

Lingnan University
Department of Sociology and Social Policy
CLE9037 Japanese Society
Second Semester 2023/24

Instructor: YIP Yui Fung (Gary)

Tel: 2616 7188

Room: WYL104

Email: yuifungyip@LN.edu.hk

Office Hours: Tue 10:30-11:30, 13:30-14:30; Thur 16:30-18:30

Lecture: Tue 11:30-13:29, LKK102

Tutorial 2: Thur 19:30-20:29, WYL109

Tutorial 3: Thur 18:30-19:29, WYL109

Brief Course Description

This course introduces students to sociological perspectives on contemporary Japan. Japan is a unique Asian country that (1) had “modernized/industrialized” rapidly in the 19th century; (2) was defeated in World War II and transformed its social system drastically; (3) has achieved remarkable economic growth and been praised for “Japan as Number One” in the mid-20th century; (4) has faced a serious economic recession afterwards and experienced the “Lost Decades”; and (5) now comprises various socio-economic characteristics (e.g., the most aged population worldwide, only Asian country among G7, a high suicide rate, serious gender inequality, modest economic inequality, and popular culture). Among these features, what are peculiar to Japan and what are common across societies including Hong Kong? Why are some of them observed only (or particularly) in Japan? Answering these questions contributes to better understanding not only Japanese society per se but also broader social problems even in other parts of the world.

Aims

This course aims to deepen students’ understanding of sociological perspectives and the ways in which they can be applied to contemporary Japan. It also seeks to provide students with relevant knowledge, skills, and data sources to review and conduct sociological research in this vein. Students will also have the opportunities to undertake original projects to analyze the current situation of Japan from a comparative perspective.

Learning Outcomes (LOs)

On completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Identify major sociological perspectives on contemporary Japan.
2. Explain the characteristics of Japan from a comparative perspective.
3. Conduct an original analysis of Japan, using secondary data.

Indicative Content

“Personalities” and Selfhood

Popular Culture

Religion and Perception

Economy and Class

Public Health and Risk Society

Social Emotions and Japanese Culture

Family and Social Space

Teaching Method

Lectures and tutorials in this course will be interactive and collaborative. In lectures, the instructor will cover sociological theories and relevant data to better understand contemporary Japan, referring to a number of reading assignments. In so doing, students will be encouraged to actively ask/answer questions and to join discussions with peers and the instructor. In tutorials, students will be required to conduct original research projects using secondary data under the instructor's guidance.

Assessment

Class Participation	15%
Project Paper (Group Work)	20%
Presentation (Group Work)	20%
Term Paper (Individual Work)	45%

Measurement of Learning Outcomes

1. Class Participation (LOs 1-3):

Class participation involves not only attending lectures/tutorials but also contributing to discussions and presentations in collaboration with peer students. Students are supposed to be well prepared for and actively participate in classes.

2. Group Work 1: Project Paper (LOs 1-3):

In tutorials, students will be divided into small groups to conduct their original analyses of the current situation of Japan from a comparative perspective. This project is composed of including (1) a selection of research topic; (2) a literature review; (3) an analysis (e.g., arguments) and discussions on the “findings” (e.g., empirical evidence). Depending on the group size, each student has to write around 800-1,000 words, and in the American Sociological Association (ASA) Style. Students in the same group may be given different marks in accordance with their contribution. **The due date is 24 Mar 2024, 17:30.**

3. Group Work 2: Presentation (LOs 1-3):

Each group will make a presentation on the project paper (assessment 2). The presentation should be prepared for around 20 minutes followed by Q&A for 10 minutes. Every student is expected to play certain roles in preparing and delivering materials, while all participants will be encouraged to critically assess other groups' presentations and to give constructive feedback. Students in the same group may be given different marks in accordance with their contribution.

4. Term Paper (Individual Work) (LOs 1-3):

Using knowledge and skills developed through lectures and tutorials, each student will be required to conduct an original analysis of contemporary Japan and to write a term paper, and the format is similar to the project paper: (1) a selection of research topic; (2) a literature review; (3) an analysis and discussion on the "findings" (e.g., empirical evidence); and (4) a conclusion. The paper should be around 1,500 words, and ASA Style. This is the chance for students to demonstrate their learning achievement comprehensively. **The due date is 5 May 2024, 17:30.**

Submission

Students will have to submit both their final essay and group paper by uploading them on Moodle (via Turnitin) in **.pdf** format. Late submission will receive 10% mark deduction per day. If you encounter any problem concerning the coursework, please do not hesitate to contact me.

