

Japan and the Asia-Pacific in Modern Times

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Course Outline

This course aims to provide an understanding of Japan's interest in and approaches to the Asia-Pacific by examining selected themes in Japan's interactions with the Asia-Pacific in modern times, from 1868 to present times. Such themes include imperialism and colonialism, nationalism and internationalism, war and peace, economic and cultural interactions, roles of state and non-governmental actors, and Japan's approaches to Asia-Pacific regionalism.

Assessment

Class attendance:	20%
Discussion and presentation:	20%
Mid-term test:	30%
Final examination:	30%

Organization

This course will consist of two sections. Section I will examine Japan's engagements in the Asia-Pacific from 1868 to 1945 while Section II will analyze Japan's interests and roles in the Asia-Pacific from 1945 to present times. The focus is on the regions of East Asia and Southeast Asia. Apart from lectures, there will be video screening of documentaries for learning purposes.

Readings

1. Selected readings on Japanese history from Columbia University's East Asian Curriculum Project: Japan, website: <http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/japan/>
2. Harry Wray and Hilary Conroy (eds.), *Japan Examined: Perspectives on Modern Japanese History* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1983), pp. 199-207, 214-228.
3. Anne Booth, "Did It Really Help to be a Japanese Colony? East Asian Economic Performance in Historical Perspective," *Japan Focus*, 7 May 2007, website: <http://japanfocus.org/products/topdf/2418>, pp. 1-6, 10-14, 23-26, 32.
4. Andrew Gordon, *A Modern History of Japan: From Tokugawa Times to the Present*, 2nd ed (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 245-251, 291-301, 310-321, 328-334.
5. Ezra F. Vogel, *The Four Little Dragons: The Spread of Industrialization in East Asia* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991), pp. 1-3, 83-109.

6. Excerpts from the Commission on Growth and Development's *The Growth Report: Strategies for Sustained Growth and Inclusive Development*, 21 May 2008, website: <http://www.growthcommission.org/index.php>

7. Timothy J. Craig (ed.), *Japan Pop! Inside the World of Japanese Popular Culture* (Armonk, New York: M. E. Sharpe, 2000), pp. 3-17, 287-308.

8. Nissim Kadosh Otmazgin, "Japanese Popular Culture in East and Southeast Asia: Time for a Regional Paradigm?" *Japan Focus*, 8 February 2008, website: <http://www.japanfocus.org/products/details/2660>, pp. 1-14.

9. Nissim Kadosh Otmazgin, "Contesting Soft Power: Japanese Popular Culture in East and Southeast Asia," *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, 8: 1 (2008), pp. 90-92, 95-98.

Class Schedule

Section I: Japan and the Asia-Pacific, 1868 to 1945

1. Introduction
2. Video: "The Meiji Revolution"
3. Japanese imperialism
4. Video: "Writers and Revolutionaries": Lu Xun and Kita Ikki
5. Japanese colonialism
6. Japan and the United States in the Asia-Pacific
7. Mid-term test

Section II: Japan and the Asia-Pacific, 1945 to present times

8. Japan's economic power
9. Video: "Inside Japan, Inc."
10. The Four Little Dragons
11. Video: "Big Business and the Ghost of Confucius"
12. Japan's cultural power I
13. Japan's cultural power II
14. Japan and Asia-Pacific regionalism
15. Final examination

A Brief Profile of the Lecturer

Teow See Heng is Associate Professor at the Department of History, National University of Singapore. He obtained his PhD in History and East Asian Languages from Harvard University. His research and teaching interests focus on Japan's roles in the international relations of East Asia and Southeast Asia.