**Contemporary Japanese Society, COSB50, Fall Semester 2021**

This course examines contemporary Japanese society, focusing on issues such as politics, pop culture, demographic change and environment. We go beyond media stereotypes and internet cliches to get a deeper understanding of what Japan is and where it's going. The focus is on post-Cold War Japan, with special emphasis on the period after the earthquake, the tsunami and the nuclear accident in 2011. Apart from discussing a number of critical issues, we also highlight the interrelationship of these issues and problems. In order to understand, for example, the debate about Japan as an aging society with low fertility, it is necessary to understand the Japanese position with regard to immigration, gender and hi-tech robotics.

In the course we also address more conventional issues affecting society. The topics discussed include the success of the Liberal Democratic party that has led the country since 1945 and Japan's role and status in an increasingly uncertain East Asian region and on the global arena.

This is the first time I offer the course and I have chosen to keep the literature and course outline largely unchanged from how the previous professor kept it. I have removed the suggested readings and cut the readings list down to a more focused set of obligatory readings, between 50 and 100 pages for each lecture. I will replace one lecture with a lecture on religion and nationalism in Japan, in order to offer a session more directly connected to my own research. The changes in articles reflect this.

The literature includes two monographs, one edited volume, and a number of journal articles. One of the monographs and the edited volume have been kept from the previous version of the course, but I have replaced a second work by Neary (somewhat outdated) with Stockwin and Ampiah’s more recent work on politics and nationalism in Japan under the second Abe administration. Both monographs are written by male authors, but amongst the remaining literature there is a better division between male and female authors. There are also a number of articles written by scholars from Japan and from other countries in Asia.

All journal articles can be accessed through available databases and the monographs and edited volume are available through the Lund University Library.

Total number of pages: ca. 800

**Monographs**

Neary, Ian. 2019. *The State and Politics in Japan*, Cambridge: Polity Press. 2nd Edition

Price (Bokus): 239 SEK

Kingston, Jeff (ed). 2019. *Critical Issues in Contemporary Japan*, London: Routledge. 2nd Edition

Price (Bokus): 339 SEK

Stockwin, Arthur & Kweku Ampiah. 2019. *Rethinking Japan: The Politics of Contested Nationalism*, Washington D.C.: Lexington Books.

Price (Bokus): 389 SEK

~~Kingston, Jeff 2012.~~ *~~Contemporary Japan: History, Politics, and Social Change since the 1980s,~~* ~~Hoboken: Wiley-Blackwell. 2nd Edition~~

**Compendium materials**

Sugimoto, Yoshio 2011. ‘The Japan Phenomenon and the Social Sciences’, *An Introduction to Japanese Society*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, *Introduction* pp. 1-36.

Kushida, Kenji E. and Lipscy, Phillip Y. 2013. ‘The Rise and Fall of the Democratic Party of Japan’ in *Japan under the DPJ: The Politics of Transition and Governance*, Stanford: Asia-Pacific Research Centre.

O’Shea, Paul. 2014. ‘Overestimating the ‘Power Shift’: The US role in the failure of the Democratic Party of Japan’s ‘Asia Pivot’.’ *Asian Perspective* 38(3). p.435-459

Postel-Vinay, Karoline. 2017. ‘The Global Rightist Turn, Nationalism and Japan’ *The Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus*, 15(10), <https://apjjf.org/-Karoline-Postel-Vinay/5035/article.pdf>

Tamaki, Taku. 2020. ‘It takes two to Tango: The difficult Japan–South Korea relations as clash of realities.’ *Japanese Journal of Political Science*, 21(1), 1-18.

Lechevalier, Sebastian, and Monfort, Brieuc. 2018. ‘Abenomics: has it worked? Will it ultimately fail?’ *Japan* *Forum*, 30:2, 277-302.

Cook, Emma E. 2013. ‘Expectations of Failure: Maturity and Masculinity for Freeters in Contemporary Japan.’ *Social Science Japan Journal* 16(1) Pp 29–43.

Song, Jiyeoun. 2018. ‘Young people, precarious work, and the development of youth employment policies in Japan.’ *Japanese Journal of Political Science* 19(3) pp. 444-460.

O’Shea, Paul & Maslow, Sebastian (2020) “Making the alliance even greater”: (Mis-)managing U.S.-Japan relations in the age of Trump, *Asian Security*, DOI: 10.1080/14799855.2020.1838486

Schwarcz, Emese (2018). “Making sense of Japan’s new immigration policy”, *The Diplomat*, November 30. Available online at: <https://thediplomat.com/2018/11/making-sense-of-japans-new-immigration-policy/>

Wright, James (2019) “Robots vs migrants? Reconfiguring the future of Japanese institutional eldercare”, *Critical Asian Studies*, 51:3, pp. 331-354.

Macnaughtan, Helen (2015) ‘Womenomics for Japan: is the Abe policy for gendered employment viable in an era of precarity?’ *The Asia-Pacific Journal*, 13 (12 /1). Available online at: <http://eprints.soas.ac.uk/19702/1/HM%20womenomics%20APJ%20Final%20March%202015.pdf>

Dalton, Emma (2017) ‘Womenomics, ‘equality’ and Abe’s neo-liberal strategy to make Japanese woman shine’ *Social Science Japan Journal* 20(1): 95-105.

Leheny, David (2015) ‘Naruto’s Limits: What can soft power actually achieve?’ *Nippon.com*, 20 January 2015. Available online at: <https://www.nippon.com/en/in-depth/a03902/>

Lam, Peng Er (2007) ‘Japan’s quest for “Soft Power”: Attraction and Limitation,’ East Asia, 24(4), pp. 349-363.

Mizohata, Sachie. “Nippon Kaigi: Empire, Contradiction, and Japan’s Future.” *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 14.21.2 (November 2016), pp. 1–19. Available online at: <http://apjjf.org/2016/21/Mizohata.html>.

Deans, Phil. “Diminishing Returns? Prime Minister Koizumi’s Visits to the Yasukuni Shrine in the Context of East Asian Nationalisms.” *East Asia* 24:3 (2007), pp. 269-94.

McLaughlin, Levi. “Did Aum Change Everything? What Soka Gakkai Before, During, and After the Aum Shinrikyō Affair Tells Us About the Persistent ‘Otherness’ of New Religions in Japan.” *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*, Vol. 39, No. 1, “Aftermath: The Impact and Ramifications of the Aum Affair” (2012), pp. 51-75.

Larsson, Ernils. “Jinja Honchō and the Politics of Constitutional Reform in Japan.” *Japan Review*, No. 30 (2017), Special Issue Formations of the Secular in Japan, pp. 227-252.