

**LIT 133C / Modern Japanese Novel: Japan's I-Novel & Other
Autobiographical Writing from East Asia (Summer 2024)**

Engineering 2 Room 194, MW 1:00-4:30 PM

Instructor: Jihoon Park

Office Hours: MW 4:30-5:00 PM (right after class)

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Where might we set the origin(s) of the modern autofictional or autobiographical novel? One origin is the Japanese I-Novel (shishosetsu), a type of confessional fiction that developed in the early 20th century, a sociocultural turning point in East Asia. We will look critically at not only the novels themselves, but also the relationality between the writer and the writing, as well as the sociocultural contexts in which they were written, and why writers may have turned to autobiographical aesthetics and forms during their time. Moving through the 20th century, we will also read more recent examples of autobiographical fiction in Korea and China. In addition to weekly readings, you can expect writing assignments and a presentation.

Key Learning Goals:

- Students will gain a basic foundational understanding of the qualities of the shishosetsu tradition and its sociocultural context, alongside other East Asian autobiographical fiction
- Students will gain the tools required to start reading and writing critically about autobiographical fiction and modern East Asian literature, including basic theoretical frameworks in literary studies

Required Texts

Reconciliation (1917) by Naoya Shiga (137 pages)

No Longer Human (1948) by Osamu Dazai (177 pages)

A Personal Matter (1964) by Kenzaburo Oe (165 pages)

Who Ate Up All the Shinga? (1992) by Park Wan Suh (248 pages)

A Private Life (1996) by Chen Ran (214 pages)

Content Advisory: Literature, as with all forms of art, may contain potentially disturbing or unsettling content. Our readings may include immoral behavior, explicit sex and violence, and uncomfortable situations. I require that we all respect each other and the texts.

Assignments & Grading

Attendance & Engagement - 40% of total grade

Students are expected to attend class having done the assigned readings for the day and participate in discussions and in-class activities. Since this is an accelerated 5-week class, each class is significant and substantial.

Reading Quizzes - 10% of total grade

For each class there will be a short reading quiz on the day's reading for accountability. These will not be difficult, and if you are doing the readings they should just be free credit.

Writing Responses - 30% of total grade

You will complete any combination of four ~500 word writing responses (for a total of eight double spaced pages of writing for the class). This means you could do four 500 word responses, two 1,000 word responses, a 1,500 word response and a 500 word response, or a traditional 2,000 word final essay. These may be specific to a single novel, or be a synthesis of the texts in class, but you may also incorporate outside texts in an interdisciplinary manner.

Presentation/Discussion - 20% of total grade

Each student will give a presentation or lead a discussion on a facet of a text(s) that (ideally) aligns with their own interests. This could be solely about the texts in class, or it could incorporate outside texts in an interdisciplinary manner. It may be critical, creative, or a mix of both. At the end, the student will provide a writing prompt/exercise.

Class Hours

The policy for a 5 unit summer class is that you can expect to spend around approximately ~30 hours of work per week for this class (doubled from a regular ten-week class), including the 7 hours spent in class. This leaves ~ 23 hours a week to read one novel and write one short response (in addition to the single presentation/discussion), which should be more than plenty with time to spare.

Absence Policy

Please contact me in advance if you foresee any issues with attendance. Due to the compacted nature of the class, after three unexcused absences we will have a talk about failing the class. Valid reasons for absences (medical & family issues) should be discussed with me in advance.

Canvas/Technology

Aside from the books listed above, the rest of your class material will be available on Canvas, including assignments, weekly schedule, etc. When in doubt, check Canvas. You may also use a laptop for in-class work. I prefer not to have students using phones, although it is okay if it is your sole method of accessing the material.

Weekly Calendar (subject to change)
(readings to be completed before the date of class)

Week 1

7/29 - Class Introduction

Autofiction & Shishosetsu; Amy Zimmerman “So You Think You’re the Main Character”; Introduction to Shiga Naoya, Shirakabaha, & *Reconciliation*

7/31 - *Reconciliation* (finish book)

Tomi Suzuki *Narrating the Self: Fictions of Japanese Modernity*, “Introduction,” Ch. 5
“Shaking Life, Shaping the Past: Shiga Naoya’s Narratives of Recollection”

Week 2

8/5 - *No Longer Human* I (thru second notebook, p. 94)

Osamu Dazai & Buraiha writers; Akutagawa’s Suicide note “A Note to a Certain Old Friend”

8/7 - *No Longer Human* II (p.94 to end)

Adaptations

Week 3

8/12 - *A Personal Matter* I (thru Ch. 8, p. 104)

Oe and Literature of the Bomb; Grotesque Realism; Excerpts from *Hiroshima Notes*

8/14 - *A Personal Matter* II (Ch. 9 to end)

Excerpts from *A Healing Family*

Week 4

8/19 - *Who Ate Up All the Shinga* I (thru Ch. 7 “Mother and Brother,” p. 143)

Park Wan Suh & Autobiographical/Memoir writing as historical archive; Korea under Japanese occupation

8/21 - *Who Ate Up All the Shinga* II (Ch. 8 “Spring in my Hometown” to end)

The Korean War

Week 5

8/26 - *A Private Life* I (thru Ch. 15 “One Person’s Death Brings Punishment to Another...” p. 129)

8/28 - *A Private Life* II (Ch. 16 “Endless Days...” to end)

Further Resources

Academic Integrity

All work submitted for this course must be your own. Plagiarism and cheating are contrary to the spirit of the kind of work we are trying to do here together, and they have serious consequences according to university policy. If you are unsure whether something is plagiarism or not, the best thing to do is check in with me and have a discussion about it. For more information, please see the UCSC policy on academic integrity at <https://ue.ucsc.edu/academic-misconduct.html>

Support for Disabilities

UC Santa Cruz is committed to creating an academic environment that supports its diverse student body. If you are a student with a disability who requires accommodations to achieve equal access in this course, please affiliate with the DRC. I encourage all students to benefit from learning more about DRC services to contact DRC by phone at 831-459-2089 or by email at drc@ucsc.edu. For students already affiliated, make sure that you have requested Academic Access Letters, where you intend to use accommodations. You can also request to meet privately with me during my office hours or by appointment, as soon as possible. I would like us to discuss how we can implement your accommodations in this course to ensure your access and full engagement in this course. Learn more here: <https://drc.ucsc.edu/>

Title IX

Title IX prohibits gender discrimination, including sexual harassment, domestic and dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. If you have experienced sexual harassment or sexual violence, you can receive confidential support and advocacy at the Campus Advocacy Resources & Education (CARE) Office by calling (831) 502-2273. In addition, Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS) can provide confidential, counseling support, (831) 459-2628. You can also report gender discrimination directly to the University's Title IX Office, (831) 459-2462. Reports to law enforcement can be made to UCPD, (831) 459-2231 ext. 1. For emergencies call 911. Faculty and Teaching Assistants are required under the [UC Policy on Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment](#) to inform the Title IX Office should they become aware that you or any other student has experienced sexual violence or sexual harassment.