, p. 427). Multiethnic literature would cover non-indigenous groups of Americans, like Irish Americans, German Americans, African Americans, Chinese Americans, or Mexican Americans. Multicultural literature on the other hand "should encompass works that arise in context of other cultures or people geographically

separate from the fifty states of the United States of America" (Stotsky, 1994, p. 28).

In the following pages, this writer will present an annotated bibliography of Asian Literature, a part of Multicultural Literature. Literature from Asia is rarely studied in schools. Usually when one learns of Asia one is introduced to the history of the countries of Asia. However, "we would not think of stating the case for Western civilization without reference to accumulated writings of more than two thousand years of history; yet we presume to sound out the mystery of various Asian civilizations-the roots of some of which go back even further into the past-without a knowledge of their books" (Yohannan, 1976, p. xvii). Since Asian Literature covers such a large area, this writer will only deal with literature from China, Japan, and India.

CHAPTER 3

Selection Policy

It is the librarian's responsibility to "develop balanced collections to support culturally pluralistic programs which reflect this diversity"(Tjoumas, 1993, p. 492). To be able to develop a collection to support multiculturalism a library needs a collection development policy. This policy can list criteria in what to select in multicultural material. The criteria will make sure they are consistent in acquiring the material.

Selection Criteria for Multicultural Literature and Multiethnic Literature

1. Avoid materials that sensationalize, enumerate unusual customs or practice reversed stereotyping.
2. Is the ethnic group portrayed as individuals with their own thoughts, emotions, and philosophies.
3. Is the ethnic group's culture respected or is it presented as inferior to the white culture?

- Does the author believe the culture is worthy of preservation or that it should be abandoned?
4. Is offensive and degrading vocabulary used to describe the characters, their actions, their customs or their lifestyles?
 5. If the story has a contemporary setting, does the author accurately describe the life and situation of the ethnic group in today's world?
 6. If the story has been translated into English, is the story understandable in English? What are the qualifications of the translator?
 7. Is the culture evaluated in terms of its own value and attitudes rather than in terms of those of another culture?
 8. Would the material help a person identify with and be proud of his heritage? Does the material give a clear understanding of another's culture?

(Norton & Norton, 1993, p. 251;

Tjoumas, 1993, p. 496)

CHAPTER 4

Literature of India

Bhartrihari. (1967). Bhartihari: Poems. (B. Stolermler, Trans.). New York: Columbia University Press.

The book contains two hundred poems in both sanskrit and English. The sanskrit is on the left side and the translation is on the right. The name of the collection in sanskrit is Satakatrāyama: Nīti, Śringāra, Vairāgya. These poems of sanskrit lyric and gnomic poetry are attributed to Bhartrihari. At the end of the book is a glossary of sanskrit names and of terms in the translation.

van Buitenen, J. A. B. (Ed.). (1973). The Mahabharata. (J. A. B. van Buitenen, Trans.). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

There are eighteen parts of The Mahabharata. Five parts of The Mahabharata are in three volumes. The parts are The Book of the Beginning, The Book of the Assembly Hall, The Book of the forest, The Book of Virata, and The Book of the Effort. No authorship or exact date can be placed on The Mahabharata.

Dimock, E. C., Jr. (Ed.). (1974). The literature of India: an introduction. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

This is a book that is an introduction to the many literatures of India. Its purpose is to help students understand the literature. The book is divided into chapters covering Indian epic, classical drama, Indian poetics, lyric poems, and story literature.

Jayaḍeva. (1977). Love song of the dark lord, Jayadeva's Gitagovinda. (B. Stolermiller, Ed. & Trans.). New York: Columbia University Press.

This is a poem dedicated to the god Krishna. It concentrates on the god's love with the cowherdress Radha in a rite of spring. It was written in the 12th century in Eastern India.

Kalidasa. (1968). The Cloud Messenger. (F. Edgerton & E. Edgerton, Trans.). Michigan: University of Michigan Press.

A poem of 110 four line stanzas. It is a poem of a sort of demigod exiled from his home and beloved wife. In the poem he asks a cloud to take his wife a message.

Kripalani, K. (Ed.). (1966). Contemporary Indian short stories. New Delhi, India: Sahitya Akademi.

