This course looks at the history of Japan between two watershed moments: The Meiji Restoration, which witnessed the formation of a new modern nation-state centered around the figure of the Japanese emperor, and the United States-led occupation of Japan in the wake of World War II. Both events were deeply unsettling and ultimately transformative of Japanese history. In this course, we shall describe this history as it unfolds across four or five key moments: 1) the opening of the country to foreign influence and the often contentious imagining—across multiple strata of society—of the Japanese nation that followed; 2) the evolution of imperial Japan, both in the form of an emperor-centered polity at home and the acquisition of colonies abroad; 3) an intriguing moment of internationalization, present from the beginning of Japan’s engagement with the West, but particularly conspicuous after the Great War in Europe; 4) Finally, we will examine modern Japanese history as it came to be defined in terms of its relationship to China and the United States. As we shall see, far from being mutually exclusive, these moments are intimately bound up with one another, each one making up a strand of the complex tapestry of Japan’s history of modernization.

Course Texts

A. Books Available for Purchase


B. Electronic Course Reserves

A selection of primary sources and historical works—all required reading for the course—has been made available through Geisel Library’s electronic course reserves. Each of these readings are marked with a double asterisk (**) on the course syllabus.

C. Historical Overview Texts

These texts are intended to provide an overview of the historical period covered in this course. They have been placed on 3-hour reserve at the Geisel Library. They have NOT been ordered for purchase. Students may choose between assignments for each section of the course.
Lecture Schedule

Week 1

9/23 Course Introduction

Part One: Opening the Country, Imagining the Nation

Historical Overview: MMJ 1-77 or RMJ 25-119

Week 2

9/28 Between Lord and Peasant: The Tokugawa Period (1600-1868)

Reading: Fukutake Tadashi, Japanese Rural Society, translator’s introduction and chapter 1, ** George Wilson, “Plotting Bakumatsu History,” in Patriots and Redeemers**

9/30 The Meiji Restoration


Note: Begin reading Kokoro

Week 3

10/05 Meiji and its Discontents


10/07 The Meiji Enlightenment

Reading: “Fukuzawa Yukichi’s View of Civilization,” Fukuzawa Yukichi and Education,” in SJT**, pp. 698-707, 760-64

Part Two: Imperial Japan, Japanese Imperialism

Historical Overview: MMJ 97-154 RMJ 120-172

Week 4

10/12 Foundations of the Meiji State

10/14 Wars of Empire

Reading: Uchimura Kanzo, “Justification of the War in Corea,”* (to be posted)

Week 5

10/19 Japanese Imperialism


10/21 Imperial Japan and its Limits

Reading: Jay Rubin, “Soseki on Individualism” and Natsume Soseki, “My Individualism,”* Laurel Rasplica Rodd, “The Taisho Debate over the New Women…” in RJW

Note: Finish reading Kokoro

Part Three: Interwar Japan

Historical Overview: MMJ 159-181, RMJ 173-205

Week 6

10/26 MIDTERM EXAMINATION

10/28 Taishō Japan and the Great War


Note: Begin reading John Dower, Embracing Defeat

Week 7

11/02 Internationalization and its Limits


11/04 Crisis and Mobilization

Part Four: The Asia-Pacific War and its Aftermath

**Historical Overview:** MMJ, 181-226  RMJ, 206-54

**Week 8**

11/09  The War in China

**Reading:** “The Way of Subjects,” in SJT, 998-1002 Louise Young, “Colonizing Manchuria” in *Mirror of Modernity*"

11/11 Veteran’s Day- No Class

**Week 9**

11/16 The Pacific War

**Reading:** James Morley, “A New Deal for Japan” in *Modern East Asia: Essays in Interpretation*"

11/18 1945

**Reading:** Maruyama Masao, "Theory and Psychology of Ultranationalism” in *Thought and Behavior in Modern Japanese Politics*"

**Week 10**

11/23  The U.S. Occupation

**Reading:** “The New Constitution” in *SJT*, pp.1031-36

11/25  Thanksgiving- No Class

**Week 11**

11/30  Legacies of the Occupation

12/02  Final Review

Final papers due in class on 12/02

**Academic Honesty**

Plagiarism is a serious offense and will be treated as such in this course. The History Department’s statement on plagiarism explains, the “most obvious form of plagiarism is the verbatim copying of words, sentences, paragraphs or entire sections or chapter without quotation and proper attribution… You must use quotation marks even if you only borrow several words in sequence from a source.” Students should reference the History Department’s statement on plagiarism at:

[http://historyweb.ucsd.edu/pages/undergraduate/Current/plagiarism.htm](http://historyweb.ucsd.edu/pages/undergraduate/Current/plagiarism.htm)
Any questions concerning plagiarism and academic honesty should be addressed before assignments are submitted.

**Evaluation Criteria**

- **Midterm Examination** – 30 percent of overall grade
  
  A midterm examination for this course will be given in class on October 26 and will cover Parts 1 and 2 of the course syllabus.

- **Final Paper** – 30 percent of overall grade
  
  Students of this course will have the opportunity to read Embracing Defeat, John Dower’s classic treatment of the Japanese experience of the U.S Occupation, in its entirety and write a final paper on one of the themes it addresses. A list of possible paper topics will be circulated after the midterm examination.

- **Final Examination** – 40 percent of overall grade
  
  The final examination will be administered on December 9, 8:00 am-11:00 am, and will cover the entire course, but with particular emphasis on Parts 3 and 4. Location TBA.
Electronic Course Reserves Key (In General Order of Appearance)


