

KCJS
Modern Japan through Cinema

Professor Sarah Frederick

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Office hours: TBA

Class meeting time: Tuesday and Thursday 1:10-2:40; Screenings Monday at lunchtime.

Contact information: Please feel free to contact me by email or in office hours. When asking questions about course content, papers, etc. it is best to ask them in class so that others may benefit from the responses.

Course description: This course provides an introduction to major trends in modern Japanese history and society through the lens of cinema, including a basic introduction to film analysis. Themes will include changes in the status of women and the modern family, the Pacific War and the Allied Occupation, the era of high growth economics, protest cultures, and the bubble and post-bubble economies. There will also be attention to the film industry itself, which arguably had its beginnings in Kyoto, as part of Japan's modernity. Site visits may include Eigamura, the new Toy Film Museum, the Kyoto Film Archive at the Museum of Kyoto. Some visits may be arranged to significant film settings and sets (Nijo Castle, Gion, etc.). Films will be shown with subtitles, but with some work on Japanese listening comprehension, attention to local dialects in film, and opportunity for subtitling and other language practice through final projects to the extent that student background allows. Screenings (once per week) will be held at a convenient time during the middle of the day at KCJS.

Required Text:

Required readings available on our Courseworks site or Dropbox.

Course structure:

Class discussion/lecture meetings (2 shorter sessions per week)

Lunchtime film screenings, one time per week. (If you need to leave early for the next class, please complete watching the film on your own.)

Student responsibilities:

1. Attendance and participation in class: 20%

Lectures are organized to build upon the readings. Students are required to do all assigned readings in advance.

Field trips: (I will be continuing to plan these over the coming months.) We will watch some Kansai related films and visit some locations noted below. We will visit Tōei Eigamura 東映映画村. This is a theme park for Tōei films and it includes a film set designed to imitate the Edo period, which is frequently used for jidaigeki television and film. There are also areas devoted to “hero shows” (Power Rangers, etc.). It’s a bit cheesy, but there are interesting presentations and performances and is educational about the film industry.

2. Self-directed movie viewing 10%

Please attend one Japanese film showing in a regular theater in Kyoto without subtitles. This is excellent for your listening comprehension practice (of both the film and audience around you) and gives you a sense of contemporary movie viewing in Japan. You may attend first-run feature Japanese films. But I also highly recommend the offerings of the Kyoto Film Archive inside the Museum of Kyoto. They do amazing programming of rarely screened films from all periods. They are showing something at almost all times. http://www.bunpaku.or.jp/exhi_film.html There will be a writing assignment about your visit.

3. Short director response paper. 3-4 page papers discussing the work of one of the directors whose work we see multiple films of (Kurosawa, Mizoguchi, Ozu) (20%) There will short film analyses and the course will introduce basic forms of film analysis.

4. Film terms quiz. 10%

5. Shot by shot analysis paper 20%

Please title your document as follows and send it as a word .doc attachment:
lastname.subject.doc

6. Final project or paper 20%

Please be in touch with me (sfred@bu.edu) if your university requires any additional or other work in order to award credit for the course. I can assign work that intensifies aspects of film studies, literary studies, or history as appropriate to your needs, as these will all be aspects of the coursework and discussion content.

Religious events, emergency, and illness policies: Please let me know in advance if you will be participating in any religious events that will mean you will miss class. I will be glad to make alternate arrangements. I will also make exceptions for severe illness, significant family events, or other emergency situations. ****If you are sick enough that you should stay in bed, please do so! (Let me know by e-mail.)****

Reserve List

Odell and Le Blanc, *Studio Ghibli the films of Hayao Miyazaki and Isao Takahata*
PN 1998.3 .M577 O34 2009

Yoshimoto, *Kurosawa*
PN 1998.3 .K87 Y67 2000

Kurosawa, *Something like an Autobiography*
PN 1998 .A3 K789413 1982

Bordwell, *Ozu and the Poetics of Cinema*
PN 1998.3 .O98 B67 1988

Desser, *Ozu's Tokyo Story*
PN 1997 .T5953 O92 1997

McDonald, *Ugetsu*
PN 1997 .U373 U34 1993

Murray, *Breaking into Japanese literature seven modern classics in parallel text*
PL 782 .E1 M87 2003

Richie, Donald. *A History of Japanese Cinema.*

Study abroad is hectic. You may have one 48-hour extension to be used for in-semester papers, no questions asked; it may not be used for the final project. Write at the top of the paper that you are using your free extension.