The editors had limited space so they chose fifteen

short stories for this book. The stories were chosen from the major Indian languages. Included with the stories are brief notes on the authors of the stories.

Kripalani, K. (1968). Modern Indian literature: a panoramic glimpse. Bombay, India: Nirrnala Sadanand Publishers.

This book makes a panoramic survey of modern Indian literature as a whole, to see how the many languages and literatures of India fit into a common pattern. It also tells the history of literature in India and its major impacts.

The Panchatantra. (1972). (A. W. Ryder ,Trans.). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

This is a collection of stories that are very ancient. They were written about 200 B.C. The Panchatantra means "five books" and is considered a "textbook of the wise conduct of life." The stories are divided into five different books which are "The Loss of Friends," "Winning of Friends," "Crows and Owls," "Loss of Gains," and "Ill-Considered Actions."

Premchand. (1968). The gift of a cow. (G. C. Roadarmel, Trans.). Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

This is one of the first Hindi novels to be translated into English. The story is about conflicts in an Indian village and the changes that occur.

Rajagopalachari, C. (1965). Ramayana. Bombay, India: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan.

This story was orally handed down from generation to generation before it was finally written down. The hero of this story is Raama, who is believed to be an incarnation of the god Vishnu.

Santhanam, K. (Ed.). (1969) An anthology of Indian literature. Bombay, India: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan.

Contains brief histories of fifteen major languages of India and their literature. The histories are followed by English translations of selected passages and poems from each language.

CHAPTER 5

Literature of China

Ch'ien, C. (1979). Fortress besieged. (J. Kelly & N. K. Mao, Trans.). Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

This is a comedy of manners with much picaresque humor. It is also a scholar's novel of irony and a commentary on courtship. The novel studies one contemporary man.

Chinese fairy tales and fantasies. (1979). (M. Roberts, Ed. & Trans.). New York: Pantheon Books.

100 tales, fables, and fantasies. They are divided in six ways: Tales of Enchantment and Magic, Tales of Folly and Greed, The Animal Kingdom, Women and Wives, Ghosts and Souls, and Judges and Diplomats. They illuminate the Chinese social order through the structured relationships that defined it. The book spans over twenty centuries of Chinese literature from 5th century B.C. to 18th century A.D.

The classic changes: a new translation of the I Ching as interpreted by Wang Bi. (1994). (R. J. Lynn, Trans.). New York: Columbia University Press.

Originally "The Book of Changes" was a divination manual, it later has become known as a book of wisdom. It consists of sixty-four hexagrams. Each hexagram is followed by a name, a statement or a judgment, and line statements for each of the six lines in the hexagram. The interpreter provides commentary after each hexagram.

Frankel, H. H. (1976). The flowering Plum and the palace lady: Interpretations of Chinese poetry. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

It is comprised of 106 Chinese poems. The poems range from the 10th century to the 14th century. This book is not oriented toward literary history and development but toward appreciation of the poems. It was intended for readers who are interested in Chinese poetry.

The golden lotus. (1972). (C. Egerton, Trans.). London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

The chief character is Hsimen Ch'ing. He is a merchant of Chingho and had one wife and three concubines. The story tells of Ch'ing's lust for other women and how nothing stood in his way. He acquired a fortune illegally and by bribery won a military official title.

Lao, S. (1981). Camel Xiangzi. (X. Shi, Trans.). Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Originally published in 1937 it is a story of Xiangzi, a rickshaw boy. Xiangzi wants nothing more than to save enough money to buy a rickshaw of his own instead of renting one. His wife helps him to buy one, but he is forced to sell it to pay off debts after his wife dies.

Lau, J. S. M. & Goldblatt, H. (Eds.). (1995). The Columbia anthology of modern Chinese literature. New York: Columbia University Press.

This anthology covers Hong Kong, Mainland China, and Taiwan. It is broken into three time periods: 1918-1949, 1949-1976, and since 1976. Those periods are further broken down into fiction, poetry, and essays. Included are biographical information on the authors that are presented in this anthology.

Liu, W. (1966). An introduction to Chinese literature. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

The author writes that the purpose of this book is to meet the need of the Western reader who has some curiosity about Chinese literature and who, after their interest has been aroused, may be induced to sample further its great works. A major emphasis is on the major works and writers of China. The book gives a brief history of Chinese literature and presents examples of literature over its long history.

