This course explores the history of China’s Northeast (“Manchuria”) as a site for challenging the boundaries imposed by histories of the nation-state. The histories of Japan, the United States, Britain, France, China and Russia will be interwoven to examine the region’s transformation from sparsely populated Manchu homeland, to staging ground for Japanese imperialism, to scene of Mao Zedong’s triumph over the Nationalists in the Chinese Civil War of 1945-49.

**Goals and Expectations:** The purpose of this course is twofold. In addition to charting the history of China’s Northeast over three centuries, students are encouraged to develop an understanding of how history is written—from both ideological and practical standpoints. To this end, weekly readings combine primary and secondary source materials. Careful attention to argumentation and evidence will form the basis of weekly class discussion and critique. To advance understanding of how history is written in a practical sense, students will prepare a research paper (using both primary and secondary source materials) to be submitted at the end of the semester.

**Required Texts:** Required texts have been ordered in paperback at the Oberlin Bookstore (basement) and placed on reserve at Mudd Library.


All other readings are available on Blackboard.

**Assessment:** The course grade will be based on the following:
- Oral Presentations (2): 15% each
- Final Paper 35%
- Class participation: 35%

**Oral Presentations:** Students will make two presentations over the course of the semester on assigned readings. At the first class meeting, each student should sign up for two presentations, making sure that at least one presentation falls before the midterm break following Week 7.
The presentation should last no more than 10-15 minutes during which time the presenter should formulate two or three key questions about the general topic and common readings assigned for that week. Presenters for any given week are encouraged to meet with one another in advance of class time to discuss common themes with a view toward integrating such themes into class discussion.

**Final Paper:** Students will write a final research paper of between 15 and 20 pages. Papers are due at **4 PM on Wednesday, December 19.**

**Class Participation and Attendance:**
Discussions are a central component of the course, and attendance is mandatory. Students are required to complete the assigned readings and come prepared for active engagement with the material.

**Film Screening:** Bernardo Bertolucci’s **“The Last Emperor”** will be screened on **Monday, Oct. 29 at 7pm** (location: TBA). The film will also be available on library reserve to view on video if you cannot make the screening. It will be discussed in class in conjunction with the readings for the week.

**Special Guest Lecture:**
On **Friday, October 5 (12noon)**, Professor Louise Young will be on campus to give a talk on Japanese imperialism in prewar Manchuria. Location: TBA.

**Honor Code:** All students are expected to adhere to the Oberlin Honor Code on all written assignments.

**Writing Assistance:** Students are encouraged to avail of the writing skills workshops offered by the staff of Student Academic Services (SAS) located in Peters 118.

**OFFICE HOURS:**
Students are encouraged to come see the instructor with questions about any aspect of the course:

Tuesday 3 – 4:30 and Friday 2:30 – 4pm
Rice Hall, Room 308
Phone: 5-6708
E-mail: Emer.O’Dwyer@oberlin.edu

**N.B.** All e-mail correspondence will be answered between 5 and 8pm on the day received, unless special circumstances dictate otherwise.
**PART I: FRAMEWORKS**

**Week 1, Sept. 4: Introduction**
Maps.

**Week 2, Sept. 11: Transnational History and “Manchuria”**


**Week 3, Sept. 18: Imperialism(s), Defined**


**PART II: HISTORIES**

**Week 4, Sept. 25: (Qing China) Manchuria under the Manchus, 1600-1911**
Presenters:


*Week 5, Oct. 2: (Japan) Railway Imperialism and the South Manchurian Railway Company (Mantetsu)*


Presenters:


*Reminder: Professor Louise Young will give a special guest lecture on Friday, October 5 at 12 noon.*
**Week 6, Oct. 9 (Imperial and Soviet Russia) The Russian Far East**


**Presenter:**


**Week 7, Oct. 16: (Republic of China) Manchuria of the Warlords**


**Presenters:**


**Fall Recess**
PART III: MILITARY CONQUEST AND WARTIME IMPERIALISM, 1931-45

Week 8, Oct. 30: The Manchurian Incident: A Military Solution


Presenters:


**Reminder: Screening of “The Last Emperor” at 7pm on Monday, Oct. 29.

Week 9, Nov. 6: Manchukuo


Presenter:
**Week 10, Nov. 13: Manzhouguo, Part 2**

**Week 11, Nov. 20: Economic Consolidation and Continued Military Expansion**


**Primary Source:**

**PART IV: BEARING WITNESS**

**Week 12, Nov. 27: Writing Manchuria**

**Primary Source:**

**Presenter:**

**PART V: POSTWAR AND CIVIL WAR**

**Week 13, Dec. 4: Decolonization and Chinese Civil War and Korean War**


Week 14, Dec. 11: Presentation of Individual Research Topics

Students will present their research topic before seminar members, explain the question(s) guiding the research, and distribute an annotated bibliography of major primary and secondary sources.