

Fall 2011**565:350 Japanese Film****M 5: 3:55pm-5:15pm (RAB-204)****W 2, 3: 10:55am-1:55pm (RAB-206)**

Instructor: Satoru Saito

Office: Scott Hall, Room 338

Office Hours: M 11:45am-1:15pm, W in RAB-206 after film screening

E-mail: ssaito@rci.rutgers.edu**Course Description**

This course explores the major cinematic representations of pre-WWII and post-WWII Japan. Among the themes of the courses are the issues of modernity and westernization, nostalgia of the past, and negotiations between progress and tradition. A particular focus will be given to the films of the 1950s and 1960s, the height of the popularity and influence of the film media in Japanese society. An examination of the sociohistorical contexts within which the films were produced, circulated, and consumed will be encouraged.

Requirements

Class attendance, participation, and response questions (10%); 4 response papers (First two at 10% each, Last two at 15% each; total of 50%); Final Paper (40%)

Response questions: At the end of each film screenings on Wednesdays, you will be asked to turn in a question you had about the film. Your questions should address an issue that you believe to be a crucial one in your interpretation of the film.

Response papers: Every two or three weeks, you are required to write an analytical paper, which focuses on a specific scene of a film that we have seen. The paper consists of two parts. First, I would like you to describe the scene that you will be discussion (1 page). Second, analyze this scene (1 page for the first two papers and 2 pages for the last two papers). Your analysis should show why the selected scene is important for our understanding of the film.

Final paper: At the end of the semester, you are asked to submit a final paper (around 10 pages double-spaced). The final paper should present an organized argument on a theme of your choice and be comparative (at least 2 films).

Note on Academic Integrity: You are expected to uphold the highest level of academic integrity in this class. For more information, please see <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/>. I will also be glad to discuss with you any concerns or questions you have on this issue.

Note on absences: Students are expected to attend all classes; if you expect to miss class, please use the University absence reporting website <https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/> to indicate the date and reason for your absence. An email is automatically sent to me.

References

Allison, Gary. *Japan's Postwar History*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997.

Richie, Donald. *A Hundred Years of Japanese Film*. Revised Edition. New York: Kôdansha International, 2005.

Class Schedule

(All reading materials are on electronic reserves)

UNIT I **Prewar and Postwar Japanese Film: Two Points of Comparison**

September 7: Introduction

*David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson, "Glossary," in *Film Art: An Introduction*, pp. 501-6.

September 8: Screening of *Sisters of the Gion* (Mizoguchi Kenji; 1936)

**Class meets in MONDAY CLASSROOM and TIMESLOT

September 12: Discussion of *Sisters of the Gion*

*Keiko McDonald, "Introduction," in *Reading a Japanese Film*, pp. 1-11.

*Noel Burch, "Mizoguchi Kenji," in *To the Distant Observer*, pp. 217-246.

September 14: Screening of *I Was Born, but...* (Ozu Yasujirô; 1932)

September 19: Discussion of *I Was Born, but...*

*David Bordwell, "Materials," in *Ozu and the Poetics of Cinema*, pp. 31-50.

*David Bordwell, "I Was Born, but..." in *Ozu and the Poetics of Cinema*, pp. 224-29.

September 21: Screening of *Ugetsu* (Mizoguchi Kenji; 1953)

September 26: Discussion of *Ugetsu*

*John Dower, "Introduction" and "Shattered Lives," in *Embracing Defeat*, pp. 19-64.

***Response Paper #1 Due Monday (September 26) on *Sisters of the Gion* or *I Was Born, but...*

September 28: Screening of *Tokyo Story* (Ozu Yasujirô; 1953)

October 3: Discussion of *Tokyo Story*

*David Bordwell, "Structures, Strictures and Stratagems," in *Ozu and the Poetics of Cinema*, pp. 51-72.

*David Bordwell, "Tokyo monogatari," in *Ozu and the Poetics of Cinema*, pp. 328-333.

*David Desser, "Introduction," in *Ozu's Tokyo Story*, pp. 1-24.

UNIT II **Humanism of Kurosawa Akira and Japan Under Occupation**

October 5: Screening of *Drunken Angel* (Kurosawa Akira; 1948)

October 10: Discussion of *Drunken Angel*

*John Dower, "Cultures of Defeat," in *Embracing Defeat*, pp. 121-67.

***Response Paper #2 Due Monday (October 10) on *Ugetsu* or *Tokyo Story*

October 12: Screening of *Stray Dog* (Kurosawa Akira; 1949)

October 17: Discussion of *Stray Dog*

*Mitsuhiro Yoshimoto, "Stray Dog," in *Kurosawa: Film Studies and Japanese Cinema*, pp. 147-78.

October 19: Screening of *Ikiru* (Kurosawa Akira; 1952)

October 24: Discussion of *Ikiru*

*Stephen Prince, "Willpower Can Cure All Human Ailments," in *The Warrior's Camera: The Cinema of Akira Kurosawa*, pp. 67-113.

Unit III: The Rise of the Japanese Youth

October 26: Screening of *Crazed Fruit* (Nakahira Kô; 1956)

October 31: Discussion of *Crazed Fruit*

*Michael Raine, "Ishihara Yûjirô: Youth, Celebrity, and the Male Body in Late 1950s Japan," in *Word and Image in Japanese Cinema*, pp. 202-225.

*Isolde Standish, "Cinema and Transgression," in *A New History of Japanese Cinema: a Century of Narrative Film*, pp. 220-34.

***Response Paper #3 Due Monday (October 31) on the films of Kurosawa Akira

November 2: Screening of *A Cruel Story of Youth* (Ôshima Nagisa; 1960)

November 7: Discussion of *A Cruel Story of Youth*

*David Desser, "Cruel Stories of Youth," in *Eros plus Massacre: An Introduction to the Japanese New Wave Cinema*, pp. 13-58.

November 9: Screening of *Pigs and Battleships* (Imamura Shôhei; 1961)

November 14: Discussion of *Pigs and Battleships*

*David Desser, "Cruel Stories of Youth," in *Eros plus Massacre: An Introduction to the Japanese New Wave Cinema*, pp. 58-75.

*Isolde Standish, "Cinema and Transgression," in *A New History of Japanese Cinema: a Century of Narrative Film*, pp. 234-57.

Unit IV: The Permutations of the Japanese Hero

November 16: Screening of *Yôjimbo* (Kurosawa Akira; 1961)

November 21: Discussion of *Yôjimbo*

*Stephen Prince, "History and the Period Film," in *The Warrior's Camera: The Cinema of Akira Kurosawa*, pp. 200-233.

**Class meets in WEDNESDAY CLASSROOM and TIMESLOT

***Response Paper #4 Due Monday (November 21) on *Crazed Fruit, A Cruel Story of Youth*, or *Pigs and Battleships*

November 23: NO CLASS; Thanksgiving

November 28: NO CLASS; make up day

November 30: Screening of *Tokyo Drifter* (Suzuki Seijun; 1966)

December 5: Discussion of *Tokyo Drifter*

*Keiko McDonald, "The *Yakuza* Film: An Introduction," in *Reframing Japanese Cinema*, pp. 165-192.

December 7: Screening of *Otoko wa tsuraiyo* (Yamada Yôji; 1969)

December 12: Discussion of *Otoko wa tsuraiyo*

*Richard Torrence, "*Otoko wa tsuraiyo*: Nostalgia or Parodic Realism?" in *Word and Image in Japanese Cinema*, pp. 226-249.

***FINAL PAPER Due at Noon on Monday, December 19 (please turn in papers under my office door at Scott 338 or in my mailbox in Scott 330).