

S23 A-Bomb Literature & Film in Japan
Syllabus

Instructor

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Office Hours

Rutgers Academic Building (West) AB-6052, Mon. 3-4pm

Cross-listed courses; both meet MW 6th period (5:40-7:00pm) in Frelinghuysen Hall-B3.

01:565:215:01 "A-Bomb Literature and Film in Japan"

16:217:576:01 "Graduate Seminar on Modern Japanese Literature"

Course Description

In this class, we will be studying short fiction, poetry, one novel, five documentaries, and three feature-length films about the 1945 U.S. atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan. The documentaries allow us to hear the authentic voices of two groups of people most closely involved in the bombings on Aug. 6 and Aug. 9: (1) the physicists and military personnel speaking about how they developed and deployed the nuclear weapons and (2) the *hibakusha* survivors speaking about their personal experience as targets of those weapons. Our purpose is to examine from multiple perspectives the way atomic warfare has been represented in various media. This will allow us to develop an understanding of the limits of representation of the dehumanizing effects of atomic warfare and help us connect A-Bomb literature and film in Japan to larger political concerns about future use of atomic weapons. All readings are in English translation.

Grading

Assignments: 40% (20x2 pts)

Leading discussion: 5% (1x5 pts)

Mid-term paper: 25%

Final paper: 30%

Total: 100%

Required Texts

1. Ōe Kenzaburō, ed. *The Crazy Iris* (Perseus, 1985) ISBN 9780802151841
2. Richard Minear, *Hiroshima: Three Witnesses* (Princeton, 1990) ISBN 9780691008370

3. Kurihara Sadako, *When We Say Hiroshima: Selected Poems* (Michigan, 1999) ISBN 9780939512898
4. Ibuse Masuji, *Black Rain* (Kodansha, 2012) ISBN: 9781568364179
5. [Grad students only: John Whittier Treat, *Writing Ground Zero: Japanese Literature and the Atomic Bomb* (Chicago, 1995) ISBN 0226811786]

Masks and Distancing policy:

I request that you wear effective masks and engage in social distancing while in the classroom.

While Rutgers no longer requires that you wear masks in all university buildings, COVID is still killing people and causing long-term *severe* harm. COVID numbers are the highest they have been in a year, mostly because people suffer from the illusion that the pandemic is over or that the consequences are mild. That is simply false. People are dying. And the protracted effects on the cardiovascular, respiratory, lymphatic, and nervous systems of the body are severe and excruciating. You can have COVID and be pre-symptomatic or asymptomatic. And this can kill people. So please bring masks to every class and wear them assiduously – for the lives of others. Please take this seriously.

Class Schedule:

Date	Discussion in class	Reading/Film for next class	Graduate seminar assignment
1/18 Wed	Introduction	Oe: Oda, <i>Human Ashes</i>	
1/23 Mon	#1 <i>Human Ashes</i>	Film: 'City of Peace'	
1/25 Wed	#2 'City of Peace'	Minear: Hara, <i>Summer Flowers</i>	
1/30 Mon	#3 <i>Summer Flowers</i> (1,2)	Film: 'The Legacy'	
2/1 Wed	#4 'The Legacy' (3)	Minear: <i>Hara Tamiki, Translator's Introduction</i>	Treat: (4) Hara Tamiki & the Documentary Fallacy
2/6 Mon	Grad #1: Minear & Treat: <i>Hara Tamiki</i>	Film: 'Rain of Ruin I'	
2/8 Wed	#5 'Rain of Ruin' (4)	Minear: Ota, <i>City of Corpses</i>	
2/13 Mon	#6 <i>City of Corpses</i> (5,6)	Minear: <i>Ota Yoko, Translator's Introduction</i>	Treat: (6) Ota Yoko & the Place of the Narrator
2/15 Wed	Grad #2: Minear & Treat: <i>Ota Yoko</i>	Minear: Toge, <i>Poems of the Atomic Bomb</i>	
2/20 Mon	#7 <i>Poems of the Atomic Bomb</i> (7,8)	Minear: <i>Toge Sankichi, Translator's Introduction</i>	Treat: (5) Poetry Against Itself
2/22 Wed	Grad #3: Minear & Treat: <i>Toge Sankichi</i>	Film: 'Rain of Ruin II'	

2/27 Mon	#8 'Rain of Ruin II' (9)	Johnston: <i>Nagai Takashi, Translator's Introduction</i>	Treat: (9) Nagasaki & the Human Future
3/1 Wed	Grad #4: Johnston & Treat: <i>Nagai Takashi</i>	Nagai, <i>Bells of Nagasaki</i>	
3/6 Mon	#9 <i>Bells of Nagasaki (10,11)</i>	Prepare MIDTERM PAPER	
3/8 Wed	NO CLASS MIDTERM PAPER due		
3/11-3/19	--Spring Break--	Film: 'White Light-Black Rain'	
3/20 Mon	#10 'White Light-Black Rain'	Kurihara, <i>When We Say Hiroshima</i>	
3/22 Wed	#11 <i>When We Say Hiroshima (12,13)</i>	Oe: Ota, <i>Fireflies</i>	
3/27 Mon	#12 <i>Fireflies (14,15)</i>	Film: Nishizawa, 'Barefoot Gen'	
3/29 Wed	#13 'Barefoot Gen' (16)	Oe: Takenishi, <i>The Rite</i>	
4/3 Mon	#14 <i>The Rite (17,18)</i>	Film: Kurosawa, 'Rhapsody in August'	Murata, <i>In the Pot</i>
4/5 Wed	Grad #5: Kurosawa & Murata: 'Rhapsody in August'	Oe: Hayashi, <i>The Empty Can</i>	
4/10 Mon	#15 <i>The Empty Can (19,20)</i>	Oe: Inoue, <i>House of Hands</i>	
4/12 Wed	#16 <i>House of Hands (21,22)</i>	Ibuse, <i>Black Rain</i> (novel)	
4/17 Mon	#17 <i>Black Rain (23,24)</i>	Film: 'Black Rain'	Treat: (8) <i>Ibuse Masuji: Nature, Nostalgia, Memory</i>
4/19 Wed	Grad #6: Ibuse & Treat: <i>Black Rain</i> & 'Black Rain'	Oe: Ibuse, <i>The Crazy Iris</i>	
4/24 Mon	#18 <i>The Crazy Iris (25,26)</i>	Oe: Sata, <i>Colorless Paintings</i>	
4/26 Wed	#19 <i>Colorless Paintings (27,28)</i>	Seirai, <i>Ground Zero</i>	
5/1 Mon	#20 <i>Ground Zero (29,30)</i>	Prepare FINAL PAPER	Prepare FINAL PAPER
5/8 Mon	FINAL PAPER due		