

SOSC 1470 The Economic and Political Development of Modern Japan

Spring Semester 2020

Classroom: 2465

Time: Tuesday and Thursday, 13.30-14.50

Instructor:

Wenkai He

Associate Professor

Division of Social Science

Room 3376, Academic Building

Email: hewenkai@ust.hk

Office Hour: 11 am -12 pm, Monday, or by appointment

TAs:

Email:

Course Description and Objectives:

The rapid economic modernization and building of a modern state in Japan after the Meiji Restoration of 1868 has long been considered a typical case of successful economic and political development. Japan's success has been overwhelmingly attributed to its "learning from the west". The lack of appreciation of Japan's economic and political development achieved before the coming of Westerners leads to a western-centered view of development.

This course aims to place Japan's development after 1868 against the historical background of economic and political development in Tokugawa Japan (1603-1868). It emphasizes the contribution of Japan's indigenous market economy and state-building efforts to Japan's transformation. We will cover topics such as rural commercialization and the rise of entrepreneurship; the business ethics of Tokugawa merchants and its contribution to a market economy; the spread of mass education and its significance to political participation; and the mercantile economic policies of major domain governments as well as the shogunate's economic policy-making. We will also underscore the role of politics, examining how domestic politics impacted the process of learning from the west and how the struggle for a political system with more representation shaped the process of modernization.

This course will deepen students' knowledge of modern Japan. It provides a more nuanced picture of its modernization, as well as highlighting the multiple trajectories of development that were possible in Japan. Moreover, it will help students better understand the relationship between economic development and political participation through a concrete case-study, and allow us to rethink critically existing models of development.

The textbook that we use in this course is Marius B. Jansen, *The Making of Modern Japan*, third printing (Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2002). Lectures will introduce more recent research in English and the scholarship of Japanese historians.

Requirements:

Please read the assigned readings before the class and participate in class discussion. Attendance may be randomly checked by unannounced in-class quizzes.

Grading:

Mid-term exam (50%) and final exam (50%)

Alternately, you can write one research paper (12 pages double-spaced). Students interested in this option must submit a proposal at least one week before the mid-term (by Week 8). The topic of the research paper must address either the continuity or discontinuity between Tokugawa and Meiji Japan. The proposal should include the topic of your paper, why you want to work on it, and the relevant scholarship. Your proposal must be approved ahead of time for you to take this option.

Reading Assignments:

1 Feb. Introduction: Why do we need to learn the history of Japan? Why study Tokugawa and early Meiji Japanese history in particular?

Week 1: The Political System of Tokugawa Japan

Jansen, *The Making of Modern Japan*, “The Tokugawa State,” pp. 32-62 and “Urbanization and Communication,” pp. 127-158.

Ronald P. Toby, “Rescuing the Nation from History: The State of the State in Early Modern Japan,” *Monumenta Pipponica*, Vol. 56, No. 2 (Summer 2001): 197-237.

Week 2: Economic Development in Tokugawa Japan

Penelope Francks, *Japan and the Great Divergence: A short guide* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), pp. 57-87.

Jansen, *The Making of Modern Japan*, “Status Groups,” pp. 96-126

Week 3: Popular and elite education in Tokugawa Japan

Jansen, *The Making of Modern Japan*, pp. 159-210;

Ronald Dore, *Education in Tokugawa Japan* (Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese Studies and the University of Michigan Press, 1992), pp. 252-290.

Kiri Paramore, “The Naturalization of Confucianism: Academism, Examinations, and Bureaucratic Governance in the Late Tokugawa State,” *Journal of Japanese Studies*, vol. 38, No. 1 (Winter 2012), pp. 25-53.

Week 4: Was Tokugawa Japan closed to the outside world?

Jansen, *The Making of Modern Japan*, pp. 63-95.

Terrence Jackson, *Network of Knowledge: Western Science and the Tokugawa Information Revolution* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2016), pp. 1-16 and 77-115.

Week 5: The crisis of Tokugawa Japan

Jansen, *The Making of Modern Japan*, pp. 223-293

Junji Banno, *Japan's Modern History, 1857-1937: A New Political Narrative* (London: Routledge, 2014), pp. 1-20.

Week 6: The Meiji Restoration as an event

Jansen, *The Making of Modern Japan*, pp. 295-343

Junji Banno, *Japan's Modern History, 1857-1937: A New Political Narrative* (London: Routledge, 2014), pp. 21-52.

Week 7: Political development after 1868: the legitimacy of the new regime

Jansen, *The Making of Modern Japan*, pp. 343-395.

Junji Banno, *Japan's Modern History, 1857-1937: A New Political Narrative* (London: Routledge, 2014), pp. 53-82.

Week 8: Economic development after 1868: the state or market

S. McCallion, "Trial and Error: The Model Filature at Tomioka," in *Managing Industrial Enterprise: Cases from Japan's Prewar Experience*, ed. W. Wray (Cambridge, MA: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1989).

Week 9: Popular reactions to the Meiji state-building

Stephen Vlastos, "Opposition movements in early Meiji, 1868-1885," in Marius B. Jansen ed., *The Cambridge History of Japan, vol. 5 The Nineteenth Century* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 367-431.

Week 10: The Parliamentary movement

Kyu Hyun Kim, *The Age of Visions and Arguments: Parliamentarianism and the National Public Sphere in Early Meiji Japan* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Asia Center, 2007), pp. 257-287 and pp.331-378.

Week 11: The military system of the Meiji state

Jansen, *The Making of Modern Japan*, pp, 395-411.

D. Colin Jaundrill, *Samurai to Solder: Remaking Military Service in Nineteenth-Century Japan* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2016), pp. 156-177.

Week 12: The Sino-Japanese War

Jansen, *The Making of Modern Japan*, pp, 414-441.

Junji Banno, *The Establishment of the Japanese Constitutional System* (London: Routledge, 1992), pp. 1-81.

Week 13: Post Russo-Japanese War Japan: the starting of a path toward the Pacific War?

Helen Hardacre, *Shitō and the State, 1868-1988* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), chapters 1 and 4.