

Social History of Post-war Japan

戦後日本の社会史

Instructor

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 - Include course name, student number in mail
- Office hours
 - None at Saitama University

Course Description

- Seventy years have passed since the end of the Pacific War. For most university students, this war is part of a distant past and references to prewar and postwar carry no special significance. In contrast, for those old enough to have experienced the Pacific War or its immediate aftermath, the terms prewar and postwar are very evocative and are part of the historical consciousness of many Japanese.

Course Description

- This course attempts to answer three basic questions: 1) why is a distinction made between prewar and postwar Japan; 2) how was Japan changed by the Pacific War; 2) what has changed in the fifty-plus years the end of the war. To give students additional perspective on the Japanese experience some comparative material drawn from the US, the UK, and various continental European countries will be introduced.

Course Goals

- Basic sense of **some** of the major social patterns in Japan postwar
- Intellectual tools for seeing and investigating other patterns by yourself
- Goals for all my courses
 - Question ideas previously accepted
 - Avoid “exceptionalism” and “Orientalism”

“Exceptionalism”

- Japan is unique
- X is uniquely Japanese
- Unlike Westerners, Japanese

Japan is a “European” Country

- The “European” history of Japan
 - Feudalism
 - Capitalism
 - Parliamentary government
 - Imperialism
 - Fascism/militarism
 - Democracy

Prewar vs Postwar

- 戦前 戦後

- Artificial distinction

- Provides psychological distance

- Prewar Japan, Japanese bad

- Postwar Japan, Japanese good

- Ignores war itself

- Forgetfulness institutionalized in museums, memorials, television programs

- More continuity than change

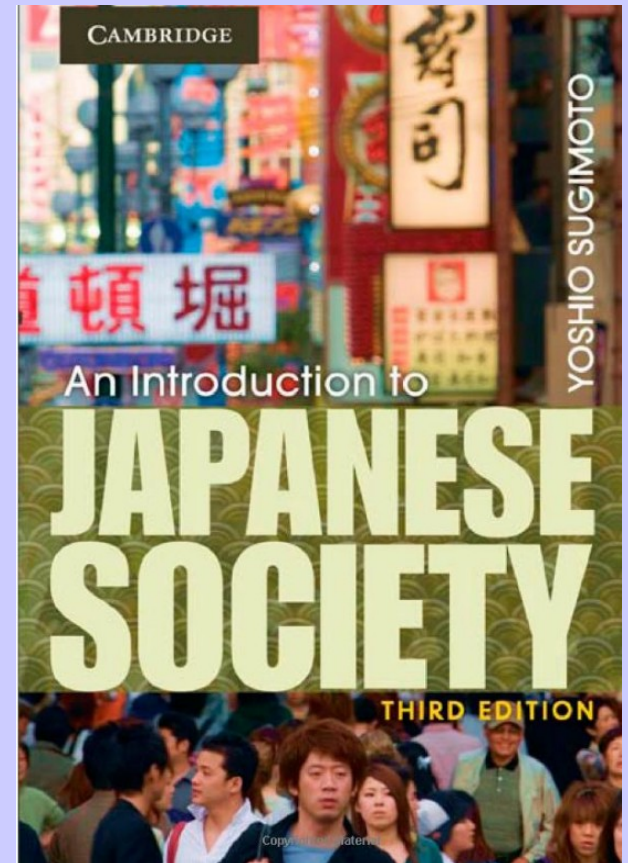
- Numerous postwar institutions, patterns actually from 1930s-1940s

Which War?

- Japanese and Americans
 - 日米戦争 US-Japan War
 - 太平洋戦争 Pacific War
 - 1941-1945 (真珠湾攻撃)
- Chinese
 - 1937-1945 ((盧溝橋事變) or 1931-1945 (滿州事變)
 - Weak in Japanese popular consciousness

Texts and Readings

- **Text Books :** There is no text book as such. Appropriate readings will be introduced in the lectures and made available through the web site maintained by the instructor. Occasional videos
- **Reference Books :** **SUGIMOTO Yoshio, *An Introduction to Japanese Society*** (Cambridge University Press, 2010). Other items will be introduced in lecture.



Grading

- Essay examination at the end of the term (100%) based on topics specified by the instructor OR a report on a subject chosen by the student(100%).
- No in class examination.

