Japanese 130A – The Literature of Multicultural Japan (Spring 2018) – Tentative

In spite of Japan’s linguistic, ethnic, regional, social, and sexual diversity, “multicultural” is perhaps an adjective that few have tended to associate with Japan or its literary tradition. Why does the image of a monocultural Japan remain so resilient? This course draws upon mainly twentieth-century literature and film to examine the variety of ways in which Japan is now and has historically been a site of multicultural interaction.

Alongside a diverse array of primary readings, we consider the shifting discourses of national identity, looking at how images of homogeneity (and heterogeneity) took shape and for what ends. How did rhetoric about Japan’s national identity evolve to meet its changing domestic and international needs? What role did contact with Western societies, overseas expansion and assimilation of colonial Others, and emergence as an economic superpower have on national identity discourse? Has globalization expanded awareness of Japan as a multicultural society or has it spurred an even greater search for cultural singularity?

The bulk of the course examines these issues in the context of twentieth century works of literature. We will consider short stories, novels, and memoirs by authors from specific socially marginalized groups: the outcaste or burakumin, the Ainu, Okinawans, Koreans living in Japan, and sexual minorities, and we will also devote some attention to how figures of ethnic others appear in major works of Japanese fiction and film.

Our class meetings will typically begin with an introductory lecture that will help to put the literary works we read in their historical and cultural context. The focus of each class meeting, however, will be close reading and discussion of the texts. Students are therefore expected to read and reflect upon the assigned materials prior to class and to participate actively in discussion. Two films will be screened during the semester; if students cannot attend the scheduled group showing, they can view the film on reserve and should do so prior to our in-class discussion of the film.

Students will also be asked to brief (about 200-250 well-chosen words) response essays to the weekly readings at least three times during the semester. These are to be posted to the online discussion forum (via LATTE) prior to class discussion. Short quizzes concerning the readings and lectures will be given periodically. A short paper (5-7 pages) will be assigned halfway through the term that will ask students to compare two of the works we have read; suggested topics will be provided but students are welcome to formulate their own questions in consultation with the instructor. As a final project, each student will also be required to submit a final paper (about 10 pages) that will provide a chance to explore a work of the student’s choice in greater analytical depth. Both writing assignments will be evaluated for their coherence, critical argumentation, persuasiveness, and thoroughness of engagement with the material. Final presentations (of about 8-10 minutes) will serve as an opportunity for students to share their findings with their classmates.

Success in this four-credit course is based on the expectation that students will spend a minimum of 9 hours of study time per week in preparation for class (readings, papers, discussion sections, preparation for exams, etc.).

Grades will be determined as follows:

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<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance and class participation</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<td>Quizzes and web posts</td>
<td>20%</td>
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Short paper 25%
Final presentation 10%
Final paper 30%

Instructor:
Prof. Matthew Fraleigh Mail: fraleigh@brandeis.edu Phone: 6-3229
Class: M, W 5:00 – 6:20 Office Hours: M 1:00-3:00
(Mandel 115)

Disabilities:
If you are a student with a documented disability on record at Brandeis University and wish to have a reasonable accommodation made for you in this class, please see me immediately.

Academic Integrity:
You are expected to be familiar with and to follow the University’s policies on academic integrity (see http://www.brandeis.edu/studentlife/sdc/ai). All suspected instances of dishonesty will be referred to the Office of Student Development and Conduct. Instances of academic dishonesty may result in sanctions including but not limited to, failing grades being issued, educational programs, and other consequences.

Required Texts – available at the Brandeis Bookstore; other readings available online

Additional Resources: The following are useful resources on Japan’s modern history and modern literature.
• Marius Jansen. The Making of Modern Japan. Harvard UP.

Students who are interested in reading materials in Japanese (either selections from the primary readings or secondary scholarship) are encouraged to consult with the instructor.
Week One – Overview
Wednesday January 10: Introduction

Week Two – Discourses of Homogeneity
Monday January 15 Martin Luther King Day (no class)

Wednesday January 17:

Thursday January 18: (Brandeis Monday)

Week Three – Ainu
Monday January 22:

Wednesday January 24:

Week Four – Okinawans
Monday January 29:

Wednesday January 31:
- Medoruma Shun. “Hope.”
Week Five – Empire: Migrant Settlers/Colonial Subjects
Monday February 5:


Wednesday February 7:


Week Six – Sexual Minorities
Monday February 12:


Wednesday February 14:

・ Kaori Ekuni. Twinkle Twinkle. (continued)

Short papers due Wednesday February 14

(February 19–23 no class; midterm recess)

Week Seven – Zainichi Korean Japanese
Monday February 26:


Wednesday February 28:

Week Eight – Zainichi Korean Japanese
Monday March 5:
• Selections from Melissa Wender. Into the Light. University of Hawai'i P, 2011.

Wednesday March 7:
• Selections from Melissa Wender. Into the Light. University of Hawai'i P, 2011.

Week Nine – Racial Difference in Contemporary Japan
Monday March 12:

Wednesday March 14:

Week Ten – Burakumin
Monday March 19:

Wednesday March 21:
• Shimazaki Tōson. The Broken Commandment (continued)
• Sayuri Oyama. “Shimazaki Tōson's Hakai: (Re)writing and (Re)reading the Canon.” PAJLS.
Week Eleven – Racial Difference in Contemporary Japan

Monday March 26:


Wednesday March 28: (Guest Lecture: Prof. Seth Jacobowitz, Yale University)

March 30 – April 6 (no class)

Week Twelve – Burakumin

Monday April 9:


Wednesday April 11:


Week Thirteen – Nihongo Bungaku

Monday April 16:


Wednesday April 18:

- Levy Hideo. *A Room Where the Star-Spangled Banner Cannot be Heard*. (continued)

Begin final presentations
Week Fourteen – Final Presentations
Monday April 23: Final presentations (continued)

Wednesday April 25 (Brandeis Friday)

Final Papers due: Friday April 25