

The Anthropology of Modern Japan, Spring 2024
JSIS 449A/ANTH 443A
M, W 11:30-1:20 MGH 251
Office: Thomson 421
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Course Description: This course begins in the mid-19th century with the new nation-state of Japan's indoctrination into capitalist and colonial modernity's temporalities, social evolutionary ideologies, new forms of power, and the emergence of environmental and people's rights activism. At WWII's end and the demise of the Japanese empire and its colonial holdings throughout Asia, we will see how conflicting through lines continue during the American Occupation of Japan (1945-52) and beyond. We will read about the emergence of "homogeneous" discourses of identity, and their entanglements with the "culture and personality" school of immediate postwar American Cultural Anthropology. We then move on to new forms of long-term fieldwork and ethnographies of Japanese society, national-cultural realities and lived experiences of mid-late 20th century high growth economic society, including the 1980s's "bubble period." We will take an in-depth look at the transformations brought on by the "financial and property bubble burst" of the early 1990's, the late 90s' "neoliberalization" of Japan, and the 2011 triple disasters of Fukushima. This course also focuses throughout on under-represented forms of resistance and collective, creative responses to the uneven sacrifices of capitalist modernity.

The course is composed of 3 sections. Section one familiarizes students with the creation of an "emperor system" and the "synchronization" of the archipelago with western notions of time and value during the Meiji period (1868-1912). This section looks at how these historically new systems affected ordinary people's lives, sense of identification, and consciousness of the costs of capitalist modernity. Section 2 engages with the aftermath of empire; the American Occupation of Japan (1945-52, (-1972 in Okinawa); shifts in postwar society and new identify formations linked to high growth economics and discourses of homogeneous society. In this section we pay close attention to how early American cultural anthropology's notion of "relative cultures," led to the "patterning of cultures" and what this meant for the focus on homogeneity in Japanese postwar discourses of national identity and the "forgetting" of Japan's multi-ethnic empire (1895-1945).

In Section 3, we closely read and discuss recent ethnographies that represent a shift in the anthropology of Japan to long term in-depth fieldwork, and historically, discursively and conceptually informed studies these have produced. In this section we focus on the ongoing effects of the political economic reforms that followed the bursting of the property and financial "bubble" of the early 1990s in Japan. The effects of the neoliberalization of education and the labor market coupled with the triple disasters of Fukushima, and more recently the Covid pandemic, have caused many in Japan, particularly the young and young women, to rethink the how, what and where of their lives, livelihoods and identifications. We will explore this rethinking and in some cases re-locating and doing otherwise through recent ethnographic engagements with their challenges to expectations regarding "natural and social reproduction" (the "low birth crisis" and new articulations of "care"); center and periphery relations and concerns (after 3.11) of the environmental costs of energy production.

Learning about the anthropology of modern Japan also means learning about the approaches, methods and critical tools of socio-cultural anthropologists. While we work in class to answer critical questions about Japan through our readings, discussions and postings, we will learn to develop new questions and denaturalize ideas of our own and others. Throughout, we will be concerned to see how the global, national and the local intermingle and how the directions of this intermingling shifts over time.

Films: All films for this course listed below are on 24-hour reserve- Odegaard Library (2nd floor)

“ANPO: ArtXWar: Film of Resistance:” Director Linda Hoagland (**See for 4/17**)

“Tokyo Sonata:” Director Kiyoshi Kurosawa (**See for 5/3**)

“Shoplifters:” Director Hirokazu Kore-eda (**See for 5/15**)

“The Land of Hope” Director Sono Shion (**See for 5/22**)

“Ashes to Honey and Little Voice from Fukushima:” Director Hitomi Kamanaka (**See for 5/24**)

Assignments & Assessments:

*Class Participation and Online Canvas Reading Responses: 20%

*Midterm Exam (Open-readings and open-note) 40%

*Final Exam (Open readings and open-note): 40%

I. Reading Responsees

Students are expected to complete all assigned readings for the course by class time on the day they are assigned. (*See weekly schedule below*) Students will complete two reading responses per week on one of the readings assigned for each day of class. (One of your responses may be on a film if assigned for a particular session). Responses should be two short paragraphs in length. The first paragraph should include a short discussion of the argument of the reading, including one to two key terms, explained to the best of your ability. The second paragraph is for questions about the reading. Questions should be specific and refer directly to parts of the text. Please include page numbers, and paragraph on the page if the question refers to a quote, expression, etc..
Reading responses should be posted in the Canvas Discussion forum for the particular reading no later than 10:00am (to be counted) on the day of class in which we are discussing the reading. In order to get credit for your response you will also need to be in class and be prepared to relate the reading's argument and your questions if called on to do so.

