Syllabus

Instructor

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Office Hours: Mon. & Thurs. 1:00-2:00 PM
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Course Description

Coursework consists of reading and discussion of fiction and poetry written by survivors of the 1945 U.S. atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan.

We also study six documentary videos describing the development and deployment of nuclear weapons and three feature-length films depicting the bombings.

The goal is to develop an understanding of a literature and cinema of trauma that struggles to remember, represent, and redeem the dehumanizing effects of atomic warfare. All readings are in English translation.

Response sheets and other course resources may be found on the Course Sakai site.

Grading

Class participation (10%); 15 response sheets, 2% each (total 30%); 3 five-page papers, 20% each (total 60%)

Required Texts (for purchase at Rutgers University-Barnes & Noble Bookstore or NJ Books)

Learning Goals

“Japanese Literature and the Atomic Bomb” 565:315 satisfies the following Asian Languages and Cultures Departmental Learning Goals for Japanese majors and minors:

*Majors* will be able to demonstrate substantial knowledge of Japanese literature and culture and pursue advanced study and/or employment in a capacity requiring such cultural knowledge. *Minors* will be able to analyze and interpret texts and relate relevant issues to other areas in the humanities.

*(See full statement of Asian Languages and Cultures Departmental Learning Goals at http://sas.rutgers.edu/component/docman/doc_download/532-sas-learning-goals)*

Academic Integrity Policy

Students are expected to be honest and uphold the highest standards of academic integrity at all times. All assignments must be the student’s own work. Violations of academic integrity include the following: submitting assignments that are not your own work; using the work of others without acknowledging the source (plagiarism); denying others access to information or material; and facilitating other’s violations of academic integrity.

If you ever have questions about academic integrity in the course, please talk to me or send me an email immediately with your concerns.


Attendance and Assignments Policy

Students are expected to attend all classes; if you expect to miss a class, please talk to me in advance or send me an e-mail (schalow@rci.rutgers.edu) immediately with the date and reason for your absence. You may also use the absence reporting website https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/ and an email will automatically be sent to me.

In order to earn full points, one-page, typed Response Sheets (2% each) must be submitted in class on the day of our discussion of the assigned reading; late assignments automatically lose a point and will be accepted anytime during the semester up to the final paper due-date: Dec. 13, 2013. Only typed submissions are accepted. Three 5-page papers must also be submitted when due or will lose points for lateness. Requests for an extension should be made by email and include a reason for the need of an extension.

If you ever have questions about my Attendance and Assignments Policy, please talk to me or send me an email immediately with your concerns.
Class Schedule

5 Sept. Thurs.
Lecture: Introduction to Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

9 Sept. Mon.
Due: Response sheet #1
Lecture: The day of the bombing in Hiroshima.

12 Sept. Thurs.
Lecture: Hara Tamiki (1905-1951)

16 Sept. Mon.
Reading: *Hiroshima: Three Witnesses*, Hara Tamiki, *Summer Flowers* parts 1 & 2 (“Summer Flowers” & “From the Ruins”) 41-78.
Due: Response sheet #2
Lecture: The days and weeks after the atomic bombing of Hiroshima.

19 Sept. Thurs.
Due: Response sheet #3
Lecture: Hiroshima before the atomic bombing.

23 Sept. Mon.
Reading: *Hiroshima: Three Witnesses*, Ōta Yōko: Translator’s Introduction” 147-224.
Lecture: Ōta Yōko (1906-1963)

26 Sept. Thurs.
Due: Response sheet #4
Lecture: The terror of radiation (“atomic bomb disease”).

30 Sept. Mon.
Reading: *Hiroshima: Three Witnesses*, Ōta Yōko, *City of Corpses* (“Relief” to “Late Autumn Koto Music”) 225-273.
Due: Response sheet #5
Lecture: Literary techniques employed by Oda, Hara, and Ōta.
3 Oct. Thurs.
Due: First 5-page paper.
Topic: Based on your reading of Oda Katsuzō’s “Human Ashes,” Hara Tamiki’s Summer Flowers, and Ota Yōko’s City of Corpses, describe the ways people died in the atomic bombing of Hiroshima. Be sure to give specific examples from each story and discuss how the emphasis differs in each text. Which text gave you the most vivid sense of what it was like to be in Hiroshima and experience the bombing?

7 Oct. Mon.
Reading: The Crazy Iris, Ōta Yōko, “Fireflies” 85-111.
Due: Response sheet #6
Lecture: Restoring humanity in the atomic aftermath.

10 Oct. Thurs.
Reading: The Crazy Iris, Takenishi Hiroko, “The Rite” 169-200.
Due: Response sheet #7
Lecture: Psychological effects of atomic bombing.

14 Oct. Mon.
Reading: Hiroshima: Three Witnesses, Tōge Sankichi “Translator’s Introduction” 277-300.
Lecture: Tōge Sankichi (1917-1953)

Due: Response sheet #8
Lecture: Poetry versus prose.

Reading: Kurihara Sadako, When We Say Hiroshima: Selected Poems.
Due: Response sheet #9
Lecture: Free verse versus traditional poetic forms.

Documentary film: “Rain of Ruin II: The Bombing of Nagasaki” (Oregon PBS, 1995) 70 mins.
Lecture: Introducing Nagasaki.

Reading: Nagai Takashi, The Bells of Nagasaki, selected chaps. (PDF posted on SAKAI)
Due: Response sheet #10
Lecture: The role of cultural and historical difference.
Due: Second 5-page paper.
Topic: Based on your viewing of five documentary films in class, give an account of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Explain the technology of two bombs and how they were developed. Describe the dominant perspective that is presented in each documentary, and explain how that perspective impacts the film’s interpretation of the military and humanitarian dimensions of the events. You must address **at least three** of the five documentaries in your paper.


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4 Nov. Mon.
Reading: *The Crazy Iris*, Hayashi Kyōko, “The Empty Can” 127-143.
Due: Response sheet #11
Lecture: The atomic aftermath for women.

7 Nov. Thurs.
Due: Response sheet #12
Lecture: A divided community due to the atomic bombing.

11 Nov. Mon.
Due: Response sheet #13
Lecture: The problem of authenticity for non-hibakusha writers.

14 Nov. Thurs.
Due: Response sheet #14
Lecture: The problem of authenticity for non-hibakusha writers (cont.)

18 Nov. Mon.
Reading: Ibuse Masuji, *Black Rain*.
Due: Response sheet #15
Lecture: Ibuse Masuji’s *Black Rain*

21 Nov. Thurs.

25 Nov. Mon.
Film: Imamura Shōhei, dir. “Black Rain” (cont.)
Discussion: Comparing “Black Rain” and *Black Rain*.

28 Nov. Thurs.
No Class [Thanksgiving Recess]
2 Dec. Mon.

5 Dec. Thurs.
Film: Kurosawa Akira, dir. “Rhapsody in August” (Shochiku Films, 1991) 98 mins.

9 Dec. Mon. (last class)
Film: Kurosawa Akira, dir. “Rhapsody in August” (cont.)
Film Discussion: “Barefoot Gen I & II” and “Rhapsody in August”

13 Dec. Fri.
Due: Final 5-page paper due in Scott Hall Rm. 330 by 4:00 PM
Topic: Briefly explain your preconceptions about the atomic bombings before you took this course, and then describe in detail your current thinking. Which genre or genres (fiction, poetry, documentary, feature-length film) did you appreciate the most, and why? Be sure to discuss at least one work from each genre that had the biggest impact in developing your new perspective.