This seminar examines the exploitation, discrimination, and marginalization of Japan’s main minority groups—the Ainu, Okinawans, Koreans and burakumin—from the 1870s to the present. Construction of discriminatory views and processes of ostracism are major themes. Other topics include: community formation, anti-establishmentarian minority movements, state policies of assimilation and control, inter-minority relations, and the politics of minority identity. Discrimination against non-ethnic and non-racial minorities—such as victims of atomic bombings and environmental pollution—will also be discussed.

**Goals and Expectations:** The purpose of this course is twofold. In addition to charting the history of discrimination against marginalized groups in late-19th and 20th century Japan (and indeed how this discrimination in many ways formed the modern nation), students are encouraged to develop an understanding of how history is written—from both ideological and practical standpoints. Careful attention to argumentation and evidence will form the basis of weekly class discussion and critique. During weeks 1 and 2, we will concentrate on how to read a scholarly article, paying attention to the structure and method of academic argumentation.

**Required Texts:** The one required text may be ordered from an on-line retailer.


All other readings are available on Blackboard, or available on-line through JSTOR or OBIS as indicated.

**Assessment:** The course grade will be based on the following:

- Oral Presentations
  - Reading questions & Follow-up paper (3 req.): 20% each
- Class participation: 40%

**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 to discuss. **The success of the course depends on the active involvement of each participant, and active involvement requires timely and thorough completion of all readings.**
To develop skills as an active reader, students are required to write one (or two, if so inspired) question about the readings for distribution to other class members at the beginning of each week’s class. Good reading questions are not quizzes on factual content. Rather, they ask about processes and trends in the historical record. Good questions have multiple answers and help readers frame a larger context for any given reading. Developing a proficiency in posing good reading questions is thus one of the goals of the course.

**Oral Presentations**: Students will make 3 presentations over the course of the semester on assigned readings. (One of the presentations must be completed before Week 8.) Each 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.

On the day of the scheduled presentation, a 750-word paper summarizing the main themes of the reading and how they tie into the general readings for the week will be due to me by e-mail by 10am.

**Writing Assistance**: Students are encouraged to use the Drop-In Writing Center located in Mudd 101A (the Academic Commons) as well as other services offered by Oberlin’s Writing Associates Program.

**Film Screening**: Director Imamura Shōhei’s “Black Rain (*Kuroi ame*)” will be screened on Wednesday, April 15 at 7pm in Wilder 101. The film will be discussed in class in conjunction with the readings for the week.

**Honor Code**: Students are expected to adhere to the Oberlin Honor Code on all written assignments, concluding each with one’s signature beneath the handwritten pledge: “I affirm that I have adhered to the Honor Code on this assignment.”

**Accommodations for Disabilities**: Students requiring accommodation for a disability must present a note from Jane Boomer (Director, Office of Disability Services, Peters Hall G-27) by Thurs. Feb. 12. The note should include a detailed description of the type of accommodation required.

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

- Th. 2:45 – 4:15pm and Fri. noon – 1:30pm
- Rice Hall, Room 308
Introduction

Week 1: Feb. 5 Introductions; The Mono-ethnic Myth

Discussion:
• How to read a scholarly article/book chapter, Part 1.
• How to develop a good question on the week’s readings.

Order from OhioLink: Shimazaki Toson’s The Broken Commandment.

Part I: National Consolidation and The Sharpening of Difference

Week 2: Feb. 12
• JSTOR

• Available online through OBIS

• JSTOR

Start reading Shimazaki Toson’s The Broken Commandment.

Week 3: Feb. 19


• Available online through OBIS [Search through “Journal Finder”]
Week 5: March Acculturation: Ainu, Okinawa, and the Meiji State


• JSTOR

• JSTOR


Part II: Discourses of Race, Nation and Empire in Imperial Japan

Week 6: March 12


• Mudd periodical stacks

Week 7: March 19

• Available online through OBIS

Perry, Samuel. Recasting Red Culture in Proletarian Japan: Childhood, Korea, and the Historical Avant-garde (2014): Ch. 4: “Comrades-in-arms: Zainichi communists, revolutionary local color, and the antinomies of colonial representation” (pp. 124-70)
• Available on-line through OBIS

Spring Break
Week 8: April 2

Part III: War

Week 9: April 9
Fujitani, Takashi. Race for Empire: Koreans as Japanese and Japanese as Americans during World War II (2013): Ch. 1, 6, 7 (pp. 35-77; 239-334).
• Available online through OBIS

• JSTOR

Week 10: April 16
Film (Wed. April 15): Black Rain (Kuroi Ame) (Dir. Imamura Shōhei, 1989)

• Available on-line through OBIS.

• JSTOR

• JSTOR

Part IV: Ethnicity and Identity in the Long Postwar

Week 11: April 23

Week 12: April 30

Week 13: May 7