II. Midterm and Final Exam:

There will be two exams in this course. The midterm exam will be a short response key idea online (posted to Canvas Assignments) exam on Monday May 1st. The ideas will come directly from our class readings and discussions. We will review key ideas regularly during our class sessions. On the midterm, you will be asked to explain key ideas and quotes we've covered in class (and in some cases to make connections between ideas and quotes from our readings) *in your own words*. You will have 70 minutes to complete the midterm. The final exam will be an in-class exam on June 7th. You will have the full period (110 minutes) to complete this short essay exam. You will choose one of two prompts to respond to in short (4-5 page) essay format. Possible prompts for this exam will be discussed our June 5th class session.

Weekly Schedule:

Week 1: March 27 & 29

M-3/27: Syllabus explanation, Q & A; Introductions, Preview of first reading for 3/29

W- 3/29: Takashi Fujitani, "Inventing, Forgetting, Remembering: Toward a Historical Ethnography of the Nation-State" (**pdf in Canvas Files**),

(Optional: Benedict Anderson, Preface to *Imagined Communities*) (**pdf in Files**)

Week 2: April 3, 5

M-4/3:

Readings: **Nation-State, National Subjects and Modern Temporality**

1) Stefan Tanaka, Preface to *New Times in Modern Japan*, (**pdf in Files**)

2) Delaney: "All We Have is Time" (**pdf in Files**)

(Optional: Y. Kawai: The Politics of "Jinshu" or "Minzoku" (**pdf in Files**)

W-4/5:

Readings: **Environment, Education, and Colonial Modernity**

1) Robert Stolz, "Introduction" *Bad Water: Nature, Pollution and Politics in Japan (1870-1950)*
UW E-book

2) Teruhisa Horio, "The Ideological Conflict over Scholarship and Education During the Meiji Enlightenment" ("Freedom and People's Rights Movement") **pdf in Files**

Week 3: April 10, 12

M-4/10:

Readings: **Modern Focus on Mothers, Childhood and the Everyday**

1) Kathleen Uno, *Passages to Modernity: Motherhood, Childhood and Social Reform in early 20th century Japan* (Intro, Chapt 2) **UW Ebook**

2) K. Uno, "The Death of "Good Wife, Wise Mother" in *Postwar Japan as History*) **UW E-books**

W-4/12:

Readings: **Boas, "Relative Cultures" and Museums**

1) Claudia Pierpont "The Measure of America" (**pdf in Files**)

2) Franz Boas: *Beyond the Laboratory, Activist Scientists...*(**Chapters 6**)

3) Noriko Aso, *Public Properties: Museums in Imperial Japan*

Week 4: April 17, 19

M-4/17

Readings: **The “Foundational Narrative” and After-Empire Japan**

1) Yoshikuni Igarashi, *Bodies of Memory*, Chapter 1 (**pdf in Files**)

2) Lori Watt, Repatriation, *When Empire Comes Home...* (**pdf in Files**)

3) Leo Ching, “Those Who Once Were “Japanese” (**pdf in Files**)

Optional: Harry Harootunian, “Dialectical Optics: History in Everydayness” (**pdf in Files**)

W-4/19:

Readings: **Ruth Benedict, Benedictian Myth and Shame**

1) Benedict, *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword: Patterns of Japanese Culture*, Chaps. 1 & 2 (**pdf in Files**)

2) Sonia Ryang, “Benedictian Myth” (**pdf in Files**),

(*Optional:* Marilyn Ivy, “Benedict’s Shame” (**pdf in Files**))

Week 5: April 24 & 26

M-4/24:

Readings: **The 60s in Japan: Vietnam War, Industrial Pollution and Resistance**

1) Gavin Walker (editor) *The Red Years*: Introduction, Shigematsu, Nagasaki, Marotti (**UW Ebook**)

2) Michiko Ishimure, “Reborn From the Scarred Earth of Modernity: Minamata Disease...” (**pdf in Files**)

(*Optional:* Victor Koschmann, “Modernization and Democratic Values: The “Japanese Model” in the 1960s” **pdf in Files**)

Discuss: “ANPO: Art X War, the Film of Resistance” (Director Linda Hoagland)

W-4/26:

Readings: **High Growth Era Life and National-Cultural Identities**

1) William Kelly, “Finding a Place in Metropolitan Japan” in *Postwar Japan as History* (**UW Ebook**)

