UNIVERSITY of HAWAI'I® MĀNOA
EAST ASIAN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES

100 Years of Japanese Studies
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa
Center for Japanese Studies
日本研究センター

EALL TALK SERIES

The Counterespionage Novel and the Fostering of Wartime Subjectivity in Imperial Japan and Korea

Quillon Arkenstone, Visiting Assistant Professor

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 3:00-4:00 PM

Moore Hall, Room 258
or zoom: https://hawaii.zoom.us/j/87561157305

Literature produced throughout Japan's empire during the Second World War is recognized as having played an important role in the creation and maintenance of a wartime subjectivity, and nowhere was this truer than with detective fiction, arguably the war's most popular genre. This presentation examines a sub-genre of detective fiction that was particularly active during the years 1941-5, the counterespionage novel (Jp. bōchō shōsetsu, Kr. pangch'op sosŏl). Focusing on Edogawa Ranpo's Idainaru yume (1943-4), and Kim Nae-sŏng's Maegukno (1943-4) two works that immerse readers in the subjective experience of the war through depictions of domestic espionage, I highlight the genre's attempts to reconcile the enlightenment thinking of modern detective fiction with the sanguinary ethnic nationalism permeating the conflict. The result is a contradiction between a dependence on a rational modernity and the pressure to accommodate wartime ideology, in whose name modernity was being reoriented to serve a very irrational war.

Quillon Arkenstone is a Visiting Assistant Professor in the department of East Asian Languages and Literatures. His research, which cuts across the domains of literary studies, theory, history, and political science, is focused on the phenomenon of how the transnational exchange of ideas, manifested in literary and artistic genres, is mediated broadly by specific societies in their own historical moment. He holds a PhD in Japanese literature.

Talk is open to the public. Light refreshments will be served in EALL (Moore Hall 3rd F) following the talk.
For more information, please contact SeaHee Choi (seahee@hawaii.edu) and Matthew Burdelski (mburdels@hawaii.edu); For disability access, please contact the EALL office at 956-8940 or eall@hawaii.edu