Ma, W. & Lau, J. S. M. (Eds.). (1978). Traditional Chinese stories: Themes and variations. New York: Columbia University Press.

A collection of traditional Chinese stories that would demonstrate the vitality and variety of this genre in its various stages of development. The stories are grouped into eighteen different subjects, like Femme Fatale, Dedicated Lover, The Trickster, and Heartless Lover. Before each chapter there is a description of what the chapter covers and how the story relates.

New songs from a jade terrace: an Anthology of early Chinese love poetry. (1982). (A. Birrell, Trans.). Boston: George Allen and Unwin.

Translation of a medieval Chinese anthology of love poems. It was compiled by a court poet Hsu Ling in about 545 A.D. and consists of 656 poems in 10 volumes or chapters and arranged in chronological order. It embodies poems from the 2nd century B.C. to the mid 6th century A.D.

Tsao, H. (1958). Dream of the red chamber. (C. Wang, Trans.). Garden City, NY: Doubleday.

It describes the life of two households in Beijing belonging to the same family, in which five generations live together with their innumerable retainers, servants, relatives, and other hangers-on. One generation is of

particular concern: a group of sisters, half sisters, and cousins among whom is one boy, the hope of the great house of China. The love of this boy and his cousin is the central theme of the book.

Wu, C. (1972). The scholars. (H. Yang & G. Yang, Trans.). New York: Grosset & Dunlap.

Written around 1750, the central theme of this book is the attitude of the scholars toward the examination system which constituted the royal road to social prestige and power and wealth. It has about 200 different characters. It is also in the form of a series of tenuously linked stories rather than a novel.

CHAPTER 6

Literature of Japan

Arishima, T. (1992). Labyrinth. (S. Goldstein & S. Seishi, Trans.). Lanham: Madison Books.

The setting of the book is America; beginning in Philadelphia in an insane asylum. The body of the story takes place in Boston. The protagonist is an outcast-wanderer, and exile by virtue of some outrage.

Kawabata, Y. (1972). The master of Go. (E. G. Seidensticker, Trans.). New York: Alfred Knopf.

The book is based on a 1938 Go match. It is more a chronicle than a novel. In the story the master of Go loses his final championship match and the author relates that to the loss of tradition.

Kawabata, Y. (1981). Thousand cranes. (E. G. Seidensticker, Trans.). New York: Perigee Book.

It is a story of Kikuji who is trapped in the ugly shadow of his father's past by woman his father loved. It is a story of love, guilt and death in modern Japan.

Keene, D. (Ed.). (1955). Anthology of Japanese literature: From the earliest era to the mid-nineteenth century. New York: Grove Press.

A collection of Japanese literature from five periods in its history: Ancient, Heian, Kamakura, Muromachi, and Tokugawa. It represents all of the different genres. The author writes that the translation has been literary, not literal.

Keene, D. (1984.) Dawn to the West: Japanese literature of the Modern Era. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Two volumes of the history of Japanese literature from the Meiji Restoration of 1868. The author presents the different writers or movements and follows how they develop. The first volume deals with fiction and the second volume with poetry, drama, and criticism.

Keene, D. (Ed.). (1956). Modern Japanese literature: an anthology. New York: Grove Press.

It divides the modern period of Japan into three periods; Meiji(1868-1912), Taisho(1912-1926), and Showa(since 1926). It furnishes literature from these periods and brief biographical information of the authors.

Kenko. (1967). Essays in Idleness: The Tsurezuregusa of Kenko. (D. Keene, Trans.). New York: Columbia

University Press.

A collection of essays of different lengths written between 1330-1332. The author is the Buddhist priest Kenko. The author tells us in the first sentence that he wrote by way of diversion from boredom, jotting down whatever came into his head.

Kenzaburo Oe (Ed.). (1985). The crazy iris and other stories of the atomic aftermath. New York: Cross Press.

Nine stories from authors that experienced the atomic bomb. The stories are about the bombing and what happened after, or it takes place after the bomb. The stories testify to the enormity of the change in Japanese life.

