



JAPAN-AMERICA SOCIETY  
OF WASHINGTON DC

---

## *Readings in Modern Japanese Literature: Summer Reading Group*

---

*Join JASW this summer as we survey the works of several of the most critically-acclaimed Japanese authors of the modern era.*

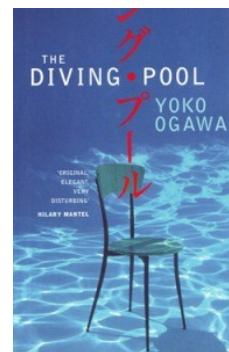
- We will begin in the Meiji period by examining the novel *Kokoro* (1914) by Natsume Sōseki. Ask any Japanese person on the street to name a few authors who best represent their national literature and you are guaranteed to hear Sōseki's name. *Kokoro*, one of Sōseki's most famous works, presents a meditation on the changing nature of Japanese society during the Meiji period as it explores the friendship of a young student and his teacher.
- Then we will sample postwar literature through Kōbō Abe's *The Face of Another* (1964). In addition to winning both the Akutagawa Prize and the Yomiura Prize for his works, Abe was nominated multiple times for the Nobel Prize in Literature for his Kafkaesque, surrealist novels. *The Face of Another* is the existential narrative of a scientist who must don a mask after being shunned by society when his face is grotesquely disfigured in a laboratory accident.
- We will end with the haunting yet subtle contemporary prose of Yoko Ogawa, who has received numerous awards and the praise of many members of today's Japanese literary circles. Ogawa's *The Diving Pool* (1990) is a collection of three novellas that explore themes of alienation, detachment, and the female experience in modern Japan.

---

*Discussions will be structured yet casual, and anyone with an interest in Japanese literature, Japan, or simply reading in general is welcome to participate regardless of previous knowledge of Japanese literature. Those interested may attend any or all of the sessions, which will be held at the Japan America Society as follows:*

<i>Kokoro</i>	Monday, June 27th, 6-7:30pm
<i>The Face of Another</i>	Monday, July 18th, 6-7:30pm
<i>The Diving Pool*</i>	Monday, August 8th, 6-7:30pm

*If you are planning to attend a discussion, please RSVP to [interndc@us-japan.org](mailto:interndc@us-japan.org) at least one week in advance.*



\*The Japan Foundation has generously furnished us with 10 copies of *The Diving Pool*, which may be picked up at our office at 1819 L Street NW #B1 between 9:30-5:30 M-F. First come first served.