The Use of Generative AI Technology (e.g., ChatGPT)

Universities around the world are thinking about strategies to deal with, as well as incorporate the generative AI technology. While it is an efficient tool for locating relevant information / materials, it might not be that productive to human thinking, depending on the use. Below are several key points concerning the dos and don'ts of ChatGPT usage in this course. Some further suggestions will be provided in class.

- 1) Copy and paste from the ChatGPT sources, or essay / script writing by ChatGPT are not allowed.
- 2) Research ethics and academic honesty are of first priority. Students are expected to strictly follow such guidelines, which also apply to ChatGPT usage.
- 3) Only treat ChatGPT as the "means" of locating / sorting / figuring out literatures, reading materials, relevant concepts / theories, and so on. It is a matter of research ethic / academic integrity to do your own research based on the ChatGPT suggestions (e.g., read the materials suggested by ChatGPT)
- 4) Turnitin offers an AI detector; justifications are required for any assignment that is beyond 15% AI detected usage.
- 5) Indicate clearly how generative AI technology is used in the assignments (e.g., a) your "prompts," 2) the full AI response, and c) how you use the response).

Course Schedule

Week	Date (WED)	Lecture	Date (TUE)	Tutorial
1	16 Jan	Introduction and Overview	18 Jan	Add-Drop Period: No Tutorial
Why Japanese Society?				
2	23 Jan	Self, Personality, and Everyday Life	25 Jan	Housekeeping
<u>Essential Readings</u> Johnson, Frank A. 1993. <i>Dependency and Japanese Socialization: Psychoanalytic and Anthropological Investigations into Amae</i> . New York: New York University Press. (Chapters 3 and 8) <u>Relevant Readings</u> Bachnik, Jane M. 1998. "Time, Space, and Person in Japanese Relationships." Pp. 91-116, in <i>Interpreting Japanese Society: Anthropological Approaches</i> , edited by Joy Hendry and Jonathan Webber. London, UK: Taylor & Francis Group. Behrens, Kazuko Y. 2004. "A Multifaceted View of the Concept of Amae: Reconsidering the Indigenous Japanese Concept of Relatedness." <i>Human Development</i> 47(1):1-27. Feldman, Ofer. 1997. "Culture, Society, and the Individual: Cross-Cultural Political Psychology in Japan." <i>Political Psychology</i> 18(2):327-53.				Self-Introduction & Group Formation
3	30 Jan	Popular Culture I: From Manga and Anime to Fandom	1 Feb	Preparation and Consultation
<u>Essential Readings</u> Consort, Ian. 2013. <i>The Soul of Anime Collaborative Creativity and Japan's Media Success Story</i> . Durham, NC: Duke University Press. (Introduction, Chapters 1 and 3) <u>Relevant Readings</u>				On Presentation and Group Paper; by appointment

<p>Galbraith, Patrick W. 2011. "Fujoshi: Fantasy Play and Transgressive Intimacy among 'Rotten Girls' in Contemporary Japan." <i>Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society</i> 37(1):211-32.</p> <p>Okab, Daisuke. 2012. "Cosplay, Learning, and Cultural Practice." Pp. 225-48 in <i>Fandom Unbound: Otaku Culture in a Connected World</i>, edited by Mizuko Ito, Daisuke Okabe, and Izumi Tsuji. New Haven: Yale University Press.</p>				
4	6 Feb	Popular Culture II: Fashion	8 Feb	Group Presentation 1
<p><u>Essential Readings</u></p> <p>Kawamura, Yuniya. 2006. "Japanese Teens as Producers of Street Fashion." <i>Current Sociology</i> 54(5):784-801.</p> <p>Monden, Masafumi. 2015. <i>Japanese Fashion Cultures: Dress and Gender in Contemporary Japan</i>. UK: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc. (Chapters 3 & 5)</p> <p><u>Relevant Readings</u></p> <p>Suzuki, Tadashi, Joel Best. 2003. "The Emergence of Trendsetters for Fashions and Fads: Kogaru in 1990s Japan." <i>Sociological Quarterly</i> 44(1):61-79.</p> <p>Miller, Laura. 2004. "Those Naughty Teenage Girls: Japanese Kogals, Slang, and Media Assessments." <i>Journal of Linguistic Anthropology</i> 14(2):225-47.</p>				<p><i>On Self, Personality, and Everyday Life</i></p> <p>(Students Select their Own Topic based on this Theme)</p> <p>Presenters:</p> <p>Topic:</p>
5	13 Feb	CNY Holiday	15 Feb	CNY Holiday
6	20 Feb	"Religion," Shūkyō, and Corporations?	22 Feb	Group Presentation 2
<p><u>Essential Readings</u></p> <p>Horii, Mitsutoshi. 2018. <i>The Category of 'Religion' in Contemporary Japan: Shūkyō and Temple Buddhism</i>. London, UK: Palgrave Macmillan. (Chapters 3 and 4)</p>				<p><i>On Popular Culture</i></p> <p>(Students Select their Own Topic based on this Theme)</p> <p>Presenters:</p>

