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JPNS 432.01: Postwar Japanese Literature

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Postwar Japanese literature

(UG Japanese 431-L, 3 credits)



LA 204, Tuesdays and Thursdays 11:10-12:30

Charles Cabell (LA 318, 234-5301, ccabell@selway.umt.edu)

Office Hours: Monday – Thursday 9:00-10, Tuesday and Thursday 12:30-1:30, and by appt.

Content: This course, an elective for the major in Japanese, is designed for students having little or no previous knowledge of Japan. We will examine Japanese writers' responses to the spiritual and economic collapse that follows Japanese defeat in WWII, conditions under the US occupation, economic recovery and prosperity, and postmodernism. We will also explore how various writers deal with concepts of family, gender, memory; identity, history, sexuality, the emperor system, state power, marginality, language, myth, nationalism, etc. Note that all works read will be in English (Those who read Japanese may read Japanese originals), and no knowledge of the Japanese language is required or expected.

I will briefly introduce writers and suggest critical interpretations, but students should understand from the outset that class discussions reflect a collective effort whose success depends upon active participation. Be prepared to develop and express, orally and in writing, your own ideas about the literary works and culture under study.

Method of Assessment:

Grade ranges: A (90-100); B (80-90); C (70-79); D (60-69)

Grade Assessment and Requirements:

1. Draft of 5-7-page paper: 5%
2. Final 5-7-page paper carefully edited and proofread: 25%
3. Midterm Exam: 20%
4. Four 1-2-page papers on four of the major works we will be reading. $4 \times 7\% = 28\%$
5. Participation (Each student is to lead part of one class discussion): 22%
6. Additional Course Requirement: Students who have completed at least sixty semester credits must demonstrate that they have passed the UDWPA (Upper Division Writing Proficiency Assessment) by the end of the semester. The UDWPA is required for graduation, and the university has requested that all upper-division writing courses add this requirement. The Assessment will be offered February 21, March 30, and April 25. To register, visit the following website:

Course Operating Policies:

(1) I have designed this course as a group exploration of postwar Japanese literature and literary history. Do not come to class unprepared. I expect you to come to each class, having taken notes on the readings. Please be ready to ask questions about specific points in the text, and offer your own interpretation. Attendance will be taken at each meeting. More than two absences (excused or not) will result in a lowering of a student's final participation mark by three points per absence. With the sixth absence, a student will fail the course, as this represents some 20% of the course. No eating in class (except for film nights!). No cellular phones. Please feel free to invite friends to participate in film nights.

(2) 1-2-page Papers: Please hand in all assignments on the date they are due. No more than 2 pages please. Late papers will be penalized one letter grade for each day past the due date. Students must go over each paper with a tutor in the writing lab (LA 109) before handing the paper in for a grade. Papers must be submitted stapled with their original draft, signed by a tutor from the writing lab.

(3) The 5-7-page draft should represent your own interpretation of one of the texts read in class. You must be thoroughly familiar with the text on which you are writing. You should support your interpretations with specific citations from the readings. Students should feel free to expand upon one of their short papers. When I return your draft to you, I will request you to read at least one of the suggested readings, which I will expect you to incorporate in your final version of the paper.

Required Texts:

(You may want to consider purchasing used versions of these books from www.abe.com.)

1. ŌOKA Shōhei. *Fires on the Plain*
2. KAWABATA Yasunari. *Sound of the Mountain*
3. DAZAI Osamu. *The Setting Sun*
4. ŌE Kenzaburō. *Silent Cry*
5. TANAKA Yukiko, Ed. *Unmapped Territories: New Women's Fiction from Japan*
6. MISHIMA Yukio. *Confessions of a Mask*

January 29: Introduction, Class Overview

January 31: ŌOKA Shōhei. *Fires on the Plain*, 3-78

February 5 *Fires on the Plain*, 78-154

February 7 *Fires on the Plain*, 155-246

*SUGGESTED READING: Stahl, David. "Ōoka Shōhei's Writings on the Pacific War"
Ph. D diss. Yale University 1994, 67-158.

February 12 ODA Katsuzō. "Human Ashes" (63-84), HAYASHI Kyōko. "The Empty Can" (127-144), INOUE Mitsuharu. "The House of Hands" (145-168) in *The Crazy Iris and Other Stories of the Atomic Aftermath*. Edited by ŌE Kenzaburō. Course Packet.

February 14 HIRABAYASHI Taiko. "Blind Chinese Soldiers" in *Japanese Women Writers*. Edited by Noriko Lippit, 41-45; Course Packet. ŌTA Yōko. "Residues of Squalor" in *Japanese*

Women Writers, 58-83; Course Packet. Begin Reading Sound of the Mountain.

February 19 **EVENING FILM** 7:00 – 9:15 *Fires on the Plain*. Dir. ICHIKAWA Kon.

February 21 KAWABATA Yasunari. *Sound of the Mountain* 1-74
PAPER DUE (*Fires on the Plain*)

February 26 *Sound of the Mountain* 75-160

February 28 *Sound of the Mountain* 161-276

***SUGGESTED READING:**

Cabell, Charles. “Kawabata Yasunari” in *Modern Japanese Writers*. Edited by Jay Rubin. 149-168. Dower, John. “Cultures of Defeat” in *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II*. 121-167.

