

Japan and the International Politics of Asia
Fall semester 2024
Monday & Wednesday 4th period (14:55-16:25)

Instructor: Haruko Satoh (Osaka School of International Public Policy, Osaka University)
Email: hsatoh65@osipp.osaka-u.ac.jp / makotochan.satoh@gmail.com
Office hours: By appointment
Course format: Seminar
Course points: 4

Course Overview

Japan has long interacted and identified with a world of Western design as the only modern state to emerge from Asia in the nineteenth century. In the 150 years history of modernising, Japan cultivated a national thought and identity that stressed Japan as *sui generis* among the Western Others. In recent decades, this familiar world has begun to change and relations with Asian countries have become increasingly important due to the rise of other countries, from China, South Korea, India to some of the Southeast Asian states. Yet, these relations with neighbouring states, especially China and Korea, remain strained because of the past when Japan acted as a colonial power.

This course offers an understanding of changes and continuities in modern Japan's international role and behaviour from a global history perspective and as a *problematique* in international relations theory, through the examination of controversial issues, such as the "history problem", Yasukuni Shrine controversy, the "comfort women" issue, and challenges related to Japan's security alliance with the United States, as well as the more positive aspects of post-war Japan's international role, such as being a major development donor and supporter of UN-centred world of peacebuilding and human security. These issues will be discussed as nation-state identity issues that arise from Japan's transition from the pre-war imperial state to post-war "pacifist" state, with the problem of the contested 1946 constitution lying at the core. In doing so, the course will be mindful of two reference points: (1) changes and continuities between pre-war and post-war Japanese states; and, (2) changes and continuities in the international system, from the pre-1945 world, Cold War period to the present post-Cold War world.

Grading requirement: Discussion (20%); 1 mid-term short essay (750 words; 30%); 1 final paper (3,000 word; 50%). Class discussion contribution: Prepare 4 short questions based on readings (200 words each max) by email to both the instructor.

• Learning Goals

- 1) Acquire an understanding of Japan's relationship with East Asia as interplay between domestic politics and imperatives of international policy.
- 2) Acquire a contextual and historical understanding of East Asian (Northeast and Southeast Asia) international politics and how they shape contemporary dynamics
- 3) Acquire an understanding of theoretical frameworks in which state international behaviour can be analysed.
- 4) Apply theoretical and policy concepts in analysing Japan's foreign policy issues.

• Course Requirements and Evaluation

This course requires students to have some awareness of contentious diplomatic issues and security situations in East Asia. Students should be updated with the current domestic and

international events. Since readings are given in advance students are expected to come prepared to participate in discussions. While students are free to express their viewpoints, class participation shall be graded based on the *quality* of questions and perspectives raised. The instructor and students should as much as possible work together to make the discussions fruitful and worthwhile. Attendance will not be graded since absences will surely reflect on class participation grade. Late papers will not be accepted, unless there is a compelling justification.

- **Required readings will be available in a Dropbox folder.**

Readings for classes will be assigned each week (and will be available in Dropbox). As a “textbook” for this course, you might find Victor Teo’s *Japan’s Arduous Rejuvenation as a Global Power* useful. The first 2 chapters from this book allow you to make the transition from Meiji Japan to post-war Japan. Ian Buruma’s *Inventing Japan* is also a good book to capture the essence of modern Japan as an “invention” (an imagine community); it is a smooth and short read. If you are not familiar with the idea of “imagined communities”, that is the nation being a social and political construct and not something that naturally exists, please read Benedict Anderson’s *Imagine Communities*, which is also in Dropbox.

—Teo, Victor. *Japan’s Arduous Rejuvenation as a Global Power*, Chapters 1 & 2. File name: [2019] Japan’s Arduous Rejuvenation as a Global Power [Teo].pdf

—Buruma, Ian. *Inventing Japan*, Chapters 1-3. Folder name: Buruma_Inventing Japan (the entire book is in a folder)

Dropbox: There are two folders, “Japan and Asia_Articles” and “Japan and Asia_Books”. Many of the books in the reading list below are available here as eBooks or in PDF.

