


Movies & Languages 2018-2019

Isle of Dogs

About the movie (subtitled version)

DIRECTOR	Wes Anderson	
YEAR/COUNTRY	2018 / USA	
GENRE	animated science-fiction comedy-drama	
VOICES	Bryan Cranston, Edward Norton, Bill Murray, Jeff Goldblum, Bob Balaban, Greta Gerwig, Frances McDormand, Courtney B. Vance, Fisher Stevens, Harvey Keitel, Liev Schreiber, Scarlett Johansson, Tilda Swinton, F. Murray Abraham, Frank Wood, Kunichi Nomura and Yoko Ono	

PLOT

The plot is complex and is a series of stories that intertwine and then come together in the end. It is set in a Japanese city in the near future (Megasaki). On the simplest level, it is about a boy and his dog and on the most complex level it is about the rise fascism/nazism instigated by the mayor of the city Kobayashi and his political party. In order to ensure their power they instigate a witch-hunt against the dog population, blaming it for many the population's problems: they infect dogs with canine flu, or snout fever, and then round them up and banished them to Trash Island, which in many cases resembles a concentration camp. Atari, Kobayashi's nephew, misses his dog, Spots, so much that he goes to the island to look for him. Ultimately, he will return with the dog population seeking revenge. Chief (Bryan Cranston) and Nutmeg (Scarlett Johansson) are two of the dogs who help Atari the most. The setting of the entire film is imbued with a Japanese love of detail. Japanese aesthetics from the woodcuts of Houksai to Hello Kitty lunch boxes pop up when we are least expecting them, making the film delightful to our eyes.

LANGUAGE

The language is extremely witty and sophisticated. Though most of the time it is the dogs who are talking about dog things, everything under the sun is talked about from political theory to genetic experiments, and thus a very wide range of vocabulary is used.

VOCABULARY

Unwary: not paying attention	To tame: to domesticate, to bring in from the wild
Litter: a group of puppies	Snout: dog's mouth and nose
R.I.P. : rest in peace, written on the tombs of the dead	Blizzard: snow storm
Isle: island	Fleas and ticks: insects that bite dogs and cats

Underdog: the person or animal in a competition that everyone thinks will not win	A breed: a specific race or group of animals, like German Shepherds or boxers
To pledge: to promise	To forsake something: to abandon or desert something or someone
To roam: to wander	A stray: a dog or cat that doesn't have a home
Well groomed: very clean and well brushed	To have paper: for a dog, it means that the dog has a pedigree certificate
To neuter: to castrate or to sterilize so that the person/animal can no longer have children	Stainless steel: metal that does not rust
A pack of dogs: a group of dogs	Tug boat: a little boat that has a very powerful motor which makes it capable of pulling big ships
Moodiness: changing mood very easily	Crook: criminal
Scraps: small bits of food	A hunch: to have an intuition or an idea about something or someone
To tame: to domesticate, to bring in from the wild	To wind: to move in a curvy way like a snake
To stomach: to be able to put up with the pain you feel	To zigzag: similar to 'to wind'; not to move straight, but to move from left to right slowly going forward
To groom: to clean, bathe, and brush an animal	A pound: a place where dogs that do not have a home are kept
Leash: the piece of leather around a dog's neck	To be padlocked: to be locked up; a padlock is a kind of lock
To lick your wounds: figuratively, it means to feel sorry for yourself	To stalk: to follow someone in a secretive way, which is usually a bit scary
To be house broken: to know at a certain point that it is bad to pee in the house	To fetch: when a dog fetches a stick, you throw it and the dog goes and gets it, and then brings it back to you
Nutmeg: a spice, generally used for sweets	Middle of the sticks: the middle of the countryside
Propeller: what drives a plane	Thugs: criminals
Brick mansion: a big house built of bricks	My train of thought: a series of interconnected ideas that you have when you are thinking
To be grounded: when a child is forbidden to go out and play, they are said to be grounded	A hunk of soap: a big chunk or piece of soap
Hearsay: rumor	When a dog sicks someone: when a dog attacks someone
To be groomed (for a dog): to have clean fur that is trimmed and cut	Outcasts: people who are sent away from the community
Scrap metal: metal that is no longer good to use, but it can be recycled	The runt: the smallest kitten or puppy of a group