

The Atomic Bomb in Literature and Memory: Japan and the United States

**JAPN 425
TU/TH TIME, JMZ ROOM**

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It is not an exaggeration to say that the United States' atomic attack on the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the only two times atomic bombs have been used purposely on human, civilian targets, had a profound impact on all citizens of the earth, forever and irrevocably changing our understanding of life, power, and politics. In the wake of these tragedies, some felt even time had to be refashioned and christened 1945 "Atomic Age: Year One." Now, in Atomic Age: Year 72, this course examines the ways the invention, testing, use, and "management" of nuclear weapons have played a role in the politics and popular culture of Japan and the U.S. To that end, we will study the fiction surrounding the decision to use "the bomb," the ways Japanese writers have attempted to express their indescribable experiences in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and the shaping of historical narratives and national identities in post-war Japan and the U.S. We will investigate representations of the "monstrous" threat of nuclear weapons (Godzilla!) and the history and current state of proliferation and anti-nuclear peace activism. We will familiarize ourselves with the most current and pressing issues related to nuclear power and the fallout of the nuclear disaster caused by the devastating Japanese earthquake of March 11, 2011 as we attempt to understand how the threat of nuclear arms and power continues to loom large in the politics and the popular imagination of these two countries.

Course Requirements:

Class Participation	15%
Assignments/Quizzes/Journal	45%
Midterm Exam	20% In-Class: DATE
Final Exam	20% Online: DATE

Required Texts:

Fallout, Jim Ottaviani (historical graphic novel)
The Crazy Iris and Other Stories of the Atomic Aftermath, Ôe Kenzaburo, ed.
Town of Evening Calm, Country of Cherry Blossoms, Kôno Fumiyo (manga)

The rest of the readings are available on our class website through Canvas or online.
Students are responsible for printing out or bringing electronic versions of all readings to class per the reading schedule.

Mandatory Film Viewing *Outside of Class:*

Witness to Hiroshima (Canvas streaming, 16 minutes)

Hellfire: A Journey from Hiroshima (Canvas streaming, 58 minutes)

Godzilla: King of the Monsters (Canvas streaming, 81 minutes)

No More Hibakusha! (Canvas Streaming, 56 minutes)

WEEK ONE

January 27 (TU)

Introduction to the Course

January 29 (TH) *The Creation of the Atomic Bomb* (142)

Fallout (pp. 1-142), Jim Ottaviani; (Note: This is an historical graphic novel.)

WEEK TWO

February 3 (TU) *Atomic Diplomacy* (53)

“Intro,” “The Trajectory of Japan’s Decline,” “General Efforts to End The War,”
“Preliminaries: April and May 1945,” and “Postponing Confrontation with Stalin,” from
The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb, Gar Alperovitz

February 5 (TH) *Documenting the Decision - Multiple Motivations* (23)

Documents from *The Manhattan Project: A Documentary Introduction to the Atomic Age*

WEEK THREE

February 10 (TU) *War and Othering* (54)

“Patterns of a Race War,” and “Apes and Others,” from *War Without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War*, John W. Dower

“I Wanted to Build Greater East Asia,” “As Long as I Don’t Fight, I’ll Make it Home,”

“Qualifying as a Leader,” and “A Village Boy Goes to War” from *Japan at War*

Song: Someone’s Gotta Slap That Jap And Uncle Sam’s the One To Do It (in class)

February 12 (TH)

“*The Whole Person*” (14)

“The Concerned Scientists” from *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb*, Gar Alperovitz

“The Bomb: The Decline to Barbarism” from *The Atomic Bomb: The Critical Issues*,

Dwight MacDonal

Video: *Hiroshima/Nagasaki, August 1945* (in class)

WEEK FOUR

February 17 (TU) *Trauma and Representation* (79)

City of Corpses, Ôta Yôko, from *Hiroshima: Three Witnesses*, ed. Richard Minear
(Read Preface, pp. 145-151; first four sections of *City of Corpses*, pp. 153-224)

February 19 (TH) *Truths and Testimonies* (46)

“Human Ashes” from *The Crazy Iris and Other Stories of the Atomic Aftermath*, Oda Katsuzô

“A Terrible Weapon,” “Eight Hundred Meters from the Hypocenter,” “A Korean in Hiroshima,” “Five Photographs of Aug. 6” from *Japan at War*

“Pictures by Atomic Bomb Survivors” from *The Atomic Bomb Voices from Hiroshima and Nagasaki*, Kyoko and Mark Selden, eds.

