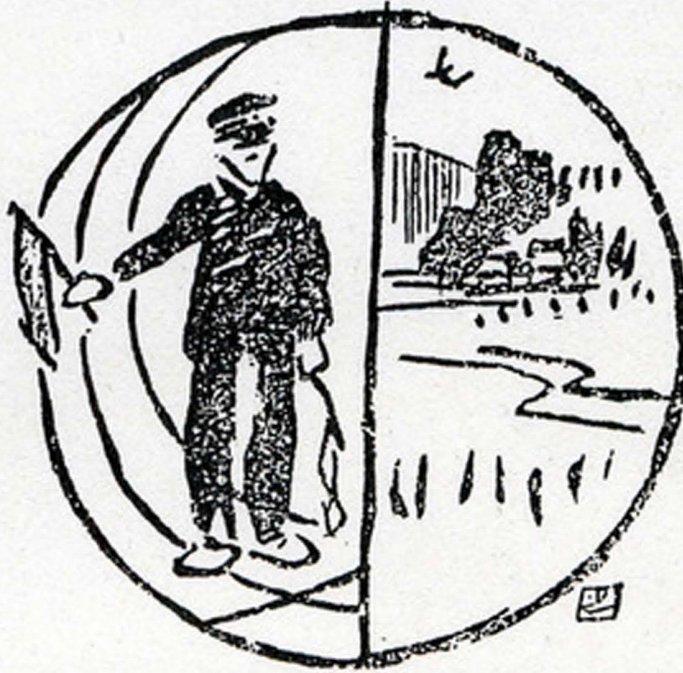


Department of Modern Languages Asian Studies Program

Steven J. Green School of International and Public Affairs



Deciphering an Illegible Text: A Provincial Japanese Youth Arrives in Tokyo

Thursday, March 9, 2017 | 3:30 PM - 5:00 PM | FIU Modesto A. Maidique Campus | SIPA 524

The novel *Sanshirō*, written by Natsume Sōseki (1867-1916) in 1908, tells the story of a provincial Japanese youth who arrives in Tokyo to enter university. Unfolding over approximately four months, the novel narrates its eponymous hero's first experience of the bustling capital, his early time in school, and his encounter with the new Japanese woman of the Meiji era. The novel affords us an opportunity to examine several important tropes in literature's engagement with new discourses on social mobility and, especially, the place of Tokyo within the collective imagining of the successful life. Tokyo initially presents itself to the newly arrived Sanshirō as an inscrutable text that has to be interpreted and made legible before he can embark on the path to success in the first place.

Timothy J. Van Compernelle is Associate Professor of Japanese at Amherst College. He is the author of *The Uses of Memory: The Critique of Modernity in the Fiction of Higuchi Ichiyō* (2006) and *Struggling Upward: Worldly Success and the Japanese Novel* (2016). He is currently working on a new project, tentatively entitled *Celluloid Metaphors: Japanese Literature in the Age of Cinema*.

Co-sponsored by the Department of Modern Languages and the Asian Studies Program.

This event is free and open to the public.
For more information, please call 305-348-1914.



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