

Sociocultural Divisions in Contemporary Japan
Fall 2020 Thu 2:00-4:50 PM
Online Class

Some readings in this syllabus are subject to change.

Instructor: Jeehwan PARK(associate professor, cultural anthropologist)

Email: jeehwan95@snu.ac.kr

Tel: 02-880-9218

Office Hours: BN140-1 #510 or Zoom meeting, Wed 10AM~12PM or by appointment

Class Description and Objectives

This seminar aims to examine sociocultural stratifications in contemporary Japan by particularly focusing on the two social categories of class and (youth) generation. It is undeniably important to understand Japan's sociocultural inequality in terms of age, gender, ethnicity and race. In this seminar, however, these issues are only slightly dealt with since they were tackled in the last spring semester. Instead, in this semester, we are going to explore Japan's social and cultural divisions through the lens of social class and younger generation because, I think, post-bubble Japanese society has been divided along the line of classes and also its socioeconomic burdens have been disproportionately put on the shoulders of younger generation since the 1990s. Referring to anthropological and sociological literatures on the two topics, therefore, we will attempt to make sense of how the so-called "all middle class society" has gradually transformed into divided society.

Reading Materials

The class materials include book chapters from the following lists as well as articles from academic journals like *Social Science Japan Journal*. Most of the reading materials will be electronically provided on the ETL, <http://etl.snu.ac.kr/>.

Course Requirement and Grading

This seminar will be conducted as participatory discussion as well as lecture and presentation, in which we are all intensively engaged with readings. Therefore, every member in this seminar including me MUST read ALL the assigned readings in each week and prepared to actively 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 by 10 AM on EVERY Thursday. You can submit your response paper on the form of online text or file attachment on the ETL.

The response paper does not need to be long. One single-spaced page or less is good enough. You are recommended to include two or three paragraphs of questions and/or critiques about main arguments in the readings rather than simply summarizing their arguments. In so doing, you would explain why the questions are relevant to understand the readings rather than just raising them.

Grades will be given by evaluating individual response papers, presentations, participation in class discussion and attendance overall.

Class Format

Class format may include a brief lecture, an individual presentation and an intensive discussion. This seminar will be held online until SNU will allow us to safely hold off-line classes without much inconvenience.

First, I will give a lecture on the readings and give you a chance to ask some quick questions on my lecture before fully discussing all relevant questions and problems. It takes about 50 minutes to complete this lecture and question session.

Second, one student will give a presentation based on his or her own response paper. You can raise three or more questions which we will discuss. You should explain on what contexts you raise the questions, whereby we can be fully engaged with them. Even though you do not need to prepare a beautiful presentation, it would be great if you can prepare a short and simple presentation on which you just copy your questions from your response paper. It may take about 20 minutes to complete your presentation.

Third, after taking a short break, we will participate in intensive discussion based on your presentation as well as my lecture. We will discuss the questions which you raised earlier and then move onto other questions. Of course, you are welcomed to add new and various questions during our discussion. The intensive discussion does not mean that you should speak up as much as you can. Instead, listening to others' argument carefully and adding your opinion to that can be a way of participating in class discussion. It is important to respect other classmates in order to promote a helpful discussion during the seminar.

Class Schedule

1st week September 3 Introduction

I. Class

2nd week September 10 Various Approaches to Class

- Wright, Erik Olin. 2005. "Foundations of a neo-Marxist class analysis." *Approaches to Class Analysis*. Cambridge University Press. Pp. 4-30.
- Breen, Richard. 2005. "Foundations of a neo-Weberian class analysis." *Approaches to Class Analysis*. Cambridge University Press. Pp. 31-50.
- Galescu, Gabriela. 2005. "Foundations of a neo-Durkheimian class analysis." *Approaches to Class Analysis*. Cambridge University Press. Pp. 51-81.
- Weininger, Elliot B. 2005. "Foundations of Pierre Bourdieu's class analysis." *Approaches to Class Analysis*. Cambridge University Press. Pp. 82-118.
- Wright, Erik Olin. 2005. "If class is the answer, what is the question?" *Approaches to Class Analysis*. Cambridge University Press. Pp. 180-192.

3rd week September 17 Divided Society and Poverty in Japan

Chiavacci, David. 2008. "From class struggle to general middle-class society to divided society: Societal models of inequality in postwar Japan." *Social Science Japan Journal* 11(1): 5-27.

