

**Course Syllabus**  
**Postwar Cultural History of Japan**  
**28 June-2 July, 2010**

**Class Hours: 2 hours, M-F**

**Instructor: Harumi Befu (Stanford University)**

This course surveys historical changes/persistence on selected topics in Japan since 1945. Foci will be changing demography, family system, education, work, women's status, and foreign migrant workers.

**SCHEDULE**

**28 June (M)**

**I. Prewar legacy**

1. A brief history of Japan
2. The war, defeat, and Occupation
3. Essentialism in Japanese studies
4. Archaeological discoveries and national identity

**Reading:**

Goodman, "Making majority culture" (in Robertson ed., *A companion to the anthropology of Japan*. Blackwell, 2005. pp.59-72.)

**II. Postwar historical background: Major turning points**

1. Japan's GDP back to 1935.
2. Occupation: 1945-52
  - a. New constitution
  - b. Reforms—Family, Economic, educational, land, etc.
3. Korean war procurement: 1950-55.
4. Double digit economic growth of the 1960s: Jimmu Prosperity ("keiki")  
Izanagi, Izanamu Prosperity periods
5. 1964 Bullet Train, Tokyo Olympics
6. Urbanization
7. 1960, 1969-70 anti-Vietnam war, Anti-Security Treaty student demonstrations
8. Recessions: oil shock
9. Prosperity of the 1970s & bubble economy of the 1980s & 1990s
10. Influx of foreign workers, bursting of the bubble; slow recovery

**III. The Family**

1. *Ie* system: Ancestors and you
2. The conjugal family: Spouse and you
5. The good wife, wise mother philosophy
6. Decline of arranged marriage; increasing love marriage. vague distinction
7. Demographic changes: Tumbling birth rates
8. Divorce yo-yo & delayed marriage
9. Graying of Japan: care for the aged

**Readings:**

Brenda Robb Jenike, "Parent care and shifting family obligations in urban Japan" in John W. Traphagan and John Knight eds., *Demographic Change and the Family in Japan's Aging Society*, State University of New York Press, pp.177-201.

## 29 June (T)

### IV. Rural community

1. Depopulation of rural areas: exodus of the youth
  - A. Mechanization of farming
2. Part-time v full time farmers
3. Breakdown of cooperation
- 4. reviving rural society through special products, tourism nostalgia theme**
5. Importation of wives

#### Readings:

Joy Hendry, *Marriage in Changing Japan*, London, Croom Helm, 1981, Ch.2, (p. 37-79)

### V. Urban community

1. Urban glitters
  - A. Specializations
  - B. Global connection
2. City as living space

#### Readings:

Bestor, Theodor, *Neighborhood Tokyo*, Stanford Univ. Press. 1989, ch. 2.

## 30 June (W)

### VI. Education

1. Pre-war elitism
2. Postwar Occupation reform
3. Credentialism
4. Entrance examination system and its consequences
5. Demography of education
6. Function of education

#### Readings:

Sato, "5: Two classrooms, two realities" (in Sato, *Inside Japanese classrooms: The heart of education*. Routledge-Falmer, 2004. pp. 109-165.

## 1 July (TH)

### VII. Work

1. "The three pillars of industrial relations"
2. The dual structure
3. Women at work
4. Coping with recession
5. Restructuring in the 1980s: M&A, off-shore outsourcing, on-shore outsourcing (contracts, temps)
6. Freeters, NEETS, foreigners

#### Readings:

Befu, Harumi & Christine Cernosia, "Demise of 'permanent employment' in Japan," *Human Resource management*, vol. 27, no. 3, pp.231-250, 1990.

Hamada, "9. The anthropology of Japanese corporate management" (in Robertson ed., *A companion to the anthropology of Japan*. Blackwell. 2005. pp.125-152.)

**2 July**

**VIII. Women**

1. Prewar rural women: Working with men
2. Prewar urban women: Staying home
3. War-time mobilization of women
4. Education
5. Postwar suffrage
6. Work as a norm
7. Discrimination at work
8. Feminist movement

**Readings:**

Kumazawa, “7. A postwar history of women workers” (in Kumazawa, *Portraits of the Japanese workplace: Labor movements, workers, and Managers*. Westview, 1996. pp.159-203.)

**IX. Ethnic diversity & foreigners’ presence**

1. The Ainu, the Okinawans
2. History of multi-ethnic infusion into Japan—pre-war  
5<sup>th</sup> c. Koreans, 16<sup>th</sup> c. Portuguese, Koreans, 17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> c. Dutch, Chinese, 19<sup>th</sup> c. Europeans, 20<sup>th</sup> c. Koreans, Taiwanese
3. Postwar—Old-timers
4. New-comers
5. Factors for their arrival
6. Provenience
7. Ethnic communities
8. Support groups
9. Cultural essentialism

**Readings:**

Komai, Hiroshi, “Ch. 1: The history and overall situation of migration” in *Foreign Migrants in Contemporary Japan*, Trans Pacific Press, 2001, pp.9-33.

**X. Concluding Remarks**