

ANT 405 X/FIL 450 – Seminar: Cinema and Society in Japan (10016/10451/10669)

AKA: Japanese Cinema

Syllabus - Spring 2009

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Course Description: The purpose of this course is to acquaint students with Japanese culture and society and the portrayals of this society in films by Japanese directors. There are a number of Japanese directors who have distinctive cinematic styles and who stand as giants in world cinema, the equals of those from any other nation. Among the best known of these are Kurosawa Akira, Miyazaki Hayao, Mizoguchi Kenji, and Ozu Yasujiro.

Japanese society has experienced significant change in the 20th century, much of it triggered by interaction with the West, particularly with the United States. Since the 1920s much of the change has been mirrored in the feature films of Japan not only by the directors of renown but by others less well known yet worthy of notice in their own right.

In addition to serving as a mirror to an ever-changing Japan, the film industry has itself been subject to the economic and political pressures characterizing this society. In this course we will consider such issues as changes in the family system, gender roles, class relationships and the urban-rural dichotomy in modern Japan as these are portrayed in film. We will also analyze possible distortions in these portrayals in so far as they reflect responses by the film industry to economic and political forces. Finally, we will also briefly cover the historical periods that have attracted the attention of prominent Japanese directors, including the age of the samurai. We will also focus discussion on the specifics of different Japanese directors' styles in their portrayal of different aspects of society.

Academic Standards, Attendance and Participation

Attendance is crucial for success in this course. You need to attend regular class meetings ready to contribute to discussions. The work we do in the classroom is essential to your learning. As a result, more than two unexcused absences will be detrimental to your grade. This requires not only that you attend class, but that you come prepared. In other words, you need to have completed the reading assignment and viewed the assigned film before each class period and arrive ready to discuss it. There will be frequent quizzes on the assigned films all of which are on reserve in the library, or will be shortly before viewing of it is required.

Don't be shy about taking the initiative to help move the class discussion along. Raise points that you think are worth special attention and ask questions on points that are unclear. More voices make things more interesting, and everyone should have an opinion about the key issues in the material covered.

This course is available on Blackboard where information will be posted periodically. Be sure to refer to your Rollins email address regularly since assignments and other information will be sent to you at that address.

Video and Test Make-ups: Video and test make-ups are available with excused absences. You are responsible to contact Mrs. Byrd (hbyrd@rollins.edu or extension 2670) to schedule your missed video.

Grades: Grades will be based on two in-class exams, one of which is the final exam (25% each), a research paper (30 %) and various in-class and take-home writing assignments (20% all together).

Grading scale:	93-100 A	87-89 B+	77-79 C+	67-69 D+	0-59 F
	90-92 A-	83-86 B	73-76 C	63-66 D	
		80-82 B-	70-72 C-	60-62 D-	

The Academic Honor Code

Membership in the student body of Rollins College carries with it an obligation, and requires commitment to act with honor in all things. Because academic integrity is fundamental to the pursuit of knowledge and truth and is the heart of the academic life of Rollins College, it is the responsibility of all members of the College community to practice it and to report apparent violations.

The following pledge is a binding commitment by the students of Rollins College:

The development of the virtues of Honor and Integrity are integral to a Rollins College education and to membership in the Rollins College community. Therefore, I, a student of Rollins College, pledge to show my commitment to these virtues by abstaining from any lying, cheating, or plagiarism in my academic endeavors and by behaving responsibly, respectfully and honorably in my social life and in my relationships with others.

This pledge is reinforced every time a student submits work for academic credit as his/her own. Students shall add to all papers, quizzes, tests, lab reports, etc., the following handwritten abbreviated pledge followed by their signature:

“On my honor, I have not given, nor received, nor witnessed any unauthorized assistance on this work.”

Material submitted electronically should contain the pledge: submission implies signing the pledge.

Plagiarism: You must distinguish clearly between your work and the work of others. To do otherwise may constitute plagiarism. The formal policy is: “If you fail to acknowledge borrowed material, then you are plagiarizing. Plagiarism is literary theft. When you copy the words of another, put those words inside quotation marks, and acknowledge the source with a footnote. When you paraphrase another’s words, use your own words and your own sentence structure, and be sure to use a footnote giving the source of the idea. A plagiarist often merely changes a few words or simply rearranges the words in the source.” (*Harbrace College Handbook*, p. 407)

Text: *A Hundred Years of Japanese Film* by Donald Richie

Readings listed under the course outline are from the Richie text. Other reading assignments from selected articles on E Reserve may be designated as the semester progresses.

The following course outline is subject to revision during the semester. Students are responsible for changes in exam schedules or any other changes that may be presented in class.

COURSE OUTLINE

DATE	TOPIC	READING
Jan. 14	Introduction: Japanese Culture & Film Culture	
Jan. 21	<i>MLK HOLIDAY: JAN. 19</i> <i>Rashomon</i> (1950) Kurosawa and the “Discovery” of Japanese Cinema	pp. 17-24
Jan. 26/28	<i>Ran</i> (1985) The Samurai in History and Film	pp. 25-42
Feb. 2/4	<i>Utamaro and His Five Women</i> (1946) Mizoguchi & the Tokugawa	pp. 43-63
Feb. 9/11	<i>Sisters of the Gion</i> (1936) Mizoguchi on Women	pp. 64-83
Feb. 16/18	<i>Fires on the Plain</i> (1962) The Horrors of War in Post-War Japanese Film	pp. 84-106
Feb. 23/25	EXAM I	
March 2/4	<i>Grave of the Fireflies</i> (1988) War and Post-War in Anime	pp. 107-128
	<i>SPRING BREAK: MARCH 9-13</i>	
March 16/18	<i>Drunken Angel</i> (1948) Film Noir	pp. 129-176
March 23/25	<i>Black Rain</i> (1989) Ordinary People in Extraordinary Circumstances	pp. 177-195
March 30/April 1	<i>Princess Mononoke</i> (1997) Miyazaki: Anime as Masterpiece	pp. 196-212
April 6/8	<i>Good Morning</i> (1959) Ordinary People in Ordinary Circumstances	pp. 213-246
April 13/15	<i>An Autumn Afternoon</i> (1962) Family and Generations	pp. 247-259
April 20/22	<i>The Funeral</i> (1987) Death and Humor	
April 27	<i>The Happiness of the Katakuris</i> (2002) Review (FINAL PAPER DUE)	
May 5	FINAL EXAM, Monday, May 4, 5:15 to 6:30 PM	