

Topics in World History: World War II in Asia

Fall 2016
26:510:543
Wednesday 5:30-8:10 PM
Engelhard 213

Instructor: Daniel Asen
Office hours: Mondays, 4:00-5:00 pm and by appointment, Conklin 328
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1. Course description

World War II (1939-1945) was unprecedented in its global scope, its mobilization of and impact on civilians, and its destructiveness. This conflict transformed the technologies and organization of warfare and ushered in a new era of international politics defined by powerful ideological rifts and the threat of nuclear war. From the perspective of many in Asia, the outbreak of WWII was inseparable from earlier trends surrounding Japan's stunningly successful industrialization and the country's expanding political and economic influence over other societies in East Asia and Southeast Asia. For Japanese, Chinese, Koreans, and others, WWII was thus connected to deeper conflicts and tensions of modernity, colonialism, race, and pan-Asian ideology.

In this graduate reading seminar, we will read journal articles and books that have transformed scholarly understandings of the contexts, meaning, and consequences of WWII as it unfolded in Asia and globally. Some of the themes that we will explore include the rise and decline of empires, the relationship between national, regional, and global scales of human activity, the social, political, and ideological dimensions of war, and critical approaches to the study of race, ethnicity, and identity.

2. Learning goals

1. One of the goals of this class will be to examine the historical origins, course, and consequences of WWII, understood as a global war which was inseparable from regional conflicts and tensions, both in Europe and Asia. We will focus especially on the long-term and short-term contexts of WWII in Asia, including the histories of European and American imperial and colonial claims in East and Southeast Asia, Japan's industrialization and colonial expansion, and the significant political and social transformations which made China a site of Japanese imperial ambitions and geopolitical conflict during the first decades of the 20th century. We will also examine the legacies of WWII for East and Southeast Asia, specifically the relationship between

WWII, decolonization, and post-colonial state-building within the context of the Cold War (and after). Throughout the course, we will think about WWII not simply as a series of diplomatic, political, and military events, but as a complex historical process touching on questions of ideology, everyday life, and other areas of society and culture.

2. An important goal of the class will be to understand the ways in which scholars have studied WWII in Asia (and globally) and interpreted its historical significance – in other words, will be thinking about questions of historiography. Sometimes this will involve thinking carefully about the meaning and politics of analytical concepts such as “collaboration” or “decolonization” and trying to understand how these have been used by historians to analyze the past. At other times, we will think about the scale at which history is studied as well as the periods in which it is divided: for example, what is gained or lost by focusing on large-scale social and political forces versus the complexity of individual lives? How should we understand World War II within the context of earlier and later developments, and does this require rethinking the significance of seemingly obvious turning points such as September 1939 or August 1945? Finally, we will think about the value of comparative and transnational perspectives which shift our focus from individual nation-states to larger-scale regional and global trends.

3. An important focus of the class will be the critical reading of scholarly monographs and articles: Over the course of the semester, we will spend a lot of time talking about how we read these kinds of sources. Specifically, we will work on identifying the thesis or main arguments, putting different scholars into dialogue with each other, critically thinking about the approaches, concepts, and debates which inform the study of history as well as the primary sources which are used, and drawing on these analytical skills to make compelling historical arguments in writing.

3. Assignments and grading

Class participation – 25%

Two presentations on class readings – 15%

Short paper (5-6 pages) – 20%

Final paper (12-15 pages) – 40%

1. Class participation (25%). Because this is a discussion-based class it is essential that everyone actively participates in every single class session. This means asking questions when something is unclear, engaging with your classmates’ ideas, being respectful when doing so, and contributing as much as you can to the intellectual atmosphere of the class. Because our class only meets once a week it is crucial that you attend every single class session.

2. Two presentations on class readings (15% total). Over the course of the semester you will give two ~8 minute presentations on assigned readings. We will arrange the

schedule of presentations at the start of the semester. Each presentation must contain a succinct overview of the following: (1) the main argument(s) of the reading, (2) the major historiographical concerns, (3) a critical assessment of the reading (Were you convinced by the argument/evidence? Why or why not?), and (4) questions for discussion later on in the class session.

3. Short paper, 5-6 pages (20%): For this paper, I would like you to take a look at the assigned readings for the first five weeks of class (up to and including the October 12th class session) and choose two class sessions that have topics and readings that particularly interest you. For the paper I would like you to identify a common theme or question that emerges from the assigned readings from these two class sessions and write a 5-6 page paper that puts the authors into conversation with each other around this topic. No outside research or reading should be done. I would like you to be creative in drawing connections between weeks and readings and will grade the paper in part on how well it goes beyond what we have discussed in class. I would also like to see you discuss similarities and differences in the ways that the authors address the issue that you have identified. We will discuss the paper assignment, writing strategies, as well as my expectations for the paper in class. This paper is due on Wednesday October 26th. Please email it to me before class on that day.

