

Department of History
University of Wisconsin-Madison
College of Letters and Science

History 456
Japan and World War Two in Asia
Upper division lecture course
Fall 2020

3 credits
MWF 9:55-10:45
Face-to-face instruction
White 3250

Professor Louise Young
O.H. Monday 4-6 and by appt.
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COVID-19 in person instruction

Individuals are expected to wear a face covering while inside any university building. Face coverings must be worn correctly (i.e., covering both your mouth and nose) in the building if you are attending class in person. If any student is unable to wear a face-covering, an accommodation may be provided due to disability, medical condition, or other legitimate reason. The History Department has directed instructors to halt the class and, if necessary, leave the classroom if anyone in the room is not wearing a properly fitted mask.

Course description

World War Two was many wars. Fought on multiple fronts, the war involved a complex tangle of war aims and competing ideologies. The advent of “total war” blurred the line between the home front and the battlefield and necessitated the mobilization of domestic societies in unprecedented ways. The war introduced new weapons of mass destruction that targeted both civilians and soldiers. This course looks at these issues from the vantage point of Japanese history, focusing on what Japanese call the “Asia-Pacific War.” Beginning with the post World War One settlement, we track the gathering crisis of the twenties and thirties through the outbreak of a multi-front war against China, against the USSR, against the US, and against the European empires in Southeast Asia. We also examine end of “hot” war and the beginnings of “cold” war in Asia.

Learning outcomes

- Develop effective reading strategies and ability to synthesize complex historical material.
- Design a research project and write up findings in the form of a history essay. This includes identifying an historical question, developing a bibliography, working with outlines to build an argument, and improving writing style.
- Acquire an understanding of the causes and outcomes of World War Two in Asia.
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Credit Hours

Credit hours are calculated based on the “Traditional Carnegie Definition”: each credit represents three hours of combined direct instruction and outside preparation each week for 15 weeks.

Readings

I have assigned a textbook by Andrew Gordon that gives an overview of modern Japanese history and should serve as a reference, particularly for those of you without previous exposure to

Japanese history. We will also read a study of the war written by a famous progressive Japanese historian, Saburo Ienaga. Students might find his sharp critical tone disconcerting, but Ienaga is representative of a viewpoint that is widely shared among Japanese academics. Both books are available for purchase through the University Bookstore. In addition, a variety of readings treating diplomatic, military, cultural and economic dimensions of the gathering conflict in the Asia-Pacific can be accessed via the class website. Together, these should provide students with a window on the war from a variety of perspectives. The readings, like the course itself, are meant to convey the multidimensional nature of the war.

The following required readings have been ordered for purchase at the University Book Store:
Andrew Gordon, A Modern History of Japan from Tokugawa Times to the Present (Oxford University Press, any edition, assigned page numbers from 3rd edition): ISBN 9780199930159.
Saburo Ienaga, The Pacific War, 1931-1945 (Pantheon, Penguin, any edition): ISBN 9780394734965.

All other readings are available on canvas.

- Ramon H. Myers and Mark R. Peattie, The Japanese Colonial Empire, 1895-1945 (Princeton, 1984), pp 61-79, 128-172.
- Peter Duus, Ramon H. Myers, and Mark R. Peattie, eds., The Japanese Informal Empire in China, 1895-1937, 65-132, 395-428.
- Akira Iriye, "The Failure of Economic Expansionism" in Harry Harootunian and Bernard Silberman, eds., Japan in Crisis: Essays in Taisho Democracy.
- Shuichi Kato, "Taisho democracy as the Prestage for Showa Militarism," both in Harry Harootunian and Bernard Silberman, eds., Japan in Crisis: Essays in Taisho Democracy.
- Dore & Ōuchi, "Rural Origins of Japanese Fascism" in Harry Harootunian and Bernard Silberman, eds., Japan in Crisis: Essays in Taisho Democracy, 181-210.
- Louise Young, "Imagined Empire," in Duus, Myers and Peattie, eds., The Japanese Wartime Empire, 71-97.
- Miles Fletcher, "Intellectuals and Fascism in Early Showa Japan," JAS 39.1: 39-63.
- Edward Drea, Japan's Imperial Army: Its Rise and Fall, 1853-1945, 146-262.
- Haruko Taya Cook and Theodore F. Cook, Japan at War: An Oral History, 95-169, 203-259, 354-367.
- Akira Iriye, "The Failure of Military Expansionism," in Dilemmas of Growth in Prewar Japan, 107-138.
- John Dower, War Without Mercy, 1-73, 293-317.

Requirements

- Weekly readings of approximately 100 pages/ week.
- Essay #1 (40%) 8-10 page essay on a topic of your choice due December 4. Submit a paragraph describing your topic with annotated bibliography for approval by instructor due September 25 (required). If you would like feedback on your developing paper, I will read a thesis statement and outline submitted by November 6 (optional).
- In-class midterm examination (30%) Scheduled for October 26, the exam will cover material (readings, films and lectures) from Part I through Part III of the course. The format of the exam will be a combination of short answer/identification questions and a choice of longer essay questions.

