565: 315 “Japanese Literature and the Atomic Bomb”
Rutgers University
Winter Session 2007

Syllabus

Instructor

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Course Description

The atomic bomb reverberates to this day in the literature of Japan. How do Japanese survivors remember and represent a pivotal event in their personal and national history? This course explores these and other questions surrounding the U.S. atomic bombings of Hiroshima on August 6th and Nagasaki on August 9th, 1945. We will read testimonial accounts by survivors of the blasts, view documentary videos describing the development and deployment of the atomic weapons, and read works of fiction and poetry addressing their aftermath. We will focus on the concept of “Positions” to understand the ongoing complexity of Japanese and American feelings about the bombs and their use in the context of World War II. All readings are in English translation.

Class will meet in Scott Hall Rm. 115, 43 College Ave. New Brunswick, at 6:10-9:30 PM from Dec. 26 (Tues) to Jan. 12 (Fri), with the following exceptions:

• NO CLASS on New Year’s Day (Jan.1, Mon).
• NO CLASS on Study Day, Jan. 11 (Thurs.) to allow students to write their final paper (8-10 pp.), due in class on Jan. 12 (Fri.).
• In case of SNOW, class to be held on Sat. (Dec. 30 or Jan. 6) at 1:00-4:30 PM.

Evaluation Criteria

• Attendance (10%)
• 10 Response Sheets (each worth 5%, 50% total)
• Final Paper (40%).

Required Texts (at Rutgers Bookstore, Ferren Mall)

1. OE Kenzaburo, The Crazy Iris
2. Richard MINEAR, Hiroshima: Three Witnesses
3. NAGAI Takashi, The Bells of Nagasaki
4. IBUSE Masuji, Black Rain
5. John TREAT, Writing Ground Zero
Class Schedule

Dec. 26 (Tues.) Class 1
  Reading: Testimonial accounts (in class)
  Lecture: Positions, representations, and contexts
  Film: “Hiroshima: City of Peace” (30 mins.)

Dec. 27 (Wed.) Class 2
  Reading: The Crazy Iris, ODA Katsuzo “Human Ashes” pp. 63-84, Response Sheet #1.
  Film: “Hiroshima: the Legacy” (30 mins.)

Dec. 28 (Thurs.) Class 3
  Reading: Hiroshima: Three Witnesses, HARA Tamiki “Summer Flowers” pp. 44-113, Response Sheet #2.
  Film: “Rain of Ruin: The Atomic Bombing of Japan” (70 mins.)

Dec. 29 (Fri.) Class 4
  Reading: Hiroshima: Three Witnesses, ÔTA Yoko “City of Corpses” pp. 147-273, Response Sheet #3.
  Film: “The Race for the Bomb” (42 mins.)

Jan. 1 (Mon.) NO CLASS—Happy New Year

Jan. 2 (Tues.) Class 5
  Film: “After the Cloud Lifted” (45 mins.)

Jan. 3 (Wed.) Class 6
  Lecture: Rituals of Burial and Mourning
  Film: “Our Hiroshima” (45 mins.)

Jan. 4 (Thurs.) Class 7
  Film: “The Nazi Bomb” (45 mins.)
Jan. 5 (Fri.) Class 8  
Film: “Rain of Ruin: the Bombing of Nagasaki” (70 mins.)

Jan. 8 (Mon.) Class 9  
Reading: IBUSE Masuji Black Rain. Response Sheet #8.  
Film: IMAMURA Shōhei, dir. “Black Rain” (100 mins.)

Jan. 9 (Tues.) Class 10  
Reading: NAGAI Takashi, The Bells of Nagasaki, Response Sheet #9.  
Film: “Children of Nagasaki” (30 mins.)

Jan. 10 (Wed.) Class 11  
Lecture: John Treat, “Hayashi Kyoko and the Gender of Ground Zero” (xerox).  
Film: NAKAZAWA Keiji, “Barefoot Gen” (100 mins.)

Jan. 11 (Thurs.) NO CLASS—Study Day

Jan. 12 (Fri.) Class 12  
**Final paper due in class (8-10 pp.)**  
Lecture: Passing on memory to future generations.  
Film: KUROSAWA Akira, dir. “Rhapsody in August” (98 mins.)