4. Final paper, 12-15 pages (40%): For this assignment, I would like you to write a 12-15 page paper which explores a larger question or issue of your choosing pertaining to World War II in Asia. You can choose the topic and approach, but you must do the following: (1) identify a question of historical significance on the basis of the readings that we have done over the semester, which should be the only sources which you use in the paper. (2) Include some discussion of the different approaches which scholars have used to study the history of World War II in Asia – in other words, questions of historiography. We will discuss these approaches in class and by the time that you write the paper you will have a good sense of what they are and how they can inform your own work. We will spend time discussing this assignment in class and will also go over the feedback which I give you on your first paper, in preparation for writing this paper.

4. Course readings

Weekly reading assignments will include either an entire book or several journal articles and book chapters. All readings will be posted on Blackboard, except for the following books:

- Phyllis Birnbaum. *Manchu Princess, Japanese Spy: The Story of Kawashima Yoshiko, the Cross-Dressing Spy Who Commanded Her Own Army*. Columbia University Press, 2015. ISBN: 9780231152198.

- Takashi Fujitani. *Race for Empire: Koreans as Japanese and Japanese as Americans during World War II*. University of California Press, 2013. ISBN: 9780520280212.

These books are available for purchase at the Campus Bookstore or other sources (i.e. Amazon.com).

5. Course policies

1. Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation:

<https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>.

If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at:

<https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>.

For more information please contact Kate Torres at (973) 353-5375 or in the Office of Disability Services in the Paul Robeson Campus Center, in suite 219 or by contacting odsnewark@rutgers.edu.

2. Academic dishonesty in this class will not be tolerated. Period. This includes plagiarism, cheating, and any other behavior described in the Rutgers University Academic Integrity Policy. **For this reason it is absolutely crucial that you familiarize yourself with this document, which describes the actions that will be counted as violations of academic integrity:** <http://policies.rutgers.edu/10213-currentpdf>

You must include the following Rutgers Honor Code Pledge statement on every assignment which you turn in: "On my honor, I have neither received nor given any unauthorized assistance on this assignment. (Name) (Signature – typing your name is fine) (Date)".

If anyone has any questions at all about this policy, what counts as a violation of academic integrity, or even simply how to cite sources on a paper (a topic which we will cover in class), I am always willing to discuss these issues with you. Students who

plagiarize assignments or otherwise violate academic integrity will receive serious penalties, ranging from a failing grade in the class to suspension.

6. Schedule

Sept. 7 Welcome to World War II in Asia!

- Introduction/Overview of class

Sept. 14 Long-Term Contexts: The Collapse of the Qing and the Rise of Japan

- Phyllis Birnbaum. *Manchu Princess, Japanese Spy: The Story of Kawashima Yoshiko, the Cross-Dressing Spy Who Commanded Her Own Army*. Columbia University Press, 2015. We will read most of the book – pages TBA.

Sept. 21 Japanese Imperialism in Global Context

- Ruth Rogaski. *Hygienic Modernity: Meanings of Health and Disease in Treaty-Port China*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004, 254-284 (Chapter 9: Japanese Management of Germs in Tianjin).
- Robert B. Valliant. "The Selling of Japan: Japanese Manipulation of Western Opinion, 1900-1905." *Monumenta Nipponica* 29, No. 4 (1974), 415-438.
- Aaron Skabelund. "'Can a Subaltern Bark?' Imperialism, Civilization, and Canine Cultures in Nineteenth-Century Japan," in *JAPANimals: History and Culture in Japan's Animal Life*. Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan, 2005, 195-244.
- Primary Source: Fukuzawa Yukichi, "On Saying Good-bye to Asia" (Datsu-A Ron), 1885 (3 pages).

Sept. 28 Physical Anthropology, Scientific Racism, and Pan-Asianism

- Rotem Kowner. "'Lighter Than Yellow, But Not Enough': Western Discourse on the Japanese 'Race', 1854-1904." *The Historical Journal* 43, no. 1 (2000): 103-131.
- Morris Low. "Physical Anthropology in Japan: The Ainu and the Search for the Origins of the Japanese." *Current Anthropology* 53, no. S5 (2012), S57-S68.
- Kim, Hoi-eun, "Anatomically Speaking: The Kubo Incident and the Paradox of Race in Colonial Korea." In *Race and Racism in Modern East Asia: Western and Eastern Constructions*, edited by Rotem Kowner and Walter Demel. Leiden: Brill, 2013, 411-430.
- Primary Source: Konoe Atsumaro, "A Same-Race Alliance and on the Necessity of Studying the Chinese Question," 1898 (8 pages).

Oct. 5 Paths to Global War, Part I: WWI to 1930s

- Naoko Shimazu. *Japan, Race and Equality: The Racial Equality Proposal of 1919* (London: Routledge, 1998), 13-37.
- Frederick R. Dickinson. "Toward a Global Perspective of the Great War: Japan and the Foundations of a Twentieth-Century World." *American Historical Review* (2014) 119, no. 4: 1154-1183.
- Eiko Maruko Siniawer. "Liberalism undone: discourses on political violence in interwar Japan." *Modern Asian Studies* 45, no. 4 (2011), 973-1002.
- Primary Source: Konoe Fumimaro, "A Call to Reject the Anglo-American Centered Peace" (1918), 3 pages.