WEEK FIVE

February 24 (TU) *The Power of Poetry* (48)

Biographical information on **Tôge** Sankichi and select poems from *Poems of the Atomic Bomb* from *Hiroshima: Three Witnesses*, Richard Minear, (Required poems: “Prelude,” “August 6,” “Dying,” “Flames,” “Blind,” “At the Makeshift Aid Station,” “Eyes,” “Season of Flame,” “Dawn,” “August 6, 1950,” “Entreaty,” “Afterword”) (For both see document titled “Toge Sankichi Bio and Poems” in Canvas)

February 26 (TH) *The Voice of Art* (38)

“Colorless Painting” from *The Crazy Iris and Other Stories of the Atomic Aftermath*, **Sata** Ineko

“War, Peace, and Beauty” and “Oil and Water: An Interview with the Artists” from *The Hiroshima Murals: The Art of Iri Maruki and Toshi Maruki*, John Dower and John Junkerman, eds.

Video: *Hellfire: A Journey from Hiroshima* (Canvas streaming)

WEEK SIX

March 3 (TU) *Neglected Nagasaki* (47)

“House of Hands” from *The Crazy Iris and Other Stories of the Atomic Aftermath*, **Inoue** Mitsuharu

“Empty Can” from *The Crazy Iris and Other Stories of the Atomic Aftermath*, **Hayashi** Kyôko

“Forgetting is a Blessing” from *Japan at War*

March 5 (TH) *Surviving in Postwar Japan* (61)

“Fireflies” from *The Crazy Iris and Other Stories of the Atomic Aftermath*, **Ôta** Yôko

“The Rite” from *The Crazy Iris and Other Stories of the Atomic Aftermath*, **Takenishi** Hiroko

WEEK SEVEN

March 10 (TU) *The Water of Life*

“Water is Life,” from *Choices for Sustainable Living*, Osprey Orielle Lake
Witness to Hiroshima, Dir. Kathy Sloane (Canvas streaming)

Visit the Ecological Research and Development Group website and read short entries under Natural History tab: Evolution, Anatomy, Protecting Health, and Conservation. (Link on Canvas)

March 12 (TH) Midterm Exam

Spring Break, March 16-23

WEEK EIGHT

March 24 (TU) *The Atomic Legacy Today* (113)

“Writing Hiroshima and Nagasaki in the 21st Century: A New Generation of Historical *Manga*,” Michele Mason (See hyperlink on Canvas.)

Town of Evening Calm, Country of Cherry Blossoms, **Kôno** Fumiyo (manga)

March 26 (TH) *The Construction of the American Myth* (34)

“A Thin Line of Criticism” and “An Exact Description” from *The Decision to Use the Bomb*, Gar Alperovitz

“The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb,” *Harper’s Magazine* (2/1947), Henry L. Stimson

“The Face of the Enemy” from *Japan at War*

WEEK NINE

March 31 (TU) *Remembering the Bomb in America and Japan* (62)

“Introduction: The Bomb as Public History and Transnational History” from *Bulletin of Concerned Asian scholars*, Laura Hein

“Commemoration and Silence: Fifty Years of Remembering the Bomb in America and Japan” from *Living with the Bomb*, Laura Hein and Mark Selden

“Making Things Visible: Learning From the Censors” from *Living with the Bomb*, George H. Roeder Jr.

April 2 (TH) *The Origins of Godzilla and Postwar Nuclear Icons* (6)

“Godzilla, The Monster Made in Japan” from *Proceedings of the Association for Japanese Literary Studies*, Jim Reichert

“The People’s Clock,” from *The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*

“The Other Icon of our Age,” from *The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, Steven Heller

“The Origin of the Peace Symbol” (Link on Canvas)

Video: *Godzilla: King of the Monsters* (Canvas streaming)

WEEK TEN

April 7 (TU) *Commemoration Controversies* (45)

“Memory Matters: Hiroshima’s Korean Atom Bomb Memorial and the Politics of Ethnicity,” Lisa Yoneyama

“Commemoration Controversies: The War, the Peace, and Democracy in Japan” from *Living with the Bomb*, Ellen H. Hammond

April 9 (TH) *Maintaining the Complexity of History* (49)

“Militarism, Colonialism, and the Trafficking of Women: Comfort Women’ Forced into Sexual Labor for Japanese Soldiers” from *BCAS*, **Watanabe** Kazuko

“Goodbye to Patriotism,” Robert Jensen (Link on Canvas)

“Student Nurses of the ‘Lily Corps,’” “Now They Call it ‘Group Suicide,’” “Forced Labor,” “Thought Criminal,” “Isn’t My Brother One of the War Dead?” from *Japan at War*

WEEK ELEVEN (63)

April 14 (TU) *Japanese Nationalism and War Responsibility*

“The Malleable and the Contested: The Nanjing Massacre in Postwar China and Japan” from *Perilous Memories*, Daqing Yang

“Teaching War,” “Unit 731,” “Gas Soldier,” “Army Doctor,” “A Quest for Meaning,” “Homecoming,” from *Japan at War*

April 16 (TH) *Rethinking National Narratives (2)*
Emperor Hirohito's Surrender Speech

WEEK TWELVE

April 21 (TU) Nuclear Threats (42)

Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)

