

Hasekura League Seminar Series

Modern writers and the problem of fiction: Putting XIX-century Italian and Japanese historical novel in comparative perspective

Summary:

In his 1845 essay *Discorso del romanzo storico e, in genere, dei componimenti misti di storia e d'invenzione*, Italian writer Alessandro Manzoni offers a lucid self critique of his own masterpiece, *I promessi sposi*, stating that a novel can never be actually considered historical. The author's alleged impasse closely mimics the Meiji literati's struggle towards assessing the true significance of writing historical pièces, and the concerns that these apparently unrelated authors share offer a relevant reflection on the evolution of the overall concept of fiction, and the shifting perspective on its relevance in the XIX century's cultural milieu. The talk will explore the common threads in Japanese and Italian authors' fictionalization of historical materials, drawing extensively on their critical essays and theoretical reflections.

Speaker:

Professor. Luca Milasi (Rome La Sapienza University, Italy)

Date: May 30, 2018, afternoon (14:00~15:00)

Room: 208, Graduate School of Arts and Letters, Kawauchi Campus

Contact:

Professor. Akihiro Ozaki

E-mail: ozakiaki@m.tohoku.ac.jp