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JAPAN'S POSTWAR RESURGENCE 2 credits (Spring)

戦後日本の再生 2単位(春学期)

The U.S. Occupation and its Legacy

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**Course Description:**

This course will examine the foundations of today's Japan that were established during the U.S. occupation, with its early left-leaning idealism and subsequent shift to conservatism. The class will examine what life was like for Japanese in the early post-war years, the nature of the U.S. occupation, the relationship between Gen. Douglas MacArthur and Emperor Hirohito, the creation of Japan's constitution and other issues that still affect Japan today. We will use as a textbook the Pulitzer Prize-winning book, "Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II," which is a solid work of scholarship that is also highly readable and even entertaining in the drama of its story.

**Textbooks:**

John W. Dower, "Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II." New York: W. W. Norton & Company Inc. 1999.

**Reference Books:**

John W. Dower, "War without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War." New York: Pantheon Books, 1993.

**Course Plan:**

- 1 Overview of course.
- 2 Japanese life immediately after surrender. Economic misery. Displaced persons. Treatment of veterans. Reading: textbook chapter 1, "Shattered Lives."
- 3 Democratization and the American imposition of reforms as "revolution from above." Demilitarization. Reading: textbook chapter 2, "Gifts from Heaven."
- 4 Suffering in the immediate post-war period. Hunger and psychological pain. The difficulties of life reflected in children's games. Inflation. Reading: textbook chapter 3, "Kyodatsu: Exhaustion and Despair."
- 5 The occupiers: Gen. Douglas MacArthur and the new American rulers. Competing analyses of Japan and the Japanese among the Americans. Reading: textbook chapter 6, "Neocolonial Revolution." (We will cover all chapters in the textbook but some of them will be out of order.)
- 6 The Japanese response to American initiatives. Japanese leftist activism and the American shift to conservative policies. Attitudes toward MacArthur. Remorseful intellectuals. Impact of the Cold War. Reading: textbook chapters 7 and 8, "Embracing Revolution" and "Making Revolution."
- 7 The role of Emperor Hirohito in the early post-war period and MacArthur's use of him to achieve American goals. Reading: textbook chapter 9, "Imperial Democracy: Driving the Wedge."
- 8 The remaking of Emperor Hirohito's image. Reading: textbook chapters 10 and 11, "Imperial Democracy: Descending Partway from Heaven" and "Imperial Democracy: Evading Responsibility."
- 9 The creation of Japan's new constitution. Diverging attitudes of the Japanese public and the country's political elite. American drafting of the constitution. Reading: textbook chapter 12, "Constitutional Democracy: GHQ Writes a New National Charter."
- 10 The new constitution's adoption by the Japanese parliament. Reading: textbook chapter 13, "Constitutional Democracy: Japanizing the American Draft."
- 11 The Tokyo war-crimes trial. Japanese efforts to come to terms with the war. Reading: textbook chapters 15 and 16, "Victor's Justice, Loser's Justice" and "What Do You Tell the Dead When You Lose?"
- 12 Social problems early in the U.S. occupation. Black markets, prostitution and "kasutori" culture. Reading: textbook chapter 4, "Cultures of Defeat."
- 13 Media, literature and language as Japan adjusts to post-war change. Reading: chapter 5, "Bridges of Language."

14 The limits of American-dominated democracy. Impermissible discourse. Curbing the political left. Reading: chapter 14, "Censored Democracy: Policing the New Taboos."

Other Economic recovery, the foundations of a prosperous Japan and the end of occupation. Planning a cutting-edge economy. Reading: Ch. 17 and Epilogue, "Engineering Growth" and "Legacies/Fantasies/Dreams."

**Lecturer's Comments to Students:**

Today's Japan cannot be understood without some knowledge of the interplay between U.S. occupation forces, the Japanese government, and the Japanese people in the early post-war years. The history of this period makes an extraordinary story. Students will be encouraged to speak out in class and express their opinions about these exceptional events.

**Method of Evaluation:**

Two essays: 35% each

Attendance and participation: 30%