Oct. 12 Paths to Global War, Part II: 1930s to Pearl Harbor

- Louise Young. *Japan's Total Empire: Manchuria and the Culture of Wartime Imperialism*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998, 55-114, 415-436.
- Mikiya Koyagi. "The Hajj by Japanese Muslims in the Interwar Period: Japan's Pan-Asianism and Economic Interests in the Islamic World." *Journal of World History* 24, no. 4 (2013), 849-876.
- Tessa Morris-Suzuki. *The Technological Transformation of Japan: From the Seventeenth to the Twenty-first Century*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994, 143-157.
- Primary Source: "The Tripartite Pact between Japan, Germany, and Italy" (1940), 1 page

Oct. 19 Understanding "Manchukuo"

- David Tucker. "City Planning without Cities: Order and Chaos in Utopian Manchukuo," in *Crossed Histories: Manchuria in the Age of Empire*, edited by Mariko Asano Tamanoi. Honolulu: Association for Asian Studies and University of Hawai'i Press, 2005, 53-81.
- Mariko Asano Tamanoi. "Knowledge, Power, and Racial Classification: The 'Japanese' in 'Manchuria.'" *Journal of Asian Studies* 59, No. 2 (2000), 248-276.
- Kari Shepherdson-Scott. "Conflicting Politics and Contesting Borders: Exhibiting (Japanese) Manchuria at the Chicago World's Fair, 1933-34." *Journal of Asian Studies* 74, no. 03 (2015), 539-564.

Oct. 26 Occupied China and the Problem of "Collaboration"

- Timothy Brook. *Collaboration: Japanese Agents and Local Elites in Wartime China*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005, 1-31, 221-239.
- Timothy Brook. "The Great Way Government of Shanghai" (157-186), in *In the Shadow of the Rising Sun: Shanghai under Japanese Occupation*, edited by Christian Henriot and Wen-hsin Yeh. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.
- **Paper #1 Due**

Nov. 2 Mobilizing for War

- Takashi Fujitani. *Race for Empire: Koreans as Japanese and Japanese as Americans during World War II*. University of California Press, 2013, 1-77.
- Mark Driscoll. *Absolute Erotic, Absolute Grotesque: The Living, Dead, and Undead in Japan's Imperialism, 1895-1945*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2010, 227-262.
- Rana Mitter. "Classifying Citizens in Nationalist China during World War II, 1937-1941." *Modern Asian Studies* 45, no. 2 (2011), 243-75.

Nov. 9 Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere

- Fujitani. *Race for Empire*, 299-334.
- Kevin M. Doak. "Building National Identity through Ethnicity: Ethnology in Wartime Japan and After." *The Journal of Japanese Studies* 27, No. 1 (2001), 1-39.
- Ethan Mark. "The Perils of Co-Prosperity: Takeda Rintarō, Occupied Southeast Asia, and the Seductions of Postcolonial Empire." *The American Historical Review* (2014) 119, no. 4: 1184-1206.

Nov. 16 War and Race: American Perspectives

- John W. Dower, *War Without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986), 15-32.
- Fujitani, *Race for Empire*, 78-205.

Nov. 23 No Class

- **Note: Wednesday Nov. 23 follows a Friday class schedule. For more information, see the RU-N Fall 2016 Academic Calendar.**

Nov. 30 War in the Pacific

- Dower, *War Without Mercy*, 3-14, 33-73.
- Primary Source: Henry L. Stimson, "The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb" (1947), 10 pages.
- Primary Source: Paul Fussell, "Hiroshima: A Soldier's View" (1981), 4 pages.

Dec. 7 Post-War Legacies, Part I: Histories of Mobility and Displacement

- Tessa Morris-Suzuki. "Prisoner Number 600,001: Rethinking Japan, China, and the Korean War 1950–1953." *Journal of Asian Studies* 74, no. 2 (2015), 411-432.
- Amy King. "Reconstructing China: Japanese technicians and industrialization in the early years of the People's Republic of China." *Modern Asian Studies* 50, no. 1 (2016), 141-174.

Dec. 14 Post-War Legacies, Part II: Decolonizing and (Re-)Imagining “Asia”

- Robert Bickers. “Settlers and Diplomats: The End of British Hegemony in the International Settlement, 1937-1945” (229-256) and Christine Cornet. “The Bumpy End of the French Concession and French Influence in Shanghai, 1937-1946” (257-276), in *In the Shadow of the Rising Sun: Shanghai under Japanese Occupation*, edited by Christian Henriot and Wen-hsin Yeh. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.
- Pankaj Mishra, *From the Ruins of Empire: The Revolt Against the West and the Remaking of Asia* (New York: Picador, 2012), 245-253.
- Ethan Mark. “‘Asia’s’ Transwar Lineage: Nationalism, Marxism, and ‘Greater Asia’ in an Indonesian Inflection.” *Journal of Asian Studies* 65, 3 (2006), 461-493.

Paper #2 Due Date TBA