				Topic:
7	27 Feb	Work and Labor	29 Feb	Group Presentation 3
<u>Essential Readings</u> Dator, James Allen. 1966. "The 'Protestant Ethic' in Japan." <i>The Journal of Developing Areas</i> 1(1):23-40. Sugimoto, Yoshio. 2014. <i>An Introduction to Japanese Society</i> . 4th ed. Melbourne, Australia: Cambridge University Press. (Chapter 4) Mouer, Ross, and Hirosuke Kawanishi. 2005. <i>A Sociology of Work in Japan</i> . UK: Cambridge University Press. (Chapter 4) <u>Relevant Readings</u> Bellah, Robert N. 1963. "Reflections on the Protestant Ethic Analogy in Asia." <i>Journal of Social Issues</i> 19(1):52-60.				<i>On Religion and Ritual</i> (Students Select their Own Topic based on this Theme) Presenters: Topic:
8	5 Mar	Reading Week	7 Mar	Reading Week
9	12 Mar	Economy, Stratification, and Consumption	14 Mar	Group Presentation 4
<u>Essential Readings</u> Sugimoto, Yoshio. 2014. <i>An Introduction to Japanese Society</i> . 4th ed. Melbourne, Australia: Cambridge University Press. (Chapter 2) Haghirian, Parissa. 2015. "Japanese Consumers and Consumerism." Pp. 530-40 in <i>The SAGE Handbook of Modern Japanese Studies</i> , edited by James D. Babb. London, UK: Sage Publications.				<i>On Work and Occupation</i> (Students Select their Own Topic based on this Theme) Presenters: Topic:

10	19 Mar	Population, Health and Risks	21 Mar	Group Presentation 5
<u>Essential Readings</u> Burgess, Adam, and Mitsutoshi Horii. 2012. "Risk, Ritual and Health Responsibilisation: Japan's 'Safety Blanket' of Surgical Face Mask-Wearing." <i>Sociology of Health & Illness</i> 34(8):1184-98. Sugimoto, Yoshio. 2014. <i>An Introduction to Japanese Society</i> . 4th ed. Melbourne, Australia: Cambridge University Press. (Chapter 3)				<i>On Economy and Consumption</i> (Students Select their Own Topic based on this Theme) Presenters: Topic:
11	26 Mar	Sport, Culture, and Politics	28 Mar	Group Presentation 6
<u>Essential Readings</u> Chiba, Naoki, Osamu Ebihara, and Shinji Morino. 2001. "Globalization, Naturalization, and Identity: The Case of Borderless Elite Athletes in Japan." <i>International Review for the Sociology of Sport</i> 36(2):203-21 Horne, John. 1998. The Politics of Sport and Leisure in Japan: Global Power and Local Resistance." <i>International Review for the Sociology of Sport</i> 33(2):171-82. Manzenreiter, Wolfram. 2014. <i>Sport and Body Politics in Japan</i> . New York: Routledge.				<i>On Health or Risk</i> (Students Select their Own Topic based on this Theme) Presenters: Topic:
12	2 Apr	Emotions and Suicide	4 Apr	Public Holiday
<u>Essential Readings</u> Tsai, Yung-Mei, and Charles R. Chandler. 1993. "Suicide in Japan and in the West." <i>International Journal of Comparative Sociology</i> 34(3-4):244-59. Ozawa-de Silva, Chikako. 2008. "Too Lonely to Die Alone: Internet Suicide Pacts and Existential Suffering in				