The Dropbox link will be made available by email request if students intending to enrol in this class want to access the readings before class starts. Please put “**Doshisha_Japan**” as subject line for inquiries or request for the Dropbox link.

- **Announcements will made via email and the Facebook group, “OSIPP Japan and Asia”**

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/712218555584841/?ref=bookmarks>

- **About the Facebook Group “OSIPP Japan and Asia”**

The Facebook group is 10 years old is active for the class I teach at Osaka University. You are welcome to join as I post articles, clips/analyses, and notices about upcoming webinars and publications that may be of interest to the class. There is no need to be part of the group but it has many wide-ranging articles already if you want to check it out.

- **Course themes**

The course will be organised around the following 7 themes, with subthemes.

Week 1: Introduction

—Why the study of Japan is relevant in the context of global history

Week 2: Contextualising Japan’s place in the world today

—Changing positions of Japan in the world and Asia in the last 40 years

Week 3: Historical background (1)

Making of modern Japan: modernity and its meaning as a global history question

—Meiji Restoration and its significance in modern history

—Nation state identity making of the past and present

Week 4: Historical background (2)

Making of modern Japan: modernity and its meaning as a global history question

—Nation state identity making of the past and present

Week 5: Between Asia and the West: Japan as a western country (1)

—Japan's relations with the West in context

Week 6: Between Asia and the West: Japan as a western country (2)

—The role of China, imaginary and real, in informing the making of modern Japan

Week 7: Post-war Japan's international relations (1)

Post-war Japan: New constitution, security alliance and pacifism

—Changes and continuities between pre-war Imperial Japan and post-war Japan

Week 8: Post-war Japan's international relations (2)

Post-war Japan: New constitution, security alliance and pacifism

—The role of the US in shaping post-war Japan: the politics of Article 9

Week 9: Japan in the Post-Cold War and beyond (1)

—The shock of Gulf War I and the impact on Japan's foreign policy thinking

Week 10: Japan in the Post-Cold War and beyond (2)

—Re-rise of China and gradual changes in Japan's relations with Asia and the US

Week 11: Foreign policy outlook: Yoshida Doctrine, Fukuda Doctrine, "Abe Doctrine" and beyond? (1)

—Examining the politics and repertoire of Japan's foreign policy tools

Week 12: Foreign policy outlook: Yoshida Doctrine, Fukuda Doctrine, "Abe Doctrine" and beyond? (2)

—Peacebuilding, human security and other UN-related international policies

Week 13: History and contemporary developments:

—Yasukuni Shrine, comfort women, and the shadow of the past

—Re-examining the San Francisco System

• Readings & notes by lecture themes for Weeks 1 to 4 (information for later weeks will be provided in due course)

Week 1&2

1. Contextualising Japan's place in the world today

—Why the study of Japan is relevant in the context of global history

—Changing positions of Japan in the world and Asia in the last 40 years

Japan is a widely studied country in the West as the first modern state to emerge from Asia. Ever since Japan's economic recovery and growth became the first "Asian miracle", the body of scholarly works in English about Japanese politics, foreign policy, culture, history and society grew, especially in the 1980s (you can find parallels with the more recent explosion of interest in contemporary China and Korea). This has been a welcome development. However, increased interests have not necessarily translated to well-informed, sophisticated understanding. Stereotypes and biases persist (especially in the media), and it would be fair to say that Japan suffers from quite a few, although this is not to say that these stereotypes are groundless.

In the first few classes aim to establish a critical approach to understanding Japan's international behaviour as it informs and is informed by the evolving regional (and global) politics in East Asia (Northeast and Southeast Asia). It treats Japan as *problematique* (or in the mode of "Asia as method") that represents common themes, questions and avenues to explore more broadly about modernity (or the modern world) and what Japan's role and experience were and are in it, mindful of the tensions between the dominant Euro-centric worldview and postcolonial conditions. As such Japanese state and society (history, culture and politics) is set in a broader historical landscape of the region, to identify continuities and changes between pre-war Japan (from the Meiji Restoration onward) and post-war Japan (after defeat in World War

II), as the regional landscape also transitions from “spheres of influence” and colonies to a region of independent sovereign states.

