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Friday, March 29th, 18:00h

Mario Talamo SPEAKER

Edo Popular Literature and Female Readership

The publishing world of the late Edo period was marked by the attempts to involve a female readership as literary consumers. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, female readers were not considered as the “specific target” of a literary output. Thus, authors and publishers resorted to many expedients to find a product explicitly designed for their preferences, such as the *ninjōbon* (sentimental books). However, this paucity of literary contributions, whose main aim was to fulfil womanly interests, does not imply that authors did not try to involve them before the publication of these “sentimental books”. Furthermore, publications with men as their original consumers could in fact be tailored to a female readership. When a literary product changes its model reader, the transformations that the text undergoes are not concerned solely with the surface—cover and illustrations—or the plot. Changes are seldom embedded in deep narrative structures. This lecture aims to outline the evolution that texts, in particular tales of vengeance or *katakiuchi mono*, went through when they addressed a female readership, which involved morphological and structural changes.

Mario Talamo obtained his PhD from the University of Naples ‘l’Orientale’ and has a Postdoctoral Diploma in Sciences of Religion and the History of Thought from the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes. He is currently a Visiting Research Scholar at the International Research Center for Japanese Studies. His research is on the late-Edo popular literature of the nineteenth century. Among his publications are the Italian translation of Jippensha Ikku’s masterpiece, *Tōkaidōchū hizakurige* (*Hizakurige: a piedi lungo il Tōkaidō*, Aracne Editrice, 2019); an anthology of tales of vengeance from the end of the Edo period (*Storie di vendetta di samurai*, Asiasphere, 2021); and “Evolutions of Ethical Paradigms and Popular Fiction: The Case of Late Edo Tales of Vengeance,” *Japan Review* (2023): 29-50.

This hybrid lecture will be held on site (email required in advance) and via Zoom (meeting ID: 842 5377 2915).



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