Japanese Literature of the A-Bomb

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Spring 2004
Grinnell College

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Required Books

Hersey, John. Hiroshima.
Minear, Richard, ed. Hiroshima: Three Witnesses.
Oe, Kenzaburo, ed. The Crazy Iris and Other Stories of the Atomic Aftermath
Selden, Kyoko and Mark, eds. The Atomic Bomb: Voices From Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Recommended Books


Course Outline

I. Introduction

M. Jan 19: Introduction. Video: Why The Bomb Was Dropped
W. Jan 21: Hersey, Hiroshima [1946], chapters One through Four

II. The Decision to Drop the Bomb
M. Jan 26: The Official Narrative
Introduction (xi-xiii), in Rain of Ruin: A Photographic History of Hiroshima and Nagasaki
Stimson, Henry, The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb (197-211); see also, Contents (xi-xiv), in Bird, Kai and Lawrence Lifschultz, eds., Hiroshima's shadow.

W. Jan 28: Revisionist Accounts
Selden, Mark, Introduction: The United States, Japan, and the Atomic Bomb (xi-xxxv), in Selden, Kyoko and Mark, eds., Voices from Hiroshima and Nagasaki
Takaki, Ronald, A Past Not Past (ch. 1, 3-11, n. 153-156); Hiroshima: The Face of War and Humanity (ch. 7, 121-151, n. 179-183), in Takaki, Ronald, Hiroshima: Why America Dropped The Atomic Bomb

III. The Atomic Bomb Experience: Witnesses to the Bombing of Hiroshima & Nagasaki

Dower, John, War, Peace, and Beauty: The Art of Iri Maruki and Toshi Maruki (9-26), in Dower, John and John Junkerman, eds., The Hiroshima Murals
Junkerman, John. Oil and Water: An Interview with the Artists (121-128), in Dower and Junkerman, eds., The Hiroshima Murals
[extra] Dower, John, Japanese Artists and the Atomic Bomb (242-256), in Dower, John, Japan in War and Peace
[also, I urge you to go look at The Hiroshima Panels in the Iowa Room of the library]
W. Feb 11: The Boy Who Was a Fetus: The Death of Kajiyama Kenji (159-169); Pictures By Atom Bomb Survivors (between 214 and 219); Children's Voices (219-242), in Selden, Kyoko and Mark, eds., Voices from Hiroshima and Nagasaki

IV. Invisible Contamination and A-Bomb Disease: The Scientific & Medical Aftermath

M. Feb 16: Shohno, Naomi, Introduction (16-29) and photographs (57-72), in Hibakusha: Survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki
Gusterson, Hugh, Remembering Hiroshima at a Nuclear Weapons Laboratory (210-226), and photos, pp. 130 & 251, in Hein, Laura and Mark Selden, eds., Living With The Bomb
Introduction: The Atomic Bomb: Challenge of Our Time: (3-7, 11, 14-17); see also, Contents (xxv-xxxi), in Hiroshima and Nagasaki: the Physical, Medical and Social Effects of the Atomic Bombings
Roeder, George, Making Things Visible: Learning from the Censors (73-99, a photographic essay), in Hein, Laura and Mark Selden, eds., Living With The Bomb

V. Japanese Literary Responses

As background for this five-week unit of the course, please read these two items on your own and make use of them in your position statements:
Treat, John Whittier, Preface (ix-xvii); Introduction (1-22); Atrocity into Words (25-43); pictures of writers, locations in Hiroshima and Nagasaki at time of bombings (122-123); in Treat, J. W., Writing Ground Zero: Japanese Literature and the Atomic Bomb
Lifton, Robert Jay, Formulation: Self and World (ch. 9, 367-395), in Lifton, Robert Jay, Death In Life: Survivors of Hiroshima

Novellas
M. Mar 1: Ota Yoko, City of Corpses (198-273)

Short Stories
W. Mar 3: Oda, Katsuzo, Human Ashes (63-84); Takenishi, Hiroko, The Rite (169-200); Tamiki, Hara The Land of Heart’s Desire (55-62); in Oe, Kenzaburo, ed., The Crazy Iris and Other Stories of the Atomic Aftermath
M. Mar 8: Ota, Yoko, Fireflies (85-112); Sata, Ineko, The Colorless Paintings (113-126); Hayashi, Kyoko, The Empty Can (127-144); in Oe, The Crazy Iris and Other Stories

Poetry

SPRING BREAK (March 13-28)

Women's Poetry and Prose

Plays
M. Apr 5: Betsuyaku, Minoru, The Elephant [1962] (185-248), in Goodman,
VI. Hiroshima and Nagasaki in History and Memory