Blind, Georg D, and Stefania Lottanti von Mandach. 2015. "Decades not lost, but won:

- increased employment, higher wages, and more equal opportunities in the Japanese labour market.” *Social Science Japan Journal* 18(1): 63-88.
- Hommerich, Carola. 2017. “The gap as threat: Status anxiety in the ‘middle’.” *Social Inequality in Post-Growth Japan*. Routledge. Pp. 37-53.
- Abe, Aya K. 2017. “The Recession and the Policy Response for Child Poverty in Japan.” *Children of Austerity: Impact of the Great Recession on Child Poverty in Rich Countries*. UNESCO. Pp. 191-218.
- Conrad, Harald. 2017. “Social policy responses to the ‘gap society’.” *Social Inequality in Post-Growth Japan*. Routledge. Pp.121-133.

4th week September 24 Equality of Opportunity and Outcome

- Ishida, Hiroshi. 2018. “Long-Term Trends in Intergenerational Class Mobility in Japan.” 2015 *SSM Research Papers 3: Social Mobility and Health*. Pp. 1-24.
- Tachibanaki, Toshiaki 2005 “Equality of Opportunity and Equality of Outcome.” *Confronting income inequality in Japan*. Cambridge: MIT Press. Pp.157-189.
- Sato, Toshiki. 2001. “Is Japan a ‘classless’ society?” *Japan Quarterly* 48(2): 25-30.
- Sato, Toshiki. 2011. “An Explosion of Inequality Consciousness: Changes in Postwar Society and ‘Equalization’ Strategy.” *Demographic change and inequality in Japan*. Trans Pacific Press. Pp. 16-45.

5th week October 1 Korean Thanksgiving Holliday

6th week October 8 Educational Aspiration Divided

- Kariya, Takehiko. 2013. “Inequality of effort under the meritocracy.” “Pitfalls of the self-responsible society-is opportunity equal” “The structure of self-confidence-educational inequality and self-esteem.” “The incentive divide-selecting the society of the future.” *Education reform and social class in Japan*. New York: Routledge. Pp. 112-188.
- Matsuoka, Ryoji. 2019. “The Vanishing ‘Mass Education Society’.” *Social Science Japan Journal* 22(1): 65-84.

7th week October 15 Non-Regular Workers

- Fu, Huiyan. 2012. “Haken” “Haken in the ‘gap-widening’ society” “The search for meaningful work.” *An Emerging Non-regular labor force in Japan*. Routledge. Pp. 17-39, 77-119.

8th week October 22 Day Laborers

- Gill, Tom. 2001. “Ethnography of Kotobuki” “Who Are These Men” “The Meaning of Home” “Marginal Identity in the Yoseba” *Men of Uncertainty*. SUNY Press. Pp. 37-79, 113-170.

9th week October 29 The Young and Female Homeless

- Maruyama, Satomi. 2019. *Living on the Streets in Japan: Homeless Women Break their Silence*. Trans Pacific Press.
- Cassegård, Carl. 2014. “Space, Art and Homelessness” *Youth Movements, Trauma and*

II. Generation and the Youth

10th week November 5 Generation and Generationalism

- Mannheim, Karl. 1998. “The Sociological Problem of Generation.” *Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge*. Pp. 163-195.
- Rauvola, Rachel S, Cort W Rudolph, and Hannes Zacher. 2019. “Generationalism: Problems and implications.” *Organizational Dynamics* 48 (4): 1-9.
- Purhonen, Semi. 2016. “Generations on paper: Bourdieu and the critique of ‘generationalism’.” *Social Science Information* 55(1): 94-114.
- White, Jonathan. 2013. “Thinking generations.” *The British Journal of Sociology* 64(2): 216-247.

11th week November 12 Discourses on Japanese Youths

- Toivonen, Tuukka and Yuki Imoto. 2012. “Making Sense of Youth Problem.” *A Sociology of Japanese Youth*. Routledge. Pp.1-29.
- Genda, Yuji. 2003. “Who really lost jobs in Japan? Youth employment in an aging Japanese society.” *Labor markets and firm benefit policies in Japan and the United States*. University of Chicago Press. Pp. 103-134.
- Furuichi, Noritoshi. 2014. “Fragile Happiness in Japan: How the young think about their insular life.” *East Asia Forum Quarterly* (April-June): 21-24.
- Hommerich, Carola. 2017. “Anxious, stressed, and yet satisfied? The puzzle of subjective wellbeing among young adults in Japan.” *Life Course, Happiness and Well-being in Japan*. Pp. 72-96.
- Hommerich, Carola, and Tim Tiefenbach. 2018. “The structure of happiness: Why young Japanese might be happy after all.” *Being Young in Super-Aging Japan*. Routledge. Pp. 132-149.

