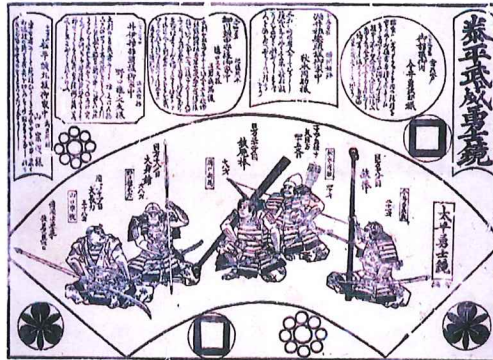


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## HIST 318: Images of the Samurai Spring 2015 UWSP



Instructor: Dr. Valerie Barske  
Office Hours: M/W 10-11AM  
(and by appointment) CCC 453

M/W 3:30-4:45 CPS 326

### Course Description

When brainstorming with students about mainstream representations of Japanese history, inevitably images of *samurai*, coupled with their *geisha* counterparts abound. As students search online for the term *samurai*, within .3 seconds Google reveals over 80 million English language hits. Most of these websites topicalize “historical” battles of Japanese warriors featured in translated films, video games, or “toy” commodities. Participating in a neoliberal global market that sells exoticized, eroticized cultural Others, “urban samurai” fashion trends promote product lines promising a well-coiffed rustic chic style for men around the world. The now highly mythologized and constantly reinvented notion of the *samurai* continues to be mobilized to explain the supposed uniqueness of “Japanese culture” from WWII *kamikaze* pilots to contemporary business, sports, and policy practices.

This course challenges students to move beyond stereotypical representations of Japan by complicating historical narratives and popular myths that appropriate *samurai* culture in a plurality of ways across time and space. Without any specific content background in Japanese history, students will develop their historical literacy for analyzing “images of *samurai*” from woodblock prints and *kabuki* plays to contemporary films and images. Students will expand their ability to employ scholarly arguments and theoretical frameworks to critique Orientalist and *Nihonjinron* ethnocentric views, to gender Japanese history by unpacking “hegemonic” and alternative masculinities, and to problematize romanticized images of militarism. Chronologically, we will begin our discussions at the end of the Heian period (794-1185 C.E.) tracing the development of the concept, class, and code(s) of “warrior” with a special emphasis on the Tokugawa period (1603-1868 C.E.). We will continue through Japan’s modern imperial nation-building culminating with preparations for total war during WWII. We conclude by employing our cultural historical analyses to grapple with contemporary articulations of ultra-nationalism, policy changes that threaten to remilitarize Japan, and increasingly complex security issues in the region of East Asia.

Our class is designed in the format of a seminar, a course-based group discussion in which faculty and students participate in the active co-generation of ideas rather than simply the delivery of content. In this seminar, we will utilize a number of high-impact teaching practices such as team-based activities, hands-on participatory workshops, and engaging embodied learning opportunities. Unlike a standard lecture course, in this class, we will work together to produce rather than simply to consume historical knowledge.



### **Intended Learning Outcomes:**

With sufficient effort engaging in course materials and assignments, students will improve their ability to:

- 1) Analyze primary and secondary historical sources to complicate stereotypical images of *samurai* and Japanese cultural practices
- 2) Demonstrate mastering complex theoretical frameworks and specific concepts including contemporary debates on Orientalizing Japan, *Nihonjinron* ethnocentrism, “hegemonic” and alternative masculinities, etc.
- 3) Employ inclusive language and develop interpersonal professional skills in oral communication through pairing activities, small group work, large group discussions, and formal poster presentations
- 4) Explain the benefits of and apply methods from cultural history to the study of *samurai*, particularly through writing scholarly a précis article summary, crafting a film response, performing excerpts from *kabuki* plays, and presenting original archival materials.

### **Participation and Professionalism 15%:**

All students are expected to engage with course materials and to participate actively in classroom discussions, exercises, group work, and activities. This course is designed to train students in the practice of History, which includes fine-tuning our abilities to articulate complex ideas and scholarly arguments citing evidence in a professional seminar environment. Be prepared to demonstrate that you have printed, read, and are able to summarize the main arguments in the readings during our in class discussions.

### **Reading Quizzes, Terms and Concepts 15%**

Students will be expected to actively take notes on in-class activities and assigned readings. Although I strive to limit straight lecture sessions, Powerpoint slides presented in class will NOT be posted online. As the popular article from *Scientific American* (June 3, 2013) suggests, taking notes by hand has been proven to engage specific cognitive processes and embodied actions that enhance learning. To ensure that students grapple with and master complex concepts, we will have scheduled “matching” quizzes with a focus on theoretical ideas, Japanese language terms, and statements identifying main arguments in our readings. We will grade the quizzes in class together. Quizzes are not intended to be punitive, but rather simply a way to ensure that all learners (*Barske-sensei* included) are staying on task with our readings.

### **Midterm Exam 15%**

To ensure that we are enhancing our analytical skills and critical thinking abilities, we will have a short answer take-home midterm exam. Review materials and details about the format will be distributed in class.