M. Apr 12: American History and Memory
Linenthal, Edward & Tom Engelhardt, Introduction: History Under Siege (1-7), in Linenthal & Engelhardt, eds., History Wars: The Enola Gay & Other Battles for the American Past
Hogan, Michael J. The Enola Gay Controversy: History, Memory, and the Politics of Persuasion (200-232), in Hogan, Michael J., ed., Hiroshima in History and Memory
W. Apr 14: Japanese History and Memory
Orr, James J., Beyond the Postwar (173-179), in Orr, James J., The Victim as Hero: Ideologies of Peace and National Identity in Postwar Japan
Walker, J. Samuel, History, Collective Memory, and the Decision to Use the Bomb (187-199), in Hogan, Michael J., ed., Hiroshima in History and Memory
Also, if you can, read one (or both) of the following on Reserve:
[r] Lifton, Robert Jay, Residual Struggles: Trust, Peace, and Mastery (253-316), and/or Perceiving America (317-365), in Lifton, Death In Life
M. Apr 19: Comparative Japanese and American History and Memory
Hein, Laura and Mark Selden, Commemoration and Silence: Fifty Years of Remembering the Bomb in America and Japan (3-34), and photograph, p. 148 (Enola Gay cartoon), in Hein and Selden, Living With the Bomb

VII. Conclusion: Legacy of Hiroshima: Moral, Psychological, Political

VIII. Student Presentations (individual assignments to be announced)
M. Apr 26
W. Apr 2
M. May 3
W. May 5
Requirements

1. Regular attendance
2. Position statements on the readings
3. In-class presentation, response, and leading of discussion
4. Final presentation and paper, ca. 8-10 pp.

Position Statements

These position statements are meant to provide jumping-off points for our class discussions. They may, but usually do not have to, address one or another study question on the reading as a whole. A brief paragraph, ca. 200-400 words, is enough. The goal should be to get to the point of the issue at hand, and to make an appropriate critical response. They should be typed and printed from a computer.

In-Class Presentation and Response

Presentation. Each of you will be asked once in the semester to make a brief oral presentation (about 10 minutes) in class on that day's readings. These presentations should not be summaries. Rather, you should focus on what you think are the main points at issue in the readings, and provide your own critical assessment of the reading. You may prepare a written version if you wish. However, the presentation itself should be made from an outline or short notes, not by reading from a written text or extended prose notes.
Response. Each of you will also be asked once in the semester to make a brief oral response (about 5 minutes) to a classmate's presentation. You should prepare yourself to be ready to listen carefully to, think about, and respond to the presentation. Your job will be to give a thoughtful, critical appraisal of the content of the presentation.

Final Presentation and Paper

A topic of your choice related to an issue or unit in the course and agreed upon with the instructor. You should turn in an abstract and tentative bibliography by Monday, April 12th. The first part is an in-class presentation and discussion with the class of the results of your research. The presentation should be about ten or fifteen minutes, leaving ten or fifteen minutes for discussion. The presentation should be made from an outline or short notes, not by reading from the text of a paper or extended prose notes. The second part is the written version, a paper of 8-10 pages taking into account the discussion.
Class Listserv

A class listserv will be set up for the course through which study questions and announcements, etc., will from time to time be distributed.

[r] = Recommended Readings, on Library Reserve

II. The Decision to Drop the Bomb

M. Jan 26:
[r] Ford, Nancy Gentile, The Decision to Drop the Atomic Bomb in World War II (203-230), in Ford, Nancy Gentile, Issues Of War and Peace (includes memos and other documents)
W. Jan 28:
[r] Bernstein, Barton, Understanding the Atomic Bomb and the Japanese Surrender: Missed Opportunities, Little-Known Near Disasters, and Modern Memory (38-79), in Hogan, Michael, ed., Hiroshima in History and Memory
[r] Bix, Herbert, Japan’s Delayed Surrender: A Reinterpretation (80-115), in Hogan, Michael, ed., Hiroshima in History and Memory

III. The Atomic Bomb Experience: Witnesses to the Bombing of Hiroshima & Nagasaki

W. Feb 4:
[r] Storytellers (85-147), in Yoneyama, Lisa, Hiroshima Traces: Time, Space, and the Dialectics of Memory
M. Feb 9:
[r] Dower, John and John Junkerman, eds., The Hiroshima Murals
[r] The Hiroshima Panels (smaller version: on Reserve)
[r] The Hiroshima Panels (larger version: in the Iowa Room of Burling Library)
W. Feb 11:
[r] Lifton, Robert Jay, Hiroshima (ch. 1, 13-14); The Atomic Bomb Experience (ch. 2, 15-56), in Lifton, Death In Life: Survivors of Hiroshima

IV. Invisible Contamination and A-Bomb Disease: The Scientific & Medical Aftermath
M. Feb 16:
[r] Physical Effects, Medical Effects, in Hiroshima and Nagasaki: the Physical, Medical and Social Effects of the Atomic Bombings
W. Feb 18:
[r] Social Effects, in Hiroshima and Nagasaki: the Physical, Medical and Social Effects...
[r] Lifton, Robert Jay, Invisible Contamination (ch. 3, 57-102); A-Bomb Disease (ch. 4, 103-163), in Lifton, Robert Jay, Death In Life: Survivors of Hiroshima
[r] Igarashi, Yoshikuni, The Age of the Body (ch. 2, 47-73, n. 220-227); Re-presenting Trauma in Late-1960s Japan (ch. 6, 164-198, n. 245-250), in Igarashi, Bodies of Memory