Grading

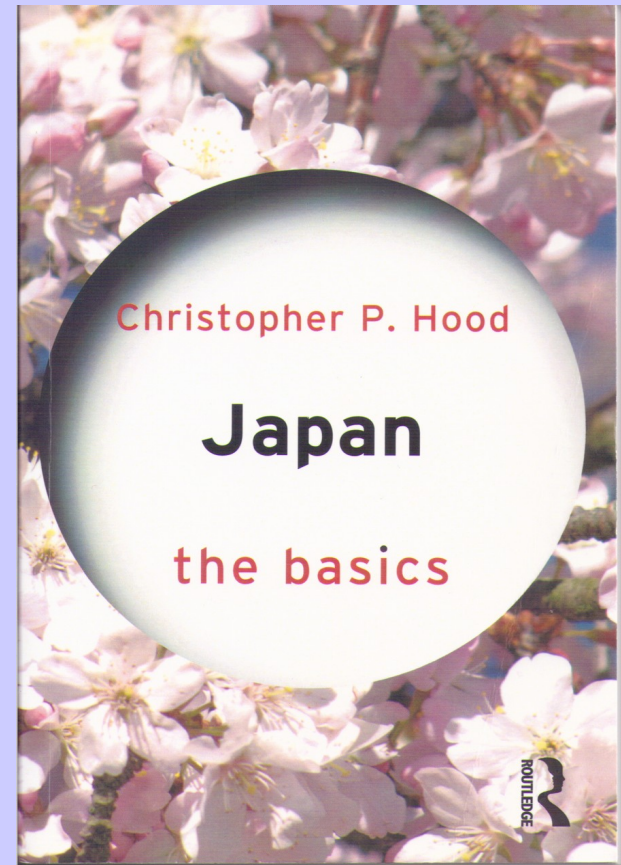
- “Essay” or “report”
 - Students pick their own subject and find their own sources
- “Exam”
 - Students write on subject(s) specified by the instructor using sources provided by the instructor

Grading

- Grading Criteria
 - Relative
 - Best work -> A
 - Adequate -> B
 - Marginal -> C
 - Rubbish -> Failure
 - Some allowance for language issues

Methodology

- Reading about the allegedly uniquely unique Japanese
- Nihonjinron 日本人論
- Nihonbunkaron 日本文化論
- Nihonshakairon 日本社会論



Rise and “Fall” of an Economic Superpower

- Postwar recovery – Japan during the reign of Douglas MacArthur
- Income doubling and then some – social change on the road to becoming an economic super power
- The 1980s bubble and its bust – one lost decade going on three
- Japan's no longer bulging middle – class and ideology in postwar

Demographic and Structural Change

- Labor pains – where have all the babies gone?
- Feminine Japan -- three steps behind or stepping out?
- Geriatric Japan – the many shades of gray in Japan
- The examination hell frozen over -- college entrance in postwar Japan
- Still more labor pains -- where have all the good jobs gone?

Demographic and Social Change

- Farming Japan -- where have all the farmers gone?
- Foreign Japan -- immigrant labor and international marriage
- Sick Japan -- Social pathologies in postwar Japan
- Political Japan – The Sociology of Political Control in Japan

Web Site

Personal web site

- <http://www2.gol.com/users/ehk/saitama/postwar>
- <http://ehk.servebeer.com/saitama/postwar>
- Source for “handouts”
 - Administrative items will be printed and distributed to students
 - Readings and reference materials are on line only

Social History of Postwar Japan

[Earl H. Kinmonth](#)

Friday 1st Period

Announcements

The first session will be on Friday 2 October 2015.

Course Work

To be discussed at the first meeting. Handouts concerning course work will be posted later.

Reference Materials

[Syllabus \(course outline\)](#) as it appears on the Saitama University web site. [PDF version of syllabus.](#)

[Student Survey](#)

Introduction to the Course ([PDF](#)) ([PPS](#))

Handouts and Readings [Primary Archive](#) [Alternate Archive](#)

The primary archive is available 365x24 but can be slow to load. The alternate archive is used for testing and is usually off line between 0130 and 0600.

Most handouts and readings used in this course are shared with a course offered by the instructor at Keio University. As a consequence, some readings and handouts may contain references to Keio that are not relevant to this course.

Mail to the Instructor

Use the address ehkuso@gmail.com. Mail may be in either English or Japanese. 日本語も使用可能. Put "Saitama Postwar," your name and your student number in the subject line of any mail you send.

[Previous Page](#)

Last Updated 2015-10-01

teaching > saitama > postwar > homepage

lectures

33

readings

12

index

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labor	middle	nihonjinron	recovery	social_ills	women

Any Questions?

- Hand in the survey before you leave
- Email
 - ehkuso@gmail.com
 - **ALWAYS** give the course name (“saitama postwar”) and your student number in email, preferably as the subject.
 - You may use Japanese. 日本語も使用可
- Handouts, readings, lecture slides
 - <http://www2.gol.com/users/ehk/saitama/postwar>
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