

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. Lecture: *Writing Ground Zero* "Genre and Post-Hiroshima Representation" pp. 45-81.
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.
Lecture: *Writing Ground Zero* "Hara Tamiki and the Documentary Fallacy" pp. 125-153. 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.
Lecture: *Writing Ground Zero* "Ota Yoko and the Place of the Narrator" pp. 199-226.
Film: "The Race for the Bomb" (42 mins.)

Jan. 1 (Mon.) NO CLASS—Happy New Year

Jan. 2 (Tues.) Class 5

Reading: *The Crazy Iris*, ÔTA Yoko "Fireflies" pp. 85-111, Response Sheet #4.
Lecture: *Writing Ground Zero* "Ota Yoko and the Place of the Narrator" pp. 199-226.
Film: "After the Cloud Lifted" (45 mins.)

Jan. 3 (Wed.) Class 6

Reading: TAKENISHI Hiroko "The Rite" pp. 169-200, Response Sheet #5.
Lecture: Rituals of Burial and Mourning
Film: "Our Hiroshima" (45 mins.)

Jan. 4 (Thurs.) Class 7

Reading: *Hiroshima: Three Witnesses*, TÔGE Sankichi "Poems of the Atomic Bomb" pp. 305-369, Response Sheet #6.
Lecture: *Writing Ground Zero* "Poetry Against Itself" pp. 155-197.
Film: "The Nazi Bomb" (45 mins.)

Jan. 5 (Fri.) Class 8

Reading: SATA Ineko “The Colorless Paintings” pp. 113-125. Response Sheet #7.

Lecture: The Problem of ‘Authenticity’ for Non-Hibakusha Writers.

Film: “Rain of Ruin: the Bombing of Nagasaki (70 mins.)

Jan. 8 (Mon.) Class 9

Reading: IBUSE Masuji *Black Rain*. Response Sheet #8.

Lecture: *Writing Ground Zero* “Ibuse Masuji: Nature, Nostalgia, Memory” pp. 261-299.

Film: IMAMURA Shōhei, dir. “Black Rain” (100 mins.)

Jan. 9 (Tues.) Class 10

Reading: NAGAI Takashi, *The Bells of Nagasaki*, Response Sheet #9.

Lecture: *Writing Ground Zero* “Nagasaki and the Human Future” pp. 301-349.

Film: “Children of Nagasaki” (30 mins.)

Jan. 10 (Wed.) Class 11

Reading: *The Crazy Iris*, HAYASHI Kyoko “The Empty Can” pp.127-143, Response Sheet #10.

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.)