

# PAAS 380 Japanese Economy, Politics and Culture

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In this course, you will explore various political and socioeconomic issues in modern and contemporary Japan. In both scholarly and popular narratives, several keywords have been used to explain the national characteristics of Japan, which include “catch-up” modernization, ethnic/cultural homogeneity, collectivism, and a mixture of traditional and futuristic cultural elements. This course will help you challenge these conventional understandings that have reduced complex political and social relations to an essentialized national identity by engaging with crucial issues that have shaped the forms and dynamics of social relations within and beyond the Japanese context. A variety of reading and visual materials will be assigned to guide you through critical topics, including: the emperor system, grassroots democratic/right-wing movements, legacies of colonialism and the war, racial/gender inequalities, environmental/nuclear disasters, and population issues.

Proposed assignments:

x

Proposed reading list: