This seminar explores the fiction and film produced amidst and about the epistemic rupture of the American Occupation of Japan. The years from 1945 to 1952 saw the destruction of Japanese imperial nationhood, the occupation of the country by a foreign power, and the imposition of “democracy.” John Dower’s cultural history, *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II* (Norton, 1999), will provide a lens through which to examine the fiction and film about these years of despair and transformation. The effort will be to explore the relationships between fictions and the larger discourses of the period and to see how writers and filmmakers responded to the forced postwar reconfigurations of national, gender, class, and sexual identities.

**Required Texts:**

John Dower, *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II*

All other readings, in Japanese and English, will be on Laulima or available on Aozora Bunko.

**Requirements**

Students are required to attend class prepared to participate in discussion. Each student will be asked to lead off discussion on a rotation basis, presenting a critical approach useful for thinking about the text in question. These presentations will count for 25% of the final grade. Overall participation in discussion will count for another 25%.

A term paper of approximately 15 pages is required. Students are required to give a 10-minute presentation on their paper topic on December 9. The paper will count for 50% of the final grade.

**Learning Outcomes**

1. Students will become acquainted with some major works of fiction and film relating to the Occupation period (1945-1952).
2. Students will learn to analyze these texts in relation to the social and cultural transformations of the period.
3. Students will produce a critical paper showing an engagement with historical contexts.
Schedule, JPN 640, Fall 2015, Cultures of Defeat

August 26  Initial Meeting

September 2  Kurosawa Akira, *Nora inu* (Stray Dog, 1949) FILM
John Dower, *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II*, pp. 33-167
(read through September 9; for this session be sure to read pp. 121-167)
Mitsuhiro Yoshimoto, *Kurosawa: Film Studies and Japanese Cinema*, pp. 147-178
Peter Brooks, *The Melodramatic Imagination*, pp. 1-23
YouTube: Japan Under American Occupation, V. 1-3
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AuPYzWnT1aA

September 9  Sakaguchi Ango, “Darakuron” (On Decadence, 1946), "Hakuchi" (The Idiot, 1946) AOZORA

September 16  Hara Tamiki, "Natsu no hana," “Haikyo kara,” “Kaimetsu no jokyoku” (Summer Flowers, 1947) AOZORA

September 23  Yoshida Mitsuru, *Senkan Yamato no saiki* (The Last of the Battleship Yamato, 1946, 1949, 1952)
(Read 1949 Ginza Shuppan version, but look at the comparisons with other versions.)
Dower, pp. 405-440
Jerome McGann, *The Textual Condition*, pp. 3-48

September 30  Ooka Shōhei, *Nobi* (Fires on the Plain, 1948, Chapters 1-21) LAULIMA
Dower, pp. 443-484

October 7  Ooka Shōhei, *Nobi* (Fires on the Plain, 1948, Chapter 22-end) LAULIMA
Dower, pp. 485-521

October 14  Naruse Mikio, *Ukigumo* (Floating Clouds, 1955), based on the novel by Hayashi Fumiko (FILM)
(Start reading Hayashi Fumiko’s *Ukigumo*)

October 21  Hayashi Fumiko, *Ukigumo* (Drifting Cloud, 1951) LAULIMA
Noriko Mizuta, “In Search of a Lost Paradise: The Wandering Woman in Hayashi Fumiko’s *Drifting Clouds*”

October 28  Dazai Osamu, *Shayō* (The Setting Sun, 1947, Chapters 1-4) AOZORA
Dower, pp. 168-200

November 4  Dazai Osamu, *Shayō* (The Setting Sun, 1947, Chapters 5-8) AOZORA
Dower, pp. 346-404
November 11  No Class. Veteran’s Day

November 18  Kawabata Yasunari, *Yama no oto* (Sound of the Mountain, 1949, through “Yoru no koe”) LAULIMA

November 25  Kawabata Yasunari, *Yama no oto* (Sound of the Mountain, 1949, “Haru no kane”-end) LAULIMA

December 2  Kinoshita Keisuke, *Nihon no higeki* (A Japanese Tragedy, or The Tragedy of Japan, 1953) FILM

December 9  Student presentations (10 minutes on paper topic)

December 16  Papers Due

(The schedule and the readings may change. Please check with me if you miss a class.)