2) Marilyn Ivy, “National Phantasms...” in *Discourses of the Vanishing: Modernity, Phantasm, Japan*-**UW Ebook**

3) Chris Nelson, “The Battlefield of Memory” (**pdf in Files**)

Optional: Laura Neitzel, “The Revolution of Everyday Life” (**pdf in Files**)

Week 6: (Midterm 5/1-Online in Assignments, 5/3)

M-5/1 Midterm in Assignments

W-5/3:

Readings: **Ethnography of Recession and Transformation**

1) Andrea Arai, *The Strange Child: Education and the Psychology of Patriotism in Recessionary Japan*, Introduction and Chapter 1 (UW Ebook)

***“Discuss “Tokyo Sonata” Director Kiyoshi Kurosawa**
(Optional: Rogers, “Uses and Abuses of Neoliberalism” (pdf in Canvas Files)

Week 7: 5/8 & 5/10

5/8: No class (Instructor away)

5/10:

Readings: **Education, Psychology and Recessionary Generation(s)**

Andrea Arai: *The Strange Child: Education and the Psychology of Patriotism in Recessionary Japan* Chapters 2-6

(Optional: A. Arai “Notes to the Heart: National Lessons in Sentiment and Sacrifice” (pdf in Files)

Week 8: 5/15 & 5/17

M-5/15:

Readings: **Gender, Low Birth, Social Reproduction and Environment**

1) Sawako Shirahase, “Marriage as an Association of Social Classes in a Low Birth Society” (in Files)

2) Huang & Wu, “New Feminist Biopolitics and Low Birth Society in East Asia” (in Files)

3) “Women Temp Workers and Low Pay” Asahi Shinbun (3/25/2023)

***Discuss “Shoplifters:” Director Hirokazu Kore-eda (See for 5/15)**

Optional: Japan Studies Guest Speaker, Prof. Kazue Harada (reading TBD)

W-5/17:

1) Nancy Fraser, "Climates of Capital" (pdf in Files)

2) Gabriella Lukacs, “The Labor of Cute...” (pdf in Files)

Optional: Ryo Morimoto, “Ecology of Harm and Half-life Politics in Coastal Fukushima” (pdf in Files)

Week 9: 5/22 & 5/24

M-5/24:

Readings: **3.11 Revelations, Media, Peripheries**

- 1) Sabu Kohso, "Disaster, Catastrophe, Revelation" (**pdf in Files**)
- 2) Hitomi Kamanaka, "Media, Democracy, Documentary Film" (**pdf in Files**)
- 3) Yu Miri, *Tokyo Ueno Station* (**UW Ebook**)

Discuss: "Ashes to Honey and Little Voice from Fukushima:" Director Hitomi Kamanaka

Optional: Davinder Bhowmik, "Unruly Subjects in Shun Medoruma's," "Walking a Street Named Peace," and Miri Yu's, *Tokyo Ueno Station*"

W-5/26:

Readings: **New Collectives, Culture=Politics and Local Energy**

- 1) Yoshitaka Mori, "New Collectivism: Participation and Politics After the Great East Japan Earthquake" (in Files)
- 2) Y. Mori, "Culture=Politics: The Emergence of New Cultural Forms of Protest in the Age of the *Freeter*" (**pdf in Files**)
- 3) Noriko Sakamoto, "Local Energy Initiatives" (**pdf in Files**)

(Optional: Genda Yuji "Have Jobs and Hope Gone Forever in Japan: From Family and Firms to a New Social Network" (pdf in Files)

Discuss "The Land of Hope" Director Sono Shion

Week 10: 5/29 Holiday, 5/31

W-5/31

Readings: **Spaces of Creative Resistance**

- 1) SCR: Andrea Arai, Introduction, "Shifting Contexts: Creative Responses" and Chris Nelson Preface (**pdfs in Files**)
- 2) A. Arai, "DiY Sensibilities, Eco Aesthetics and Women's Projects in post-3.11 Japan" (**pdf in Files**)
- 3) Ishibashi, "I Refuse to Live in a Town without a Cinema: Rebuilding a Cultural Space in Toyooka Japan" (**pdf in Files**)

Optional: Susan Buck Morss: "1968 De-Centered" (**pdf in Files**)

Week 11: 6/5 & 6/7

M-6/5:

Readings: **Final Readings and Preparation for Essay Exam**

1) David Slater, “Vulnerable Populations Under Covid-19 in Japan”

<https://apjpf.org/2020/18/ToC.html>

2) “Students Emergency Action for Liberal Democracy & Alex Dudden, Nominating Article 9
(pdfs in Files)

W-6/7: In-class Final Essay Exam