V. Japanese Literary Responses

[r] Treat, John Whittier, Genre and Post-Hiroshima Representation (45-81); The Three Debates (83-120); in Treat, Writing Ground Zero
[r] Lifton, Robert Jay, Creative Response: 2) Artistic Dilemmas (ch. 11, 451-479), in Lifton, Robert Jay, Death In Life [on films]
[r] Lifton, Robert Jay, The Survivor (ch. 12, 479-541), in Lifton, Death in Life
[r] Igarashi, Yoshikuni, A Nation That Never Is: Cultural Discourse on Japanese Uniqueness (ch. 3, 73-103, n. 227-230), in Igarashi, Bodies of Memory
[r] Dower, John, The Bombed (ch. 5, 116-142), in Hogan, Michael J., ed., Hiroshima in History and Memory
[r] Orr, James J., Hiroshima and Yuiitsu no hibakukoku [The only country that suffered from the atomic bomb]: Atomic Victimhood in the Antinuclear Peace Movement (36-70, n.194-208), in Orr, The Victim as Hero
M. Feb. 23:
W. Feb 25:
[r] Treat, John Whittier, Ota Yoko and the Place of the Narrator (199-226), in Treat, Writing Ground Zero: Japanese Literature and the Atomic Bomb
VII. Conclusion: Legacy of Hiroshima: Moral, Psychological, Political
W. Apr 21:


TWO ATOMIC BOMB NOVELS

[r] Ibuse Masuji, Black Rain [1966]
[r] Lifton, Robert Jay, Appendix: Black Rain (543-555), in Lifton, Death In Life
[r] Orr, James J., Sentimental Humanism: The Victim in Novels and Films (ch 5, 129-135, on Black Rain), in Orr, James J., The Victim as Hero
[r] Sakaki, Atsuko, Obsessed With Inscription: Ibuse Masuji,s Kuroi ame, or (Re)Writing Memories, in Sakaki, Atsuko, Recontextualizing Texts: Narrative Performance in Modern Japanese Fiction

FOUR ATOMIC BOMB FILMS (on reserve at Library Listening Room or AV Center)

Record of a Living Being (105 minutes, dir. Akira Kurosawa, 1955) Library
Hiroshima, Mon Amour (91 minutes; dir. Alain Resnais, 1959) AV Center
Black Rain (123 minutes, dir. Shohei Imamura, 1988) Library
Rhapsody in August (98 minutes, dir. Akira Kurosawa, 1991) Library
Our Hiroshima (43 minutes, 1995; Canadian documentary) Library

Books on Library Reserve
Bird, Kai and Lawrence Lifschultz, eds., Hiroshima,s shadow
Buruma, Ian, The Wages of Guilt: Memories of War in Germany and Japan
Dower, John, Japan in War and Peace
Dower, John and John Junkerman, eds., The Hiroshima Murals
Ford, Nancy Gentile, Issues Of War and Peace
Goodman, David G., After Apocalypse: Four Japanese Plays of Hiroshima and Nagasaki
Hein, Laura and Mark Selden, eds., Living With the Bomb...
Hiroshima and Nagasaki: the Physical, Medical and Social Effects of the Atomic Bombings
The Hiroshima Panels (small version)
The Hiroshima Panels (large version: downstairs in the Iowa Room of Burling Library)
Hogan, Michael J., Hiroshima in History and Memory
Ibuse, Masuji, Black Rain
Igarashi, Yoshikuni, Bodies of Memory: Narratives of War in Postwar Japanese Culture...
Lifton, Robert Jay, Death in Life: Survivors of Hiroshima
Lifton, Robert Jay and Greg Mitchell, Hiroshima in America: A Half Century of Denial
Lindée, M. Susan, Suffering Made Real: American Science and the Survivors of Hiroshima
Maruki, Toshi, Hiroshima no Pika
Oe, Kenzaburo, Hiroshima Notes
Orr, James J., The Victim as Hero: Ideologies of Peace and National Identity in Postwar Japan
Sakaki, Atsuko, Recontextualizing Texts: Narrative Performance in Modern Japanese Fiction
Treat, John Whittier, Writing Ground Zero: Japanese Literature and the Atomic Bomb
Yoneyama, Lisa, Hiroshima Traces: Time, Space, and the Dialectics of Memory
On Order for Library Reserve
Fujitani, T., G. M. White and Lisa Yoneyama, eds., Perilous Memories: the Asia-Pacific War(s)
Linenthal, Edward T. and Tom Engelhardt, eds., History Wars: Enola Gay and Other Battles for the American Past
Schlant, E. and J. Thomas Rimer, eds., Legacies and Ambiguities: Postwar Fiction and Culture in West Germany and Japan
Unforgettable Fire: Pictures Drawn by Atomic Bomb Survivors