**Japanese Society and Culture**

**Spring 2020 Thu 2-5 PM**

**(This syllabus is still incomplete and subject to change.**

**Its final version will be provided in the first class in March)**

Instructor:

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Office Hours: Wed 10AM~12PM

**Class Description and Objectives**

This seminar will examine various topics in the study of Japanese society and culture by reading historical, anthropological, and sociological literatures on contemporary Japan. Its reading materials will cover Japan’s social and cultural transformations from the Occupation Period (1945-1952) to the 21st century Japan by examining the themes of family, schooling, work, gender and sexuality, class/ethnic/racial minorities, consumption and popular cultures in a global context, and finally, social activism and local communities in Post-311 Japan.

This seminar pays attention to understanding the historical contexts of social transformations, why and how they happen and their outcome on everyday life. It also focuses on exploring the connection between social institutions such as family, school and work, in which the different social and cultural expectations are contested and negotiated. In addition, it is concerned with social divisions and diversities in everyday life in the 21st century Japan

In so doing, this class aims to prepare graduate students to further develop their own research interests in Japanese studies.

**Reading Materials and Methods**

The class materials include book chapters from the following lists as well as academic articles like *Asian Anthropology, Cultural Anthropology,* *Journal of Japanese Studies* and *Social Science Japan Journal* etc. Most of them will be electronically provided on an on-line platform.

Class format may include brief lecture, individual presentation and intensive discussion. However, an intensive discussion does not mean that you should speak up as much as you can. Listening to others’ argument and adding your opinion to that could be regarded as a way of participating in class discussion. It is important to respect other classmates in order to promote a helpful discussion during the seminar.

Bestor, Victoria Lyon, Victoria Lyon-Bestor, and Akiko Yamagata, eds. 2011. *Routledge Handbook of Japanese Culture and Society*. Oxon, England: Routledge.

Chiavacci, David and Julia Obinger, eds. 2018.*Social Movement and Political Activism in Contemporary Japan*. Routledge.

Gill, Tom, Brigitte Steger and David H. Slater, eds. 2015. *Japan Copes with Calamity*. Peter Lang Ltd, International Academic Publishers.

Gordon, Andrew, ed. 1993. *Postwar Japan as history*. University of California Press.

Gordon, Andrew. 2019. *A Modern History of Japan: From Tokugawa Times to the Present* (4th edition), Oxford University Press.

Robertson, Jennifer, ed. 2005. *A Companion to the Anthropology of Japan*. John Wiley & Sons.

**Course Requirements**

This seminar will be conducted as a participatory discussion as well as lecture and presentation, in which we are intensively engaged with selected readings. Therefore, all the members of this seminar including the instructor are required to read all the assigned readings each week, and prepared to participate in discussion. In order to facilitate your engagement with the readings and your participation in class, you are required to submit a response paper to the instructor before the class every week. The paper does not need to be long. It is good enough to include two or three paragraphs of questions and/or critiques about main arguments in the readings.

**PART ONE. Historical Contexts of Post-war Japan**

**2nd week The Structure of Post-war Japanese society and its transformations**

Duus, Peter. 2011. “Showa-era Japan and beyond: from Imperial Japan to Japan Inc.” In *Routledge Handbook of Japanese Culture and Society*. pp. 13-28.

Kelly, W. William. 1993. “Finding a Place in Metropolitan Japan: Ideologies, Institutions, and Everyday Life.” In *Postwar Japan as History.* pp. 189-216.

Allison, Anne. 2013. “From Lifelong to Liquid Japan.” *Precarious Japan*. Duke University Press. pp. 21-42.

**3rd week Occupation and its Legacies**

Gordon, Andrew. 2019. “Occupied Japan” In *A Modern History of Japan*. pp. 232-250.

**4th week Formations of Social Contracts**

Gordon, Andrew. 2019. “Economic and Social Transformations,” “Political Struggles and Settlements of the High-Growth Era,” “Global Power in a Polarized World.” In *A Modern History of Japan*. pp.253-320.