12th week November 19 Precarious Youths (1): Non-regular workers

- Honda, Yuki. 2005. “Freeters’: young atypical workers in Japan.” *Japan labor review* 2(3): 5-25.
- Imai, Jun. 2018. “Struggling men in emasculated life-courses: non-regular employment among young men.” *Being Young in Super-Aging Japan*. Routledge. Pp. 100-117.
- Smith, Colin S. 2018. “The precarious and the transitional: labor casualization and youth in post-bubble Japan.” *Children’s Geographies* 16(1): 80-91.
- Asahina, Yuki. 2019. “Precarious regular workers in Japan.” *Japan Forum*. Pp. 1-25.
- Masuda, Jin. 2015. “Finding Hope in the Life of Young Part-timers.” *International Journal of Japanese Sociology* 24(1): 106-118.

13th week November 26 Precarious Youth (2): NEET and Hikikomori

- Genda, Yuji. 2007. “Jobless Youths and the NEET Problem in Japan.” *Social Science Japan*

Journal 10(1): 23-40

- Toivonen, Tuukka. 2012. "NEETs: The strategy within the category." *A Sociology of Japanese Youth*. Routledge. Pp.139-158.
- Shirahase, Sawako. 2014. "Youngsters who won't leave the nest." *Social Inequality in Japan*. Routledge. Pp. 92-115.
- Horiguchi, Sachiko. 2012. "Hikikomori: How Private Isolation Caught the Public Eye." *A Sociology of Japanese Youth*. Routledge. Pp. 122-138.
- Horiguchi, Sachiko. 2017. "Unhappy and isolated youth in the midst of social change: Representations and subjective experiences of hikikomori in contemporary Japan." *Life Course, Happiness and Well-being in Japan*. Pp. 57-71.
- Genda, Yuji. 2019. *Solitary Non-Employed Persons Empirical Research on Hikikomori in Japan*. Springer.

14th week December 3 Precarious Youths (3): Political Responses to Youth Precarity

- Song, Jiyeoun. 2018. "Young people, precarious work, and the development of youth employment policies in Japan." *Japanese Journal of Political Science* 19: 444-460.
- Toivonen, Tuukka. 2008. "Introducing the youth independence camp: How a new social policy is reconfiguring the public-private boundaries of social provision in Japan." *Sociologos* 32(1): 40-57.
- Hori, Yuki. 2020. "Japan's Employment Ice-age Generation Today: Investigating the Impact of Instability in the School-to-Work Transition." *Japan Labor Issue* 4(20): 1-14.
- Cassegård, Carl. 2014. "The Rise of Movements Against Precarity" "Alternative Space, Withdrawal and Empowerment." *Youth Movements, Trauma and Alternative Space in Contemporary Japan*. Global Oriental. Pp. 79-116, 181-213.

15th week December 10 Local Youths (1)

- Sato, Ikuya. 1998. *Kamikaze Biker: Parody and Anomy in Affluent Japan*. University of Chicago Press. Pp. 72-222.

16th week December 17 Local Youths (2)

- Hori, Yukie. 2010. "School-to-Work Transition and Employment of Youth in Non-Metropolitan Areas." *Japan Labor Review* 7(3): 127-143.
- Wilhelm, Johannes. 2015. "Schools in remote areas of Japan: Challenges for youth, parents and community." *Sustainability in Contemporary Rural Japan*. Taylor & Francis. Pp. 19-34.
- Klien, Susanne. 2015. "Young urban migrants in the Japanese countryside between self-realisation and slow life: *The quest for subjective well-being and post-materialism*." *Sustainability in Contemporary Rural Japan*. Taylor & Francis. Pp. 95-107.
- Lee, Young-Jun, and Hiroaki Sugiura. 2018. "Key Factors in Determining Internal Migration to Rural Areas and Its Promoting Measures? A Case Study of Hirosaki City, Aomori Prefecture." *Public Policy Review* 14(1): 153-176.