Fall 2015

701 Japanese Minority Literatures

Instructor: Kristina IWATA (Kristina.iwata@lit.nagoya-u.ac.jp; Rm 221)

1. Class Meetings
Wednesday, 2nd period (starting October 7), Rm 131

2. Course Registration
The course is open to all 3rd and 4th year undergraduate, graduate and NUPACE students. Students from other Schools are welcome if they are familiar with the basics of literary analysis. Although the course will mostly be taught in English, written assignments may be handed in in Japanese.

3. Course Description
There is no such thing as ‘minority literature’, let alone ‘immigrant literature’ in Japan. Needless to say, there certainly are not only ethnic and other minorities but also immigrants producing a substantial amount of literature in Japanese, even receiving acclaimed literary prizes. And yet, the term ‘minority/immigrant literature’ is hardly ever applied to literature written in Japan(ese) but only to such writing in foreign ‘immigration countries’ such as the US and Canada. In this course we will explore a number of authors and texts that challenge the notion of Japanese literature as written exclusively by ethnic Japanese born and raised in Japan. We will also discuss possible reasons for the lack of a generic term as well as its desirability.

4. Course Content
We will read works by authors belonging to communities at the margin of Japanese society, communities that have been marked as ethnically or racially 'different' and are thus indispensable for the construction of a 'Japanese Self'. In particular, we will look at literature by burakumin authors, zainichi Korean literature, Okinawa literature, and possibly exophonic literature. This course is not a lecture but a seminar the learning outcome of which depends on your preparation and active participation in class.

5. Textbooks & Reference Materials
No textbook is required for this class. All texts will be provided in English as PDFs, etc.

Recommended background readings:
- Molasky, Michael S. The American occupation of Japan and Okinawa : literature and memory. Routledge, 1999

6. Evaluation
Details regarding evaluation will be announced during the first class meeting. An attendance rate of at least 80% is mandatory for all students. No sleeping in class.