**5th week Lost Decades and Beyond**

Gordon, Andrew. 2019. “Japan’s Lost Decades” “Shock, Disaster, and the End of the Heisei Era.” In *A Modern History of Japan*. pp.321-375.

**PART TWO: Social Institutions in Contemporary Japan**

**6th week Work: Salaryman, Office lady, and Slackers**

Rohlen, Thomas P. 1974. “The Office Group,” In *For Harmony and Strength*, University of California Press. pp. 93-120.

Ogasawara, Yuko. 1998. “The Japanese Labor Market and Office Ladies.” In *Office Ladies and Salaried Men: Power, Gender and Work in Japanese Companies*. pp.17-43.

McCann, Leo, John Hassard and Jonathan Morris. 2006. “Hard Times for the Salaryman: Corporate Restructuring and Middle Managers’ Working Lives.” In *Perspectives on Work, Employment and Society in Japan*. pp. 98-118.

Yuki, Honda. 2006. “‘Freeters’: Young Atypical Workers in Japan.” In *Perspectives on Work, Employment and Society in Japan*.

Recommended:

Hamada, Tomoko. 2005. The Anthropology of Japanese Corporate Management. In *A Companion to the Anthropology of Japan*. pp. 125-152.

**7th week The Credential society and Meritocracy and Schooling in Crisis**

Goodman, Roger. 2015. “Japanese education and education reform.” In *Routledge Handbook of Japanese Culture and Society. pp.52-62.*

Rebecca Fukuzawa, “The Path to Adulthood According to Japanese Middle Schools,” Journal of Japanese Studies 20(1):61-86 [1994]

Brinton, Mary C. 2011. “Narratives of the New Mobility” In *Lost in Transition: Youth, Work, and Instability in Postindustrial Japan*. pp.148-167.

Sachiko, Kaneko. 2006. “Japan’s ‘Socially Withdrawn Youths’ and Time Constraints in Japanese Society: Management and Conceptualization of Time in a Support Group for ‘Hikikomori’.” *Time and Society* 15(2-3): 233-249.

**8th week ‘Japanese’ Family, the New Singles, and the New Seniors**

Vogel. Suzanne H. 1978. “Professional Housewife: The Career of Urban Middle Class Japanese Women.” *Japan Interpreter* 12(1): 16-43.

Nakano, Lynne Y. Nakano. 2010. “Working and Waiting for an “Appropriate Person” : How Single Women Support and Resist Family in Japan.” In *Home and Family in Japan: Continuity and Transformation*. pp.131-151.

Alexy, Allison. 2010. “The Door My Wife Closed Houses, Families, and Divorce in Contemporary Japan.” In *Home and Family in Japan.* pp. 236-253.

Suzuki, Hikaru Suzuki. 2003. “McFunerals: The Transition of Japanese Funerary Services.” *Asian Anthropology* 2: 49-78.

**PART THREE: Marginality Contested and Constructed**

**9th week Gender and Sexuality**

Allison, Anne. 1991. “Japanese Mothers and Obentōs: The Lunch-Box as Ideological State Apparatus. *Anthropological Quarterly* 64(4): 195-208.

Roberson, James. 2003. “Japanese Working-Class Masculinities: Marginalized Complicity.” In Men and Masculinities in Contemporary Japan. pp.126-143.

Nakamura, Karen and Hisako Matsuo. 2003. “Female Masculinity and Fantasy Spaces: Transcending Genders in the Takarazuka Theatre and Japanese Popular Culture.” In *Men and Masculinities in Contemporary Japan.* pp. 59-76.

Takeyama, Akiko. 2005. “Commodified Romance in a Tokyo Host Club.” In Genders, Transgenders, and Sexualities in Japan. pp. 200-215.

**10th week Multi-Ethnic Japan?**

Roth, Joshua Hotaka Roth. 2002. “On the Line at Yusumi Motors,” In *Brokered Homeland: Japanese Brazilian Migrants in Japan*, pp. 37-63.

