

I am modifying my current syllabus on Asian Politics to reflect things we covered at the Japan workshop in Seattle, March 2011. My syllabus is divided into three parts according to themes and historical periods:

Part I: Historical Backgrounds—covers ancient time to pre-modern period.

Part II: Part II: Ideas and Values—covers the entire period

Part III: Part III: Party Politics, Society and International Relations: Post WWII period

The overriding theme of the workshop was Japanese values and ideas, in particular, Japanese search for identity commonly known as *Nihonjinron*. The ideas and knowledge that I gained from the workshop will be most useful on Part II.

Modern and post modern values as seen in Japanese popular cultures such as *Manga* and the high culture of *Haiku* will be posted together along the line of gender issues. Since my current course deals with all three (four including North Korea) countries, China, Japan and Korea my allotment Japan is only one third of the class and I hope to be able to offer a course on Japan only.

The following reading materials and ideas are direct results of my participation in the workshop that I would like to cover in class

A. On Issues of Gender

a.: On political women before and during WWII :

1. **Patricia Steinhoff** (1996): “Three Women Who Loved the Left: Radical Women Leaders in the Japanese Red Army,” in Anne Imamura, ed., *Re-Imaging Japanese Women*
2. **Youngtae Shin** (1999), “Women’s Political Activism in Japan and other late Developing Countries” in *South Easter Political Review* 27 (1): 81-102

b.: Women as agents for Japan’s economic recovery and social movements in Post War period

1. Mary Brinton (1994) “*Women and Economic Recovery*”
2. Youngtae Shin (2004) “Women, Political Aliens and Grassroots Movement” in *Women and Politics in Japan and Korea*.135-170.

B. Overall National Identity reflected in Politics and everyday life.

1. Harumi “Befu, Geopolitics, Geoeconomic and the Japanese Identity,” in Peter Nosco ed *Japanese Identity: Cultural Identities*, 10-32.
2. David Howell, “Territoriality and Collective identity in Tokugawa Japan, *Daedalus*, 127(3, summer 1998):105-32.
3. Oriie Endo (translated by Kumiko Fujimura-Fanslow): Aspects of Sexism in Language, 29-42.

Discussions: The following topics will be thrown out for open discussions

While each opinion is respected and taken seriously, comments that has no pedagogical values, or intended purely to insult the culture will not be tolerated. In other words, have respect for the

culture even when you dislike or disagree. Only constructive and positive contribution to discussions will be given high marks.

1. Do you think the Meiji Revolution is a reaction to internal disintegration or to external threats? Post your response and then respond to at least one of your peer's response.
2. Discuss the role of the United States, played in Japan's annexation of Korea and the reasons behind it. .
3. Can government deceive the people in order to win the war? In this case discuss the justice or injustice inflicted on the Comfort Women
4. Does Japanese women's power dwindle in the modern times compared to the pre-modern times? Support your argument as vigorously as you can.
5. What is the most important cultural artifacts that signify Japanese-ness and how does it represent Japanese culture and its identity? Consider both classical and popular cultures to guide your thinking.