HIEA 113: The Fifteen Year War in Asia and the Pacific

Time and Place: MWF 10:00: 10:50 AM; Center Hall 113
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Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday 1:30-3:00 PM or by appointment

Objectives and Expectations:

The Fifteen Year War is a term used to describe the military struggle in Asia from 1931 to 1945. It includes what we might call World War II or the Pacific War but ultimately tells a far different story. While the United States plays an important role in this story in the end it is not central. This course is intended to help students understand the Fifteen Year War, World War II and the Pacific War from the perspective of Asia. This focus is intended to help reveal the diplomatic, political, and military maneuvers, but also perceptions and experiences of the war from those most heavily affected by it: those experiencing it on the ground in China, Japan, Korea, and Taiwan. Understanding this war is critical for helping us understand Asia and America’s role within it today. The foundations of the Cold War and the post-Cold War world that we live in today were forged on battlefields in mainland China, small islands in the Pacific, and in the skies over the archipelago of Japan. In order to provide the background and understand the legacies, this course covers an extended time frame, beginning in the 19th century with the arrival of the West in Asia and continues into the 1950s.

The readings for the course consist primarily of primary resource materials and are intended to help students’ understand and analyze the actions of historical actors. Many of these readings are gory, callous, or by our own 21st century eyes can be seen as racist. But I did not choose them to shock. Instead, the readings for this class are intended to help students understand the motivations of historical actors and illustrate the context within which the drama of the Fifteen Year War played out. The only way to understand history is to understand and sympathize with the actions of actors even if we choose to condemn them for the choices they make. The readings closely track the themes of the lecture and in order to help add context and illustrate the broader themes laid out in the lecture students are strongly encouraged to stay up to date with the readings. To help in this process of developing a historical sympathy, while this is a lecture course, students are encouraged to ask questions and actively engage with the material. While this is a lecture course, over the course of the quarter there will be four (4) dedicated “discussion sessions.” I will lead these discussions and some questions to help guide your thinking are included in the weekly schedule (see below). These sessions are intended to give students the opportunity to engage with the material and talk about some of the important underlying themes of the course.

There are no specific pre-requisites for the course. Students are best served having taken HILD 10, 11, 12, or else an upper division course on East Asia. Those unfamiliar with East Asia and its history are encouraged to do some background reading on Chinese and Japanese history. A good starting place for China is Jonathan Spence’s *The Search for Modern China* and for Japan, Andrew Gordon’s *A Modern History of Japan from Tokugawa Times to the Present*. 
Required Texts:
Ba Jin, *Cold Nights* (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press) 1978
All other course readings are available through the library’s E-Res website

Course Requirements:
1. **Midterm exam:** 35 percent. Questions will be drawn from readings and lectures from the first five weeks and will be conducted in class.
2. **Final exam:** 45 percent. Questions will be drawn from readings and lectures from all ten weeks and will be conducted in class.
3. **Pop quizzes:** 10 percent. Two pop quizzes will be administered in class over the course of the ten week quarter. These quizzes will be drawn from the readings and also from material covered in the lectures. For those who are coming to class and following along in the readings, these should be very easy. No make-ups for missed quizzes.
4. **Response papers:** 10 percent. Students will be required to write five (5) three to four page response papers over the course of the quarter. Four of these papers must be submitted on webct before 8 AM on days in the syllabus marked “discussion” (see weekly schedule below). The others can be submitted at any point during the quarter, though no more than one can be submitted in any given week.
5. **Extra Credit:** Students that participate on marked “discussion” days (see weekly schedule below) will be able to acquire one extra credit point that is added to their final grade. With four discussion sessions over the course of the quarter, students can get four total extra credit points added. Participation is determined by the instructor.

Plagiarism:
For more information on what is considered plagiarism and what is not, I urge all students to consult the Department of History’s guidelines on the matter:
http://historyweb.ucsd.edu/pages/undergraduate/Current/plagiarism.htm. Please note the most common form of plagiarism: “verbatim copying of words, sentences, paragraphs or entire sections or chapter without quotation and proper attribution. This is the most obvious form of plagiarism. You must use quotation marks even if you only borrow several words in sequence from a source.” If you have any questions or concerns about this very serious issue, please do not hesitate to contact me. Students found guilty of plagiarism will receive no credit for the assignment/exam and will also be reported to the Office of the Academic Integrity Coordinator for further adjudication.

Weekly Schedule:

Week 1

April 2: Introductions
April 4: Background: the West, Imperialism and the Rise of Nations and Nationalism in Asia
- Start Discourse of Three Drunkards

April 6: Japan: the Model for Asia?
- Continue with Discourse

Week 2

April 9: Nationalism, National Crisis and the Nationalists in China
- Continue with Discourse

April 11: DISCUSSION #1
Discussion Questions: What is the linkage between National identity in Asia and the West? How do you evaluate the role of the West in late 19th and early 20th Century Asia? Is it positive or negative in this early period? From Discourse: Which course for Japan do you agree with: that of the “Gentleman of Western Learning” or the “Champion of the East”?
- Finish Discourse
- “Shouts of Independence” in Under the Black Umbrella, 17-23