Nice short piece on the beginnings of film studios in Kyoto: <http://www.cmn.hs.h.kyoto-u.ac.jp/NO1/SUBJECT1/INAJAP.HTM>

Course Schedule and Readings:

(Some adjustments may be made for scheduled field trips and local opportunities)

9/8-9/10 Ozu Yasujiro, *I Was Born But...* 生まれては見たけれど 91 min.

Tuesday: Kinmouth, *The Self-Made Man* selection; Gerow on early cinema.

Thursday: (Recommended) Philip "The Salaryman's Panic Time"; Bordwell, pp. 224-229 PDF at: <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/c/cjfs/0920054.0001.001>

Over the first three weeks of class, explore the film analysis terms at:

<http://classes.yale.edu/film-analysis/index.htm>

And the selections from Corrigan, *Writing About Film*.

9/15-9/17**Mizoguchi Kenji, *Sisters of Gion*, 1936, 68 mins.**

Tuesday: Miriam Silverberg, "The Modern Girl as Militant"; Historical readings on modern geisha.

Thursday: K McDonald "Synergy of Theme, Style and Dialogue"

Field Trip, Toy Film Museum

9/22 HOLIDAY**9/24 *Page of Madness*, Dir. Kinugasa**

Gerow on *Page of Madness*

War on Film**9/29-10/1 Wartime films: *China Night* (Osamu Fushimizu, 1940), 124 min.**

(also recommended: Kurosawa Akira, *The Most Beautiful*)

Chikako Nagayama, "The Flux of Domesticity and the Exotic in a Wartime Melodrama" in *the Journal of Asian Studies*

(October 2 – 4 Fall Trip to Okayama)

Postwar Reflections**10/6-10/8 *Fires on the Plain*****10/13-15 Kurosawa Akira *Rashōmon* 羅生門 (83 min)**

Tuesday Richie, "Rashōmon," in *The Films of Akira Kurosawa*, 70-80

Thursday: Akutagawa, "Rashōmon" and "In a Grove"

Yoshimoto on Rashōmon

10/20-22 Kurosawa Akira, *Ran*

Kurosawa response paper due 10/10 by email by 5 p.m.

Postwar Cultures**10/27-29 Ozu, *Tokyo Story* (Tokyo monogatari) 東京物語, 1953 (136 minutes)**

McDonald, "A Basic Narrative Mode in Yasujiro Ozu's Tokyo Story"
Geist, "Narrative Strategies in Ozu's Late Films"

Go through the links at: <http://pears.lib.ohio-state.edu/Markus/Welcome.html> These are very brief but helpful;

Bordwell on *Tokyo Story* <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/c/cjfs/0920054.0001.001> reading section on *Tokyo Story* beginning on 238.

FALL BREAK

11/10-12 Mizoguchi, *Streets of Shame* (or Kansai alternate, *Gion Bayashi?*) and *Pigs and Battleships*

Mizoguchi or Ozu response paper due 11/16 by email by 5 p.m.

11/17-11/19 Masumura Yasuzo's *Giants and Toys* 巨人と玩具 (1958)

Michael Raine on *Giants and Toys*, "Modernization Without Modernity."

Thursday Field Trip: Tōei Eigamura <http://www.toei-eigamura.com/en/> Write up a one-page response paper, due Nov. 24.

Bubble Era Cultures

11/24-26 *The Family Game* (107 min.) 家族ゲーム

Allison, "Producing Mothers"

A. Gerow on Family Game, "Playing with Postmodernism"

12/1-12/3 Itami Jūzō 伊丹十三 *Tampopo* たんぽぽ 1985 (114 minutes)

Schilling, "Juzo Itami"

Bruns, "Refiguring Pleasure: Itami and the Postmodern Japanese Film"

Post-Bubble Japan

12/8-10 Kurosawa Kiyoshi (no relation...), *Tokyo Sonata* 東京ソナタ

Vincent on "Immaturity" and *Tokyo Sonata*

Dasgupta on *Tokyo Sonata*

***Final paper / project due 12/11 by 5 p.m.**