Readings: Articles in “Japan and Asia_Articles” of the Dropbox “OSIPP Japan and Asia” folder.

—Carol Gluck, “Top Ten Things You Need to Know About Japan in the Early Twenty-First Century”

File name: Gluck-Ten-Things-21C.pdf

—Barry Buzan, “Japan’s Future: Old History versus New Roles;

File name: [1988] Buzan_Japan Old vs New.pdf

—Masaru Tamamoto, “Reflections on Japan’s Postwar State”;

File name: [1995] Tamamoto_Daedalus.pdf

Further readings:

—*The Economist*, Special Report: Japan. “On the Front Line” (Dec. 2021);

File name: The Economist_20211211-JapanSR.pdf

—Andrew Salmon, “How Singapore Sealed the Fate of Britain’s Asian Empire”;

File name: [2022] Salmon_Singapore sealed the fate of Britain’s Asian Empire - *Asia Times*

Week 3&4: Historical background (Meiji to 1945):

- 1) Making of modern Japan: modernity and its meaning as a global history question
 - Meiji Restoration and its significance in modern history
 - Nation state identity making of the past and present

- 2) Between Asia and the West: Japan as a *western* country
 - Japan’s relations with the West in context
 - The role of China, imaginary and real, in informing the making of modern Japan

Two questions about Meiji Japan and its influence on the present:

—a) Why did Japan try acquire equal status with the West?; and,

—b) Why did Japan turn to subjugate China and others in Asia by military force?

In addressing these questions, we do two things:

—a) consider the broader context of world politics back in the 19th century; and,

—b) consider what may be *particular or unique* to Japan’s nation-making process.

A note about classes on history: History is like a conversations between the past and the present, and is important to understand the present about any country or region. But there are also two important notes things to remember about history. First, history (of modern Japan or any country) is at best a reconstruction of past events, and their descriptions are in most cases interpretive; the past is constantly being (re-)interpreted through the lens of the present. But to find the proper relevance of past events to the present we must, at the very least, understand that they are interpreted to serve a particular end, be it political (as nationalist propaganda) or as a line of intellectual inquiry. For example, writing the history of Japan’s Asian past as a chronological description of events is different from writing about it as part of the history of empires, colonialism or racial discrimination, or as part of China–Japan relations. Most of the history books listed in the syllabus’ bibliography are interpretive (organised by themes).

Second, it is important that we “imagine” how things were 150 years ago, try to get into the minds of those who lived in the past. This is simply because our values and standards have changed over time, and what may be unthinkable today often tended to be normal back then. For example, slavery was “normal” in the past but it is today condemned as illegal. History books are one tool to get into the past people’s mindsets. There are also documentaries that use footage from certain eras. Novels and autobiographies are also useful. In any case, what is important is not to judge past events **only** through the lens or by the yardstick of the present.

Readings: 6 readings (chapters from 4 books and 2 journal articles):

• Book chapters from books in “Japan and Asia_Books” folder (you are encouraged to read more than the assigned chapters)

—Mishra, Pankaj. *From the Ruins of Empire: The Revolt Against the West and the Remaking of Asia* (London: Allen Lane, 2012), Prologue and Chapter 3.

File name: [2012] Mishra_From the Ruins of Empire_ The Revolt Against the West and the Remaking of Asia [Mishra].epub

—Tanaka, Stefan. *Japan’s Orient: Rendering Pasts into History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), Introduction, Chapters 1 & 2.

File name: [1995] Japan's Orient - Rendering Pasts into History [Tanaka].pdf

—Morris-Suzuki, Tessa. *Re-inventing Japan: Time Space Nation* (London: Routledge, 1998); Introduction & Chapter 1.

File name: [1998]Morris-Suzuki_Re-inventing Japan Time, Space, Nation by Tessa Morris-Suzuki (z-lib.org).pdf

—Buruma, Ian & Avishai Margalit, *Occidentalism: The West in the Eyes of its Enemies* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2004), Chapter 1-3.