<p>Japan.” <i>Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry</i> 32(4):516-51.</p> <p>Picone, Mary. 2012. “Suicide and the Afterlife: Popular Religion and the Standardisation of ‘Culture’ in Japan.” <i>Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry</i> 36(2):391-408.</p>				
13	9 Apr	Family, Space and Intimacy	11 Apr	Group Presentation 7
<p><u>Essential Readings</u></p> <p>Tsutsui, Junya. 2020. <i>Work and Family in Japanese Society</i>. Singapore: Springer Singapore. (Chapters 5 and 6)</p> <p>Daniels, Inge, 2015. “Feeling at Home in Contemporary Japan: Space, Atmosphere and Intimacy.” <i>Emotion, Space and Society</i> 15:47-55.</p> <p>Linhard, Sepp. 1998. “Sakariba: Zon of ‘Evaporation’ between Work and Home.” Pp. 231-42, in <i>Interpreting Japanese Society: Anthropological Approaches</i>, edited by Joy Hendry and Jonathan Webber. London, UK: Taylor & Francis Group.</p>				<p><i>On Sport, Culture, and Politics</i></p> <p>(Students Select their Own Topic based on this Theme)</p> <p>Presenters:</p> <p>Topic:</p>
14	16 Apr	Individual Paper Workshop	18 Apr	Group Presentation 8
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Writing Structure - Social Sciences Research Paper & the Japanese Context - Topic Brainstorming, etc. 				<p><i>On Emotions / Family / Gender</i></p> <p>(Students Select their Own Topic based on this Theme)</p> <p>Presenters:</p> <p>Topic:</p>

15	23 Apr	Conclusion	25 Apr	Final Remarks and Consultation

Required Readings

Sugimoto, Yoshio. 2020. *An Introduction to Japanese Society*. 5th ed. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Recommended Readings

Funabashi, Yōichi and Barak Kushner. 2015. *Examining Japan's Lost Decades*. London: Routledge.

Goodman, Roger, Yuko Imoto, and Tuukka Toivonen. 2011. *A Sociology of Japanese Youth: From Returnees to NEETs*. Routledge.

Holthus, Barbara and Wolfram Manzenreiter. 2017. *Life Course, Happiness and Well-Being in Japan*. edited by B. Holthus and W. Manzenreiter. London: Routledge.

Ishida, Hiroshi and David H. Slater. 2010. *Social Class in Contemporary Japan: Structures, Sorting and Strategies*. London: Routledge.

Kariya, Takehiko. 2012. *Education Reform and Social Class in Japan: The Emerging Incentive Divide*. Oxford: Routledge.

Kariya, Takehiko and Jeremy Rappleye. 2020. *Education, Equality, and Meritocracy in a Global Age: The Japanese Approach*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Manzenreiter, Wolfram and Barbara Holthus. 2017. *Happiness and the Good Life in Japan*. Oxford: Routledge.

Shirahase, Sawako. 2014. *Social Inequality in Japan*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Yamaguchi, Kazuo. 2019. *Gender Inequalities in the Japanese Workplace and Employment: Theories and Empirical Evidence*. Singapore: Springer.

Papers published in *Social Science Japan Journal* and the *International Journal of Japanese Sociology*.

Important Notes:

- (1) Students are expected to spend a total of 9 hours (i.e. 3 hours of class contact and 6 hours of personal study) per week to achieve the course learning outcomes.
- (2) Students shall be aware of the University regulations about dishonest practice in course work, tests and examinations, and the possible consequences as stipulated in the Regulations Governing University Examinations. In particular, plagiarism, being a kind of dishonest practice, is “the presentation of another person’s work without proper acknowledgement of the source, including exact phrases, or summarised ideas, or even footnotes/citations, whether protected by copyright or

not, as the student's own work". Students are required to strictly follow university regulations governing academic integrity and honesty.

- (3) Students are required to submit writing assignment(s) using Turnitin.
- (4) To enhance students' understanding of plagiarism, a mini-course "Online Tutorial on Plagiarism Awareness" is available on <https://pla.ln.edu.hk/>