EVENING FILM: 7:00 – 9:15. Dir. MIZOGUCHI *Sisters of the Gion*

March 5 HAYASHI Fumiko. “A Late Chrysanthemum” in *A Late Chrysanthemum: Twenty-one Stories from the Japanese*. Translated by Lane Dunlop, 95-112; Course Packet.
PAPER DUE (*Sound of the Mountain*)

March 7 DAZAI Osamu. *The Setting Sun* 1-78

March 12 *The Setting Sun* 79-175

March 14 Midterm Exam

Spring Break (Read *Silent Cry* during Break)

March 26 ŌE Kenzaburō *Silent Cry* 1-100 (Do NOT read introduction!)

March 28 *Silent Cry* 101-160

April 2 *Silent Cry* 161-222

April 4 *Silent Cry* 223-274

***SUGGESTED READING:** Wilson, Michiko. “A Narrative of Simultaneity: The Football Game of the First Year of Man’em” in *Marginal World of Ōe Kenzaburō*, 48-60. Pollack, David. “The Archeology of Difference: Kenzaburō Ōe’s *The Silent Cry*” in *Reading Against Culture*, 192-210. Napier, Susan. “You Can Learn a Lot from Legends: *The Silent Cry*, 180-195.

April 9 ŌBA Minako. “Candle Fish” in *Unmapped Territories* 18-38. HIKARI Agata “A Family Party” in *Unmapped Territories* 84-119 (Bibliography in course packet).

***SUGGESTED READING:** Wilson, Michiko. “Artists as Cultural Critic as Woman” in *Gender is Fair Game*, 44-63.

April 11 ABE Kōbo. “The Magic Chalk” in *The Shōwa Anthology: Modern Japanese Short Stories I*. Edited by Van Gessel, 63-76; Course Packet. KURAHASHI Yumiko. “The Woman

with the Flying Head” in *The Woman with the Flying Head and Other Stories*. Translated by SAKAKI Atsuko, 45-52; Course Packet. TANIZAKI Jun’ichirō. “Bridge of Dreams” in *Contemporary Japanese literature*. Edited by Howard Hibbit, 354-388; Course Packet.

*SUGGESTED READING: SAKAKI Atsuko. “(Re)Canonizing Kurahashi Yumiko: Toward Alternative Perspectives for “Modern” “Japanese” “literature” in *Ōe and Beyond: Fiction in Contemporary Japan*. Edited by Stephen Snyder. 153-176. Chambers, Anthony. “The Bridge of Dreams” in *The Secret Window: Ideal Worlds in Tanizaki’s Fiction*, 107-124.

April 16 **EVENING FILM 7:00 – 9:15** *Women of the Dunes*. Dir. TESHIGAHARA Hiroshi.
PAPER DUE (*Silent Cry*)

April 18 KANAI Mieko. “Rabbits” in *Rabbits, Crabs, Etc.: Stories by Japanese Women*. Translated by Phyllis Birnbaum, 1-17; Course Packet. KŌNO Taeko. “Ant Swarm” in *Toddler-Hunting and Other Stories*. Translated by Lucy North, 166-184; Course Packet.

*SUGGESTED READING: Orbaugh Sharalyn. “Arguing with the Real: Kanai Mieko” in *Oe and Beyond*, 245-277.

Draft of Final Paper Due (Discussion of Papers)

April 23 MISHIMA Yukio. *Confessions of a Mask* 1-100

April 25 *Confessions of a Mask* 100-166

April 30 *Confessions of a Mask* 167-254

*SUGGESTED READING: Slaymaker, Douglas. “Japanese literature after Sartre: Noma, Ōe, and Mishima” Ph. D. diss., 224-240. Starr, Roy. *Dangerous Dialectics* (See section of *Confessions of a Mask*.)

May 2 YAMAMOTO Michiko “The Man who cut the Grass” in *This Kind of Woman: Ten Stories by Japanese Women Writers, 1960-1976*. Translated and Edited by Yukiko Tanaka, 181-195; Course Packet. YAMADA Emi “When a Man Loves a Woman” in *Unmapped Territories* 69-8 (Bibliography in course packet). TOMIOKA Taeko “Straw Dogs” in *Unmapped Territories* 120-151 (Bibliography in course packet).

*SUGGESTED READING: Cornyetz, Nina. “Power and Gender in the Writings of Yamada Eimi” in *Woman’s Hand: Gender and Theory in Japanese Women’s Writing*. Edited by Paul Schalow, 425-453.

May 7 SAEGUSA Kazuko “The Rain at Rokudō Crossroad” in *Unmapped Territories* 3-17 (Bibliography in course packet). MASUDA Mizuko “Sinking Ground” in *Unmapped Territories*, 39-68 (Bibliography in course packet). TSUSHIMA Yūko “The Marsh” in *Unmapped Territories*, 152-163 (Bibliography in course packet).

PAPER DUE (*Confessions of a Mask*)

May 9 TAWADA Yoko “The Bridegroom was a Dog” in *The Bridegroom was a Dog*. Translated by Margaret Mitsutani, 9-62 Course Packet. **Final Paper Due**