April 13: Japanese Militarism and the Expansion of the Japanese Empire
- “Japan on the Mukden Incident” in the *Search for Modern China: A Documentary Collection*, 279-281
- “Japan’s Expansion: A satirical poem”, “Japan defended at the Chamber of Commerce” in *Search for Modern China: A Documentary Collection*, 281-286
- “East Asian Federation”, “The Spiritual Basis of Asian Revolution and Unity.”, “Japan as Economic Leader of Asia”, in *Japan’s Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere in World War II: Selected Documents* (New York: Oxford University Press) 1975, 3-8, 36-40, 48-54

**Week 3**

**April 16: The Coming Conflict With China**
- “Political and Military Realities in *Twentieth Century China: A History in Documents*, 78-83

**April 18: 1937-1938: Japan on the March**
- “Japan at War” in *Search for Modern China: A Documentary Collection*, 314-324
- “The Rape of Nanjing, Search for Modern China: A Documentary Collection*,324-330

**April 20: Retreat, Resistance, and Nationalism in China**
- “Generalissimo Jiang on National Identity” in *Chinese Civilization: a Sourcebook*, 401-404
- “War, Nationalism and Identity” in *China: Inventing the Nation*, 207-223

**Week 4**

**April 23: Behind Chinese Lines: “Free China”**
- “Chungking, a Point in Time” in White and Jacoby eds *Thunder Out of China*, 3-19
- “Bombs Don’t Discriminate” in Flath and Smith, eds. *Beyond Suffering: Recounting War in Modern China* (Vancouver: UBC Press) 2011, 59-79

**April 25:** Pearl Harbor and the Transformation of the War of Resistance  
- “Tojo on the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere”, “Tojo Greets the Greater East Asia Conference, in *Japan’s Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere in World War II*, 78-81, 88-93  
- “A Failure of Diplomacy” in *Japan at War: an Oral History*, 90-95  

**April 27:** DISCUSSION #2  
**Discussion Questions:** What you think about the rhetoric of the Japanese led “Greater East Asia?” Which elements of it are convincing and which are not? How do you evaluate the statement that some historians have made that the war with Japan helped create Chinese nationalism? What are the different elements of this?


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**Week 5**

**April 30:** Race, Colonialism and War  
- “Korean Guard” in Japan at War, 113-120  
**OPTIONAL:** “Race, Language and War in Two Cultures” in John Dower *Japan in War and Peace: Selected Essays*, 257-285

**May 2:** Women, Sex, and Conquest  
- Ding Ling, “When I was in Xia village” *Columbia Anthology of Modern Chinese Literature*

**May 4:** Midterm: IN CLASS

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**Week 6**
May 7: Film: “Nanjing: Memory and Oblivion”
- Start Cold Nights

May 9: Allies and Competitors: the American-Chinese Relationship
- Jay Taylor, The Generalissimo: Chiang Kaishhek and the Struggle for Modern China (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009), 194-244

May 11: The Question of Communism

Week 7

May 14: Death, Destruction, and Losing Hope
- “The Honan Famine” in Theodore White and Annalee Jacoby Thunder out of China, 166-178
- Finish Cold Nights

May 16: War and Empire in the Pacific Island, Guest Lecture: Jessica Jordan
- Drafted to the Kobe Shipyards”, “the War Effort” in Under the Black Umbrella, 123-138
- “Volunteer and “Human Torpedo” Japan at War, 306-319

May 18: Film: “Wings of defeat”
OPTIONAL: “Sensational Rumors, Seditious Graffiti and the Nightmares of the Thought Police” in John Dower Japan in War and Peace, Selected Essays, 101-154

Week 8

May 21: DISCUSSION #3
**Discussion Questions:** What impact did the American entry into the war have on China? Why did many in the American government begin to believe that the Communists were their best hope? Do their arguments have merit? What role does race play in the war?

-Herbert Dix, “Japan’s Delayed Surrender: A Reinterpretation” in Diplomatic History 19, no. 2, 197-225
-“The Burning Skies” in Japan at War, 343-353

**May 23:** Finding an Endgame: Surrender and the Bomb
-Start Hiroshima
-“Thank God for the Atom Bomb” in Paul Fussell, Thank God for the Atom Bomb and Other Essays, 1-28

**May 25:** Surrender and Transition to the Cold War
-“Mansei” in Under the Black Umbrella, 139-147
-“Shattered Lives” in John Dower Embracing Defeat 48-64
-“Reversals of Fortune” in Japan at War, 407-419
-Continue reading Hiroshima

OPTIONAL: Matthew Allen, “Wolves at the Back Door: Remembering the Kumejima Massacres,” in Islands of Discontent, 39-64

**Week 9**

**May 28:** Holiday

**May 31:** The Atomic Age and the First Shots of the Cold War
- Godzilla on My Mind: Tsutsui (get citation)
- Finish Hiroshima

**June 2:** DISCUSSION #4
**Discussion Questions:** Why do you think the Americans decided to drop the bomb? Did it accomplish their goals? What unintended consequences (social, political, and economic) were there in dropping the bomb? What is the linkage between the end of the Pacific War and the beginning of the Cold War?

-“Victory and Civil War” in Theodore White and Annalee Jacoby, Thunder Out of China, 279-297

**Week 10**
**June 5: Resonances: the Legacy of War**
- Hideo Kobayashi, “The Postwar Economic Legacy of Japan’s Wartime Empire” in *Japan’s Wartime Empire*, 324-334

**June 7: Exam Review**

**June 9: Final Exam: IN CLASS**