File name: [Ian_Buruma, Avishai_Margalit]_Occidentalism_The_(b-ok.xyz).pdf

• Articles in “Japan and Asia_Articles” folder.

—Chen, Kuan-Hsing, “Takeuchi Yoshimi’s 1960 ‘Asia as Method’ Lecture”, *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies*, Vol. 13, No. 2, 2012.

File name: [2012]KH Chen_Takeuchi_Japan as Method.pdf

—Linus Hagström & Karl Gustafsson, “Japan and Identity Change: Why it matters in International Relations”;

File name: Hagstrom&Gustafsson_Japan and identity change why it matters in International Relations (pdf)

• Podcast (In Our Time): There is a good podcast episode on the Shimabara Rebellion (a brutal battle to quash the Christian rebellion) in the early phase of the Tokugawa Bakufu (the Edo period). It is from the “In Our Time” podcast series on the BBC. The episode is particularly good as it covers the historical and political development leading up to the establishment of Edo shogunate and the characteristics of Edo Japan. (The website also has some excellent further reading list on the topic of Christianity’s encounter with 16th century Japan).

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/m001lrd7>

Another one is on the Russo-Japanese War: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m000tnq3>

• Further recommended readings

—Samuels, Richard. *Machiavelli’s Children*, Chapter 1.

File name: [2003] Machiavelli’s Children - Leaders and Their Legacies in Italy and Japan [Samuels].pdf

—Gluck, Carol. *Japan’s Modern Myths: Ideology in the Late Meiji Period* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), Chapters 4 & 5.

File name: [1985]Gluck_ModernMyths_2.pdf; [1985]Gluck_ModernMyths_3.pdf.

—Harootunian, Harry. *Overcome by Modernity: History, Culture, and Community in Interwar Japan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), Chapter 2.

File name: [2000] Overcome by Modernity - History, Culture, and Community in Interwar Japan [Harootunian].pdf

—Hotta, Eri. *Pan-Asianism and Japan’s War 1931-1945*. Chapter 1.

File name: [2007] Pan-Asianism and Japan’s War 1931–1945 [Hotta].pdf

- Orbach, Danny. *Curse on This Century*. Introduction and Chapter 1.
File name: [2017] Curse on This Country_ The Rebellious Army of Imperial Japan [Orbach].pdf.
- Duara, Pransanjit. *Rescuing History from the Nation*, Introduction, Chapter 1 (and Chapter 2 if you can);
File name: [1997] Rescuing History from the Nation_ [Duara].pdf
- Bruce Stokes, “Japanese Divided on Democracy’s Success at Home, but Value Voice of the People”, File name: Pew-Research-Center_Japan-Report_2017.10.17 copy.pdf
- George Mikes, Introduction chapter, *The Land of the Rising Yen*, File name: Mikes_1970.pdf

A note on academic ethics: As members of an academic community, each one of us bears the responsibility to participate in scholarly discourse and research in a manner characterized by intellectual honesty and scholarly integrity. Collaborative scholarship requires the study of other scholars' work, the free discussion of such work, and the explicit acknowledgement of those ideas in any work that inform our own. This exchange of ideas relies upon a mutual trust that sources, opinions, facts, and insights will be properly noted and carefully credited. In practical terms, this means that, as students, all work submitted in this course, whether in draft or final form, must be your own. You must be responsible for the full citations of others' ideas in all of your research papers and projects; you must be scrupulously honest when taking your examinations; you must always submit your own work and not that of another student, scholar, or internet agent. Any breach of this intellectual responsibility is a breach of faith with the rest of our academic community. It undermines our shared intellectual culture, and it cannot be tolerated. *The use of ChatGPT or any other AI tools for course assignments (with the exception of artificial neural networks like DeepL for machine translations, duly cited) is tantamount to plagiarism.* Any cases of plagiarism or cheating will be reported to Columbia Undergraduate Global Engagement and the academic advisor at your home institution and are subject to the code of academic conduct there. In such cases, your final grade will be determined by your home institution and not by KCJS.