Konishi, J. (1984). A history of Japanese literature. (A. Gatten & N. Teele, Trans.). (E. Miner, Ed.). Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

It's a history of literature in Japan. It describes the beginning and how it has changed over the centuries. There are three volumes which cover the archaic and ancient ages, the early middle ages, and the high middle ages.

Mishima, Y. (1958). Confessions of a mask. (M. Weatherby, Trans.). New York: New Directions Book.

Story of an adolescent who must learn to live with

the painful fact that he is unlike other men. He discovers that he is becoming a homosexual in a polite, post-war Japan.

Mishima, Y. (1974). The decay of the angel. (E. G. Seidensticker, Trans.). New York: Alfred Knopf.

The setting is early 1970s Japan. The character Hondo, 76 years old, adopts a son Toru, 16 years old. The son becomes aggressive as he gets older. Both of the main characters have misfortune. The boy tries to commit suicide but only blinds himself. Hondo is publicly disgraced and believes he has cancer.

Mishima, Y. (1968). Forbidden colors. (A. H. Marks, Trans.). New York: Alfred Knopf.

The author attempts to show the discrepancies and conflicts within himself as represented by the two characters, Shunsuke and Yuichi. The story is about the young man, Yuichi, who is more narcissist than he is a homosexual.

Mishima, Y. (1972). Spring Snow. (M. Gallagher, Trans.). New York: Alfred Knopf.

A love story about Satoko and Kiyooki. Satoko is promised to a member of the imperial family. There is a fight between the lovers but they make up and Satoko

becomes pregnant before her wedding. Her parents hustle her off. Satoko takes refuge in a nunnery where Kiyooki dies trying to see her.

Murasaki, S. (1960). The tale of Genji. (A. Waley, Trans.). New York: Modern Library.

The story was written in the early part of the 11th century. The main character of the story is Genji, son of the emperor by a consort of inferior rank. The theme of the story is Genji's love life.

Natsume, S. (1957). Kokoro. (E. McClellan, Trans.). Washington, D.C.: Regney Gateway.

Written in 1914, the author is concerned with man's loneliness in the modern world. The only escape for the protagonist from loneliness is death.

Natsume, S. (1977). Sanshiro. (J. Rubin, Trans.). Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press.

Sanshiro is a student in college studying English literature. He is from the country and doesn't always understand what is before him. By the end of the book Sanshiro has changed.

Saikaku, I. (1972). Five women who loved love. (W. T. DeBary, Trans.). Vermont: Tuttle Company.

This book is about five typical women. It follows these women in their amorous and usually illicit adventures.

Saikaku, I. (1963). The life of an amorous woman and other writings. (I. Morris, Trans. & Ed.). New York: New Directions Books.

Four works by Ihara Saikaku. In the four stories the narrators are a successive wife, court lady, courtesan, priest's concubine, mistress of a feudal lord, and a streetwalker.

Sei, S. (1971). The pillow book of Sei Shonagon. (I. Morris, Trans. & Ed.). Baltimore: Penguin Books.

The author Sei Shonagon served as a lady-in-waiting to Empress Sadako. While the author served at court she wrote personal notes. This book covers ten odd years. This was written during the time of mid-Heian period of feminine vernacular literature about a thousand years ago.

Shusaku, E. (1980). The samurai. (V. C. Gessel, Trans.). New York: Aventura.

Set in Japan in the beginning of the 17th century the book tells of the life of Hasekura. It is a record of the spiritual voyage that is undertaken within one man's heart. Hasekura was a real person that had gone on a sea voyage for the Emperor of Japan. The book is also a part autobiography of the author.

Tanizaki, J. (1957). The Makioka sisters. (E. G. Seidensticker, Trans.). New York: Wideview/Perigee Book.

The Makioka sisters are four sisters: Yukio, Taako, Sachiko, and Tsuruko, who have been raised rich in a traditional aristocratic Japan. Now they must face the reality of a new post war society in which they no longer have money or positions.

Conclusion

Many of the books chosen were written hundreds of years ago, a couple have been around for over a thousand years. It has only been recently, however, that many have been translated into English. Because of this many of the books have only been translated once. This is a reason as to why the copyright dates are old. These books are still good because the translation is considered the best.

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