

LTEN 181 / ETHN 124: ASIAN AMERICAN LITERATURE

Race, Gender, and Culture in Wartime

Winter 2006

Tu/Th 12:30-1:50

CENTER 222

Professor Lisa Lowe

3440 Literature Bldg, x43853

office hours: Tu 2:30-3:30, W 1:00-3:00

The internment of 120,000 Japanese Americans during World War II has figured as the paradigmatic example of Asian Americans in the twentieth century. In this course, we reassess the centrality of this internment as symbol and anomaly, by situating the event within wider international, national, and regional contexts before and after World War II. This includes the scope of U.S. interests in China, Japan, the Philippines, Korea and other Asian sites, the span of Asian immigration to and settlement in the western U.S., and the wartime relation of Japanese Americans to other immigrant, racial, and ethnic groups working in west coast cities like Los Angeles. Our objective is to understand the different international, national, and regional landscapes as crucial contexts for the emergence of the many meanings surrounding “Asia” and “Asians” in the 20th century.

In this interdisciplinary course, we will read, interpret, and analyze a variety of materials, including literary fiction, plays, narrative histories, policy studies, newspapers, magazines, photographs, films, and other primary historical and social scientific materials.

Attendance of lectures is mandatory.

Students are expected to complete all assignments by the time of the lecture.

Students will write periodic response papers, with the topic distributed in class Friday and the 1- page response papers due the next Monday.

Course requirements:

Class attendance, 3 response papers	20%
Midterm paper (5 pages)	40%
Final paper (5 pages)	40%

Required books

for sale at UCSD Bookstore, and available on SSSL Course Reserves:

John Okada, *No-no Boy* (U Washington)

Joy Kogawa, *Obasan* (Doubleday)

Hisaye Yamamoto, *Seventeen Syllables and Other Stories* (Rutgers UP)

Kim Ronyoung, *Clay Walls* (U Washington)

Chester Himes, *If He Hollers, Let Him Go* (Thunder’s Mouth)

Luis Valdez, *Zoot Suit* (Arte Publico)

Naomi Hirahara, *Summer of the Big Bachi* (Bantam Dell)

Required readings available from Cal Copy, 3251 Holiday Ct. #103, 452-9949; and on reserve at SSSL Course Reserves:

- John Hersey and Ansel Adams, "A Mistake of Terrifically Horrible Proportions," from *Manzanar*
- Ronald Takaki, from *Democracy and Race: Asian Americans and World War II*
- W. W. Rostow, from *An American Policy in Asia*
- Henry R. Luce, "The First Great American Century"
- James Thomson, et al., from *Sentimental Imperialists: American Experience in East Asia*
- T. Fujitani, "Go For Broke: Japanese American Soldiers in U.S. Military, National and Racial Discourses," from *Perilous Memories: The Asia-Pacific War(s)*
- Caroline Chung Simpson, "Introduction," from *An Absent Presence*
- Lisa Yoneyama, "For Transformative Knowledge and Postnationalist Public Spheres: The Smithsonian *Enola Gay* Controversy," from *Perilous Memories*
- Glen Masato Mimura, "Antidote for Collective Amnesia? Rea Tajiri's Germinal Image" from *Countervisions: Asian American Film Criticism*
- Grace Kyungwon Hong, "'Something Forgotten That Should Have Been Remembered': Private Property and Cross-Racial Solidarity in Hisaye Yamamoto," *American Literature* (June 1999)
- Anthony Macias, "Bringing Music to the People: Race, Urban Culture and Municipal Politics in Postwar Los Angeles," *American Quarterly* (Sept 2004)
- Kelly Oliver and Benigno Trigo, "Introduction," *Noir Anxiety*
- Laura Pulido, "Differential Racialization in Southern California," *Black, Brown, Yellow and Left*
- Luis Alvarez, "Of Pachucos, Hep Cats, and Social Horizons: Zoot Suits, Masculine Bodies and the Politics of Dignity"
- Chester Himes, "Zoot Riots Are Race Riots," from *Black on Black*
- Robin D. G. Kelley, "Riddle of the Zoot: Malcolm Little and Black Cultural Politics in World War II," *Race Rebels: Culture, Politics and the Black Working Class*