### **Article Précis and Film Response 20%:**

As we engage critically with various media representations of *samurai*, we will watch at least one film together in class. In our increasingly anomic and overly individualized personal screen culture, we tend to forget the social and cultural value of screening films as a group. Please come to the film-viewing class period with an open mind and a willingness to engage. Students will then be required to write a film response. Guidelines will be distributed in class, directly mirroring professionalized writing opportunities in the peer-reviewed academic journal, *Asian Cinema*.

### **Multi-Modal Group Presentation and Reflection 10%:**

The field of Japan Studies represents an inherently cross/interdisciplinary program, with a strong emphasis on cultural and linguistic knowledge. In addition to learning how to analyze cultural history and visual sources,

students will work in small groups to produce a multi-modal presentation, that is to say combining visual, aural, textual, and kinesthetic ways of knowing. Groups will perform scenes from historical *kabuki* plays along with analyzing other primary and secondary sources relevant to the plays. Fear not, we will spend time developing specific techniques and devoting class time to group work.

### **Professional Conference Poster Presentations 15%**

Project Abstract 5%

Poster Presentation 10%

According to the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, the most meaningful course assignments are authentic activities with real-world relevance for professional training. We will be presenting our work at the COLS Undergraduate Research Symposium on May 4, 2018. Please mark your calendars, students must attend. Also, the posters will cost approximately \$50 per group, \$10-\$12 per group member. We do not have a purchase book, so please plan ahead. But as always, if any one needs help with this requirement, please let me know. This group project offers students an opportunity to present original materials reflecting professional formats endorsed by the Association of Asian Studies, American Anthropological Association, and the American Historical Association.

### **Final Exam/Reflection 10%**

In a format similar to the Midterm, our Final Exam will be take-home, due in D2L Dropbox. Details to be distributed in class.

### **A Note on Late Assignments:**

Although my bleeding heart has always allowed for late assignments, I must institute some boundaries that will benefit all of us. An assignment may be submitted up to one week late for a deduction of 10 points from the grade, but after one week the assignment will be recorded as a 0. Please plan ahead, budget your time, and submit your work based on the class schedule. If you know ahead of time that you have a scheduling conflict for an assignment or activity, please let me know in advance.

### **Participation Expectations:**

√+ **90-100**—Students always come prepared for class with readings printed, previous notes, and any other necessary materials. During the discussion, they will ask on-topic questions, articulate complex ideas, and synthesize materials from previous sessions. They will volunteer and be ready to provide an answer when called. They will treat other students with respect, offering support and helping to create an inclusive learning environment.

√ **80-90**—Students come prepared to class on a regular basis with their readings and other materials. They share ideas and communicate in group work, but could be more engaged in large group discussions. Although a student in this group might not volunteer as readily, they are always prepared to respond when called.

√- **70-80**—Students are not prepared on a regular basis, forget their materials, or fail to participate. They might also wander off topic consistently, create a disturbance in the class, or show disrespect to other students. Students receiving a 70% for participation may not be able to engage fully in the coursework and with other students, so please try to avoid letting your participation reach this level.





**Grading Scale:**

A	93-100	B-	80 – 82	D+	67 – 69
A-	90 – 92	C+	77 – 79	D	63 – 66
B+	87– 89	C	73 – 76	D-	60 – 62
B	83-86	C-	70 – 72	F	59 and below

**Course Schedule, Text Rental, and Required Readings:**

Please come prepared to engage and to produce rather than simply to consume historical knowledge. Students will be expected to complete the readings scheduled for the date of the class meeting listed. We have a text rental book *Inventing the Way of the Samurai: Nationalism, Internationalism, and Bushidō in Modern Japan* (Oleg Benesch 2014). The first half of the semester, we will also have full-length articles posted on D2L. D2L readings will be digitized and uploaded to our course website, organized chronologically by the date they will be discussed in class. Please print or bring a digital copy of each article to class for discussion.

DATE	TOPIC	 READINGS	 ASSIGNMENTS
<b>WEEK 1: BEYOND ORIENTALISM AND IMAGES OF JAPAN</b>			
1/22	Getting Situated, Challenging Stereotypes		
1/24	<i>Samurai, Geisha</i> , and “Wacky” Orientalism in Images of Japan	Wagenaar (2016) D2L	
<b>WEEK 2: HISTORICIZING WARRIORS</b>			
1/29	<i>Bushidō</i> = Modern Invented Tradition	“Introduction” Benesch (2014) Text Rental	
1/31	“Medieval” Warriors	Segal (2008) D2L	
<b>WEEK 3: COMPETING HISTORIES, COMPLEX MASCULINITIES</b>			
2/5	Redeeming Amawari’s Honor Japanese “ <i>Samurai</i> ” Capture the Ryukyu King (1609)	Turnbull (2009) D2L Website on Gosamaru and Amawari	
2/7	Masculinties and Recreating Japanese Men	Fruhstuck and Walthall (2011)	<b>QUIZ 1</b>
<b>WEEK 4: WHAT DO WARRIORS DO DURING PEACE? PAX TOKUGAWA (1603-1868)</b>			
2/12	Tokugawa Growth and Change in Early Modern Japan	Yonemoto (2008) D2L	
2/14	<i>Samurai</i> and Guns? Do Guns Have Gender?	Walthall (2011) Chapter 1 D2L	
<b>WEEK 5: AKO INCIDENT (1701-1703): HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL REPRESENTATIONS</b>			
2/19	Historical Complexities of the Infamous “Vendetta of the 47 Samurai”	Bito (2003) D2L	<b>Article Précis DUE 2/20 11PM D2L Dropbox</b>

