

Humanities in Tokyo

YALE SUMMER COURSES ABROAD 2019

The City of Tokyo

Professor Seth Jacobowitz
Program Assistant: Young Yi

Course Description:

This course surveys the cultural history of Tokyo through literature, film, art, anime, architecture, and living spaces. Taking as our point of departure the renaming of the capital from Edo to Tokyo (Eastern Capital) in 1870, we will explore the phoenix-like cycles of destruction and reconstruction through the Great Kanto Earthquake (1923), the firebombing of the city during WWII, and other significant changes in the cultural topography and lived experiences of the city. Particular emphasis will be given to contextualizing the classroom content with field trips to museums and historic neighborhoods. There will also be short trips to Kyoto and Kamakura as a study in contrasts with the postmodernity and megacity scale of Tokyo.

Required Texts:

WORRALL and SOLOMON, *21st Century Tokyo*

JACOBOWITZ, Seth, ed./trans., *Edogawa Rampo Reader*

YOSHIMOTO Banana, *Kitchen* (novel, 1988)

WIESENFELD, Gennifer *Imaging Disaster: Tokyo and the Visual Culture of Japan's Great Earthquake of 1923* (2012) –available online through library

Additional readings are posted on Canvas

Films:

BONG, Joon Ho, CARAX, Leos, and GONDRY, Michel, *TOKYO!* (2008)

HAPTAS, John and SAMUELSON, Kristine, *Tokyo Waka* (2012)

HOSODA, Mamoru, *Summer Wars* (2010)

HONDA Ishiro, *Godzilla* (1954)

ITAMI, Juzo, *Tampopo* (1985)

KON, Satoshi, *Tokyo Godfathers* (2003)

OZU Yasujiro, *Tokyo Story* (1953)

TAKEUCHI, Hiroshi, *Train Man* (TV series, 2005)

Course objectives:

To investigate the cultural history of Tokyo from its days as the capital of the Tokugawa shogunate to its contemporary incarnation as a metropolis at the forefront of globalization and the information society.

To study a representative selection of texts in literature, art, film, anime, architecture, and other historical materials; in the process we will become familiar with the methods for analyzing different cultural and urban forms; to develop critical thinking and writing skills as students in the humanities

Course requirements and policies:

Grading is based on regular attendance and participation (20 points), two short papers of 4-5 pages (20 points each), and a final essay of 10-12 pages (40 points). The two short papers will be assigned with a choice of questions and will require you to incorporate the readings covered in class into your own argument. The final paper will be a research paper with the topic to be selected in consultation with the instructor.

This is an intensive summer course where every day is equivalent to one week's worth of work in the academic year. As per YSS policy, students must attend all classes and excursions. Unexcused absences may be grounds for dismissal from the program. If for any reason you will be late or miss class, you must have a legitimate excuse. You are also expected to show up on time for all excursions and to participate in them fully. Class runs Monday to Thursday from 9 a.m. to noon. Make sure you allow adequate time to get from your host family's home to class and the excursion meeting places. Japanese culture is about punctuality: lateness is taken very seriously. If you are late to the excursions, you risk having to make your own travel arrangements at your own expense.

Policy for late papers: Papers will be marked down 1/3 letter grade per day late (A becomes A-, A- becomes B+, etc.). After three late days the paper will not be accepted. Students must ask permission in advance for an extension, which will only be given for legitimate health-related issues or the equivalent.

A final note about the code of conduct: You are expected to behave respectfully toward your instructors, classmates, Waseda staff, and host families. As per YSS policy there is zero tolerance for any abusive conduct or conduct which constitutes a distraction to the learning environment. We want everyone to have a great experience, and that means we are all in this together. Misbehavior on social media, or in any other form outside the classroom, will be handled at the discretion of the professor. By the same token, if anyone has a problem with a fellow student, staff, or host family, please come to the instructors immediately and we will do our utmost to resolve the issues in consultation with the YSS staff.

SCHEDULE:

First assignment before class begins

- 1) Read “Tokyo became a megacity by reinventing itself,” *National Geographic*, April 2019 issue: <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/magazine/2019/04/how-tokyo-japan-became-megacity-by-rebuilding-after-earthquake-war/>
- 2) Watch the omnibus film *Tokyo!* on Amazon Prime

Week 1 Introduction: Tokyo in the Era of Civilization & Enlightenment

- May 27 Discussion of megacity article and film
May 28 JINNAI Hidenobu, “Cosmology of a City of Water,” pp. 66-118
May 29 ICHIYO “Growing Up” and KAFU, “The River Sumida”
May 30 COALDRAKE on Tokyo station, *Architecture and Authority in Japan*
May 31 **Excursion:** Edo Tokyo Museum and Tokyo Sky Tree (lunch provided)

Week 2 Erotic, Grotesque, Nonsense & the Era of Mass Culture

- June 3 Selections from *Imaging Disaster: Tokyo and the Visual Culture of Japan's Great Earthquake of 1923*, Jennifer Wiesenfeld
June 4 “The Fantasy of Modern Life,” in *Overcome by Modernity*, Harry Harootunian
First Short Paper Assigned
June 5 Edogawa Rampo, “Appearance of Osei,” “The Martian Canals,” “Stalker in the Attic,” “Horrors of Film” and “Spectral Voices” in *The Edogawa Rampo Reader* and “The Human Chair” PDF on Canvas
June 6 *The Neighbor's Wife and Mine*, Goshō Heinosuke (read script notes before class)
June 7 **Excursion:** Walking tour of Harajuku, Omotesando, and the Meiji Shrine (lunch provided)

Week 3 Postwar Defeat and Reconstruction

- June 10 DOWER, *Embracing Defeat*
June 11 HONDA, *Gojira and Godzilla, King of the Monsters*
First Short Paper Due
June 12 OZU, *Tokyo Story*
June 13 “Tange Kenzo's Tokyo Monuments,” COALDRAKE; and Metabolism: A Japanese Modernism,” MILES
Second Short Paper Assigned
June 14 **Excursion:** Kamakura – Engakuji, Kotokuin, and monk's vegetarian lunch

Week 4 Prosperity and Alienation in Contemporary Tokyo

- June 17 **Excursion:** Hiroshima - visit to World Heritage sites
June 18 **Excursion:** Kyoto - Temple of the Golden Pavilion and Kiyomizu Temple
June 19 **Excursion:** Kyoto - Free Day
June 20 ITAMI Juzo, *Tampopo*
June 21 YOSHIMOTO, *Banana, Kitchen*
Second Short Paper Due/Final Paper Assigned

Week 5 Communities/Assemblages of 21st Century Tokyo

- June 24 KON, *Tokyo Godfathers*
* Read Morikawa, *Otaku and the City*
June 25 HOSODA, *Summer Wars*
June 26 TAKEUCHI, *Train Man (Densha Otoko)*, episodes 1-4
June 27 HAPTAS and SAMUELSON, *Tokyo Waka* (film)
June 28 Discussion of final papers and concluding thoughts
Final papers due in class