Neary, Ian. 2009. “Burakumin in contemporary Japan.” In *Japan’s Minorities*. pp. 59-83.

Siddle, Richard. 2009. The Ainu: Indigenous People of Japan. In Japan’s Minorities. 21-39.

Lie, John. 2001. “Modern Japan, Multiethnic Japan.” In *Multiethnic Japan*. pp. 83-110.

**11th Week Underclass and Homeless**

Slater, David. H. 2011. “Social class and social identity in postwar Japan.” In *Routledge Handbook of Japanese Culture and Society*. pp. 103-115.

Stevens, Carolyn S. 2011. “Life on the margins in Japan: homeless, migrant day laborers, and people with disabilities.” In *Routledge Handbook of Japanese Culture and Society*. pp. 163-171.

**PART FOUR: Japan in a Global Context**

**12th Week Migration**

Shipper, Apichai. 2005. Criminals or Victims? : The Politics of Illegal Foreigners in Japan. *Journal of Japanese Studies* 31(2): 299-327.

Yamawaki, Keizo. 2000. “Foreign Workers in Japan: A Historical Perspective.” In *Japan and Global Migration*. pp. 38-51.

**13th Week Consumption**

Whitelaw, Gavin Hamilton. 2006. “Rice Ball Rivalries: Japanese Convenience Stores and the Appetite of Late Capitalism.” In *Fast Food / Slow Food: The Cultural Economy of the Global Food System*. Pp. 131-144.

Bradsley, Jan and Hiroko Hirakawa. 2005. “Branded: Bad Girls Go Shopping.” In *Bad Girls of Japan.* pp.110-125.

Ohnuki-Tierney, Emiko. 1997. “McDonald’s in Japan: Changing Manners and Etiquette” In *Golden Arches East: McDonald’s in East Asia*. Pp.161-182.

Bestor, Theodore C. 2000. “How Sushi Went Global.” *Foreign Policy* (121): 54-63.

**14th Week Popular Cultures**

Yano, Christine R. 2004. “Kitty Litter: Japanese Cute at Home and Abroad.” In *Toys, Games, and Media. pp.* 55-71.

Condry, Ian. 2007. “Yellow B-Boys, Black Culture, and Hip-Hop in Japan: Toward a Transnational Cultural Politics of Race.” *positions: east asia cultures critique* 15(3): 637-671.

Allison, Anne. 2009. The Cool Brand, Affective Activism and Japanese Youth. T*heory, Culture & Society* 26(2-3): 89-111.

Shiraishi, Saya. 2000. “Doraemon Goes Abroad. In Japan Pop!: Inside the World of Japanese Popular Culture.” Pp. 287-308.

**PART FIVE: Post 3.11 Japan**

**15th Week Social Activism**

Chiavacci, David and Julia Obinger. 2018. “Toward a new protest cycle in contemporary Japan.” In *Social Movement and Political Activism in Contemporary Japan*.

Cassegard, Carl. 2018. “The post-Fukushima anti-nuke protests and their impact on Japanese environmentalism.” In *Social Movement and Political Activism in Contemporary Japan*.

Loschke, Ayaka. 2018. “Civil society advocacy after Fukushima.” In *Social Movement and Political Activism in Contemporary Japan*.

O’Day, Robin, David H. Slater, and Satsuki Uno. 2018. “Mass media representation of youth social movements in Japan.” In *Social Movement and Political Activism in Contemporary Japan*.

**16th Week Local Communities in Post 3.11 Japan**

Steger, Brigitte. 2015. “Solidarity and Distinction through Practices of Cleanliness in Tsunami Evacuation Shelters in Yamada, Iwate Prefecture.” in *Japan Copes with Calamity.*

Gill, Tom. 2015. “This Spoiled Soil: Place, People and Community in an Irradiated Village in Fukushima Prefecture.” In *Japan Copes with Calamity*.

Slater, David H. 2015. “Moralities of Volunteer Aid.” In *Japan Copes with Calamity*.