“Introduction” and “Deadly Connections: Empire and Nuclear Weapons,” from *Empire and the Bomb*, Joseph Gerson

27,000 Holocausts, The Pinky Show (Link on Canvas, 30 min)

April 23 (TH) TBD

WEEK THIRTEEN

April 28 (TU) What to do with a Problem like Nuclear Power? (5)

Nuclear Power Explained: Climate of Hope, Parts 1, 2, and 3 (Link on Canvas, 30 min)

Visit Beyond Nuclear website and read “An Introduction to Beyond Nuclear,” which can be found under the “Pamphlets” tab (Link on Canvas)

“The Change in Sustainability Framework,” “Biological and Technical Nutrients” (PDFs)

Bonus Viewing:

Pluto-kun, Our Reliable Friend (video, Link on Canvas, 11 min)

Nuclear Reactor Boy's Tummy Ache (video, Link on Canvas, 4.5 min)

April 30 (TH) Crisis and Precarity: Depicting the Fukushima Daiichi Disaster (19)

“Happy to See Cherry Blossoms,” Mayuzumi Madoka, ed. (article, Link on Canvas)

“The Sloppy Realities of 3.11 in Shiriagari Kotobuki's Manga,” Mary Knighton

“Amid Invisible Terror: The Righteous Anger of A Fukushima Farmer Poet,” Maeda Arata with an introduction by Satoko Oka Norimatsu (article, Link on Canvas)

WEEK FOURTEEN

May 5 (TU) Fukushima and Popular Protest

Blind (movie, Link on Canvas, 5 min)

Down with TEPCO (Let's Join Tokyo Electric) (song, Link on Canvas, 6 min)

Rokkasho by Shing02 (song, Link on Canvas, 7 min)

You Can't See It or Smell it Either by Rankin Taxi and Oki Dub Ainu Band (song, Link on Canvas, 4.5 min)

May 7 (TH) Injustice to and Inspiration from Indigenous Communities

Poison Wind, Dir. Norman Patrick Brown and Jenny Pond (Canvas Streaming)

TED Talk: “Reclaiming the Honorable Harvest,” Robin W. Kimmerer

Bonus: “The Intelligence in All Kinds of Life.” Extended conversation with Dr. Kimmerer on TEK and the Center for Native Peoples and the Environment on the *On Being* podcast. (Link on Canvas)

WEEK FIFTEEN

May 12 (TU) Thinking Beyond Borders: The Notion of Global Hibakusha

“Hiroshima Unknown,” from *Peace Now!*, Andrew Lichterman

Video: No More Hibakusha!

Final Exam: DATE

(Only in the case of illness, death in the family, or other dire circumstance will arrangements be made for a make-up exam. In such cases, please don't hesitate to contact me to work something out.)

Policies:

1. Students who require **special accommodations** for exams or other matters must contact me at the beginning of the semester to make appropriate arrangements.
2. Students who need to miss class because of **religious observances** must contact me at the beginning of the semester to make appropriate arrangements.
3. The University has approved a **Code of Academic Integrity** which prohibits students from cheating on exams, plagiarizing papers, submitting the same paper for credit in two courses without authorization, buying papers, submitting fraudulent documents, and forging signatures. Plagiarism policy: all quotations taken from other authors, including from the Internet, must be indicated by quotation marks and referenced. Paraphrasing must be referenced as well. The following University of Maryland **Honor Pledge** has been proposed by the Council and approved by the University Senate: "I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this assignment/examination." *I assume that all of you have agreed to this even without writing it on every assignment and exam.*
4. This **syllabus** may be **subject to change**. Students will be notified in advance of important changes that could affect grading, assignments, etc.
5. Unless otherwise directed, students are expected to remain in the classroom for 15 minutes in the unlikely event that the instructor should not arrive on time. After 15 minutes, it may be assumed that class will not be held.
6. **Make friends with a fellow student and get her/his phone number.** When a student is absent the best way to find out what happened in class and about the next assignment is to 1) ask a fellow classmate and 2) check Blackboard.
7. **Cell phones** should be turned off and stored in a student's pocket or backpack. They should *not be visible* in the classroom.
8. Use of **computers** is provisionally allowed in class. If one student abuses the privilege of having a computer in class – i.e. using it for something other than taking notes or activities related to in-class activities – *ALL* students will lose permission to use computers in class.

9. **Email Etiquette:** Following these rules for email should be considered part of the process of developing habits of "professionalism" which, ultimately, will be helpful in the "real" world. Please note that I will not reply to a student's email if it does not meet these requirements.

- a) A proper subject heading (include JAPN### for a quick response)
- b) A proper greeting (e.g. Dear Professor Mason or Dr. Mason, NOT "Yo Teach!")
- c) A succinct statement of your business/question.
- d) Proper grammatical and punctuation conventions.
- e) A proper signing off – Sincerely, full name.
- e) Expect 24 hours or more for a reply/response.