Recommended books at UCSD Bookstore and at SSSL Course Reserves:

- Caroline Chung Simpson, *An Absent Presence* (Duke UP)
- T. Fujitani, et al., *Perilous Memories: The Asia-Pacific War(s)* (Duke UP)
- "Los Angeles, the Future of Urban Cultures," *American Quarterly*, 56:3

Recommended films on reserve at the Film and Video Library, Geisel SSSL

- "Caught In Between," Lina Hoshino
- "Go For Broke," Robert Pirosh
- "History and Memory," Rea Tajiri
- "A Family Gathering," Lise Yasui
- "L.A. Confidential," Curtis Hanson
- "Chinatown," Roman Polanski
- "Zoot Suit," Luis Valdez

Schedule of Assignments and Lectures

Please make every effort to complete readings by assigned dates.

Week 1

- Jan 10 introduction
Jan 12 Hersey and Adams, *Manzanar* (reader); Takaki, *Democracy* (reader)

Week 2

- Jan 17 Okada, *No-no Boy*, pp. iii-172; Rostow, *American Policy in Asia* (reader);
Luce, "American Century" (reader)
1st response paper due
Jan 19 finish Okada, *No-no Boy*; Thomson, et al. *Sentimental* (reader);
Fujitani, "Go For Broke: Japanese American Soldiers" (reader)
Suggested viewing: "Go For Broke" (FVL reserve)

Week 3

- Jan 24 Kogawa, *Obasan*, pp. 1-130; Simpson, "Introduction" (reader)
Jan 26 class canceled: view Tajiri film, "History and Memory" and Lise Yasui
film, "A Family Gathering" (FVL, screened @ 12:30 in Rm 2 & 5:30 in
Rm 276); Mimura, "Antidote for Amnesia?" (reader)

Week 4

- Jan 31 finish Kogawa, *Obasan*; Yoneyama, "Enola Gay Controversy" (reader)
2nd response paper due
Feb 2 In Yamamoto, *Seventeen Syllables*: "Seventeen Syllables," "Legend of
Miss Sasagawara," "Yoneko's Earthquake"; "Death Rides the Rails to
Poston," "Fire in Fontana" Hong, "Something Forgotten" (reader)
Midterm paper topics distributed

Week 5

- Feb 7 Kim, *Clay Walls*, pp. 5-130
Feb 9 finish Kim, *Clay Walls*; Macias, "Bringing Music" (reader)

Week 6

- Feb 14 "Chinatown" (FVL reserve); Oliver/Trigo, *Noir Anxiety* (reader)
Midterm papers due
Feb 16 *class canceled; "Chinatown" (FVL screened @ 12:30 in Rm 2
& 5:30 in Rm 276); Pulido, "Differential Racialization" (reader)

Week 7

- Feb 21 Valdez, *Zoot Suit*; Alvarez, "Of Pachucos" (reader);
Feb 23 Valdez, *Zoot Suit*; Himes, "Zoot Riots Are Race Riots," (reader);
Kelley, "Riddle of the Zoot" (reader)

Week 8

- Feb 28 Himes, *If He Hollers, Let Him Go*, pp. 1-121
3rd response paper due
Mar 2 finish Himes, *If He Hollers, Let Him Go*

Week 9

- Mar 7 Hirahara, *Summer of the Big Bachi*, pp. 1-149.
Mar 9 finish Hirahara, *Summer of the Big Bachi*
Final paper topics distributed

Week 10

- Mar 14 *class canceled
Mar 16 *class canceled

Final papers due Friday, March 24 by 4:00 pm, Literature Office

If you wish to pick up your paper at the Lit Office, write "Privacy Waiver" and signature.
If you wish it returned to you by mail, include a stamped, self-addressed envelope.