2/21	<i>Kabuki</i> and <i>Chūshingura</i> (1748)	“Intro to Kabuki” D2L “Introduction” Keene (1971) D2L	
<b>WEEK 6: PERFORMING SAMURAI ON THE KABUKI STAGE: EMBODYING GENDER AND HISTORY</b>			
2/26	Multi-Modal Group Work	Excerpts from <i>Chūshingura</i> (1748) Keene (1971) D2L	<b>Location TBA</b> <b>Wear Comfortable Clothing</b>
2/28	Staging the Treasury of Loyal Retainers	Bring Script, Props, Costumes NO WEAPONS, Minimize Orientalizing Portrayals	<b>Location TBA</b> <b>Reflection DUE 3/1</b> <b>11PM D2L</b>
<b>WEEK 7: ZEN, SEXUALITY, AND STATUS IN TOKUGAWA JAPAN</b>			
3/5	Male Colors, Tokugawa <i>Samurai</i> and Sexualities	Leupp (1995) Excerpts D2L	<b>QUIZ 2</b>
3/7	Zen, Breathing, Meditation and <i>Samurai</i>	Benesch (2016) D2L	<b>Wear Comfortable Clothing</b>
<b>WEEK 8: MODERNITY, NATION-BUILDING, AND “THE WAY”</b>			
3/12	Summarizing <i>Samurai</i> Thought and Identity Before <i>Bushidō</i>	Chapter 1 Benesch (2014) Text Rental	
3/14	Inventing Modern <i>Samurai</i> in Meiji	Chapter 2 Benesch (2014)	<b>Midterm DUE 3/18</b> <b>11PM D2L</b>
<b>WEEK 9: ARCHIVAL IMAGES OF THE SAMURAI AT UWSP</b>			
3/19	Applied History in the Archives	Bring Pencil (NO PENS), Notebooks, CAMERAS or PHONES, etc.	<b>Meet ALB 5<sup>th</sup> Floor</b> <b>ARCHIVES</b>
3/21	Group Poster Workshop		<b>Meet NFAC 215</b> <b>Computer Lab</b>
<b>SPRING BREAK 3/23-3/30</b>			
<b>WEEK 10: INTERNATIONALIZING AND IMPERIALIZING BUSHIDŌ</b>			
4/2	Modern War, Foreign Others 1894-1905	Chapter 3 Benesch (2014)	<b>Group Poster</b> <b>Abstracts Due</b> <b>11PM D2L</b>
4/4	Spiritual Education, Literature, Patriotism	Chapter 4 Benesch (2014)	
<b>WEEK 11: THE WAY DECLINES AND REVIVES</b>			
4/9	End of <i>Bushidō</i> ?	Chapter 5 Benesch (2014)	<b>QUIZ 3</b>
4/11	Shōwa Resurgence of the <i>Samurai</i>	Chapter 6 Benesch (2014)	
<b>WEEK 12: POSTWAR SAMURAI FILM</b>			
4/16	<i>Hara-kiri: Death of a Samurai</i> (2012) Part I	In-Class Film	
4/18	<i>Hara-kiri: Death of a Samurai</i> (2012) Part II	In-Class Film	
<b>WEEK 13: POSTWAR JAPAN, POPULAR CULTURE, AND RE-INVENTING “THE WAY”</b>			

4/23	Postwar <i>Bushidō</i>	Chapter 7 Benesch (2014)	Film Response Due 4/24 11PM D2L
4/25	Group Poster Workshop		MEET NFAC 215 Computer Lab
<b>WEEK 14: PRESENTING COMPLEX HISTORICAL IMAGES OF THE SAMURAI</b>			
4/30	Group Poster Workshop		MEET NFAC 215 Posters Due to Printers by 9AM 4/31
5/2	ALTERNATIVE CLASS MEETING FRIDAY!	Group Presentations	MAY 4 FRIDAY COLS SYMPOSIUM
<b>WEEK 15: RECONCEPTUALIZING IMAGES OF THE SAMURAI</b>			
5/7	Contemporary Pop Culture and Political Policies Based on Historical Legacies of the <i>Samurai</i>	Benzon (2008) D2L In-Class Episode Excerpts <i>Samurai Champuru</i> (2004-2005)	
5/9	Reflections on Producing History: How do we now view images of the <i>samurai</i> ?		Review for Final Exam

**FINAL EXAM: Final Exam/Reflection Due FRIDAY May 18, 2018 at 18:00 (or 11PM) D2L Dropbox**

**Reminder: The instructor reserves the right to add, delete, or alter readings and assignments based on the pedagogical needs of the course. Please attend class and check D2L for any updates or changes.**