- Final examination (30%) The final is comprehensive and covers all material from class lectures, readings, and films. Like the midterm, the format of the exam will be a combination of short answer/identifications and essay questions.

Grading

A	93-100
AB	87-92
B	81-86
BC	74-80
C	68-73
D	62-67
F	61 and below

Essay Instructions

- Ten pages of double-spaced text in 12-point font.
- Late papers will not be accepted except in case of a documented emergency.
- Good writing takes effort. Take care to craft an essay that is well reasoned and builds effectively from opening to close. Make an outline, write a first draft, and then revise it. Edit the paper for word choice, grammar, and spelling.
- Avail yourself of History Lab assistance. History Lab offers various forms of help including one-on-one tutoring, on line handouts, and workshops.
- Make use of the talent in the classroom. Find a partner or partners to exchange drafts for peer review.

Class schedule

Part I: **the rise of imperial Japan**

Read: Andrew Gordon, A History of Modern Japan, pp 46-137; Ramon Myers and Mark Peattie, The Japanese Colonial Empire, pp 61-79, 128-172.

W. September 2	<i>introduction</i>
F. September 4	<i>Why chose empire?</i>
M. September 7	<i>the Meiji state and the "emperor system"</i>
W. September 9	<i>military expansionism</i>
F. September 11	<i>paper topic discussion</i>
M. September 14	<i>economy and empire</i>

Part II: **World War I and the crisis in Asia**

Read: Andrew Gordon, A History of Modern Japan, pp 138-180; Peter Duus, Ramon H. Myers, and Mark R. Peattie, eds., The Japanese Informal Empire in China, 1895-1937, 65-132, 395-428; Akira Iriye, "The Failure of Economic Expansionism" and Shuichi Kato, "Taisho democracy as the Prestage for Showa Militarism," both in Harry Harootunian and Bernard Silberman, eds., Japan in Crisis: Essays in Taisho Democracy; Ienaga Saburo, The Pacific War, 1-54.

W. September 16	<i>Japan at the Paris Peace Conference</i>
F. September 18	<i>annotated bibliography and topic paper discussion</i>

- M. September 21 *WW1 and the East Asian regional system*
W. September 23 *Japan's "China problem"*
F. September 25 *Challenges to military leadership*
- M. September 28 *World War One and the East Asian regional system*
W. September 30 *the peace conference and its aftermath*
F. October 2 *"Taishō demokurashii"*
- M. October 5 *the economic muddle of the 1920s*

Part III: fascism, militarism, Japanism

Read: Andrew Gordon, A Modern History of Japan, 181-201; Dore & Ōuchi, "Rural Origins of Japanese Fascism" 181-210; Louise Young, "Imagined Empire," in Duus, Myers and Peattie, eds., The Japanese Wartime Empire, 71-97; Miles Fletcher, "Intellectuals and Fascism in Early Showa Japan," JAS 39.1: 39-63; Edward Drea, Japan's Imperial Army: Its Rise and Fall, 1853-1945, 146-189; Haruko Taya Cook and Theodore F. Cook, Japan at War: An Oral History, 203-259.

- W. October 7 *the rise of the right-wing*
F. October 9 **NO CLASS**
- M. October 12 *economic depression & the imperial fix*
W. October 14 *Manchurian Incident*
F. October 16 *Democratic breakdown*
- M. October 19 *war fever!*
W. October 21 *"thought police"*
F. October 23 *national defense state*
- M. October 26 **midterm examination**

Part IV: the four spheres of the Asia-Pacific War

Read: Edward Drea, Japan's Imperial Army: Its Rise and Fall, 1853-1945, 190-262; Akira Iriye, "The Failure of Military Expansionism," in Dilemmas of Growth in Prewar Japan, 107-138; Ienaga Saburo, The Pacific War, 55-152;

- W. October 28 *America and Japan*
F. October 30 *The Road to Pearl Harbor*
- M. November 2 *The diplomacy of Red Peril*
W. November 4 *Strike North!*
F. November 6 *Entanglements in China*
- M. November 9 *Entanglements in Southeast Asia and the Pacific*

Part V: the conduct of the war

Read: John Dower, War Without Mercy, pp 1-73; Ienaga Saburo, The Pacific War, 153-240; Haruko Taya Cook and Theodore F. Cook, Japan at War: An Oral History, 95-169; 354-367.

- W. November 11 *China Incident*

F. November 13 *Nanjing Massacre*

M. November 16 *Strike South*
W. November 18 *Occupation of Southeast Asia*
F. November 20 *The long bloody roll back*

M. November 23 *Air power and the Atomic bomb*
W. November 25 **NO CLASS**
F. November 27 **NO CLASS**

Instruction moves online

M. November 30 *Japan's struggle to surrender*

Part VI: from war to peace

Read: Andrew Gordon, *A Modern History of Japan*, p 224-241; John Dower, *War Without Mercy*, 293-317.

W. December 2 *Occupation and Cold War*
F. December 4 *Tokyo War Crimes Trial and war responsibility*
M. December 7 *A-bomb culture and "peace nationalism"*
W. December 9 *Conclusion*