

NAJS 2008 – The Fifth NAJS Conference on the Study of  
Contemporary Japanese Society, 27–28 March 2008,  
Stockholm, Sweden

[www.najs.jp](http://www.najs.jp)

Dear participants,

You are most welcome to the Fifth Annual NAJS Conference. The Conference will be held at the Swedish Institute of International Affairs, Drottning Kristinas Väg 37, Stockholm. Coffee breaks and lunches will be provided in connection to the Institute. On Thursday evening there will be a welcome dinner at Ramen Ki-mama, Birger Jarlsgatan 93.

There is no conference fee, and thanks to our sponsors we are happy to announce that coffee breaks, lunch and dinner are all free of charge.

In this booklet you will find a schedule, list of participants and abstracts.

We are looking forward to two productive and intensive days in Stockholm!

NAJS 2008 Organizing Committee  
Linus Hagström, Pia Moberg, Lars Martin Sørensen, Martin Nordeborg & Staffan Appelgren

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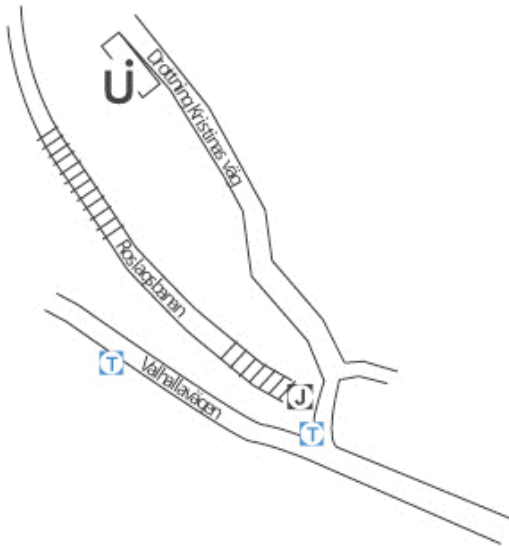
**Sponsors:**

Nordic Institute of Asian Studies (NIAS)  
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## PRACTICAL INFORMATION

### Conference venue

Swedish Institute of International Affairs, Drottning Kristinas väg 37, Box 27 035, 102 51 Stockholm, Sweden.



If you have problems to find us on Thursday, please call Linus' mobile phone 0736-966298.

### From Stockholm Airport

If you want to travel by taxi in Stockholm we suggest that you use any of the major taxi companies, e.g. Transfer Taxi, Taxi Stockholm, Taxi Kurir or Taxi 020. From the airport, Transfer Taxi is probably least expensive.

### Transportation in Stockholm

Take subway (red line to Mörby or Fruängen, depending on direction) or bus (e.g. 4 or 72) to Tekniska högskolan and then walk Drottning Kristinas väg up until you reach the institute (which shares its building with the Swedish National Defense College).

### Accommodation

Accommodation is your own responsibility, but below you find some suggestions with approximate prices:

<http://www.hostelbedandbreakfast.com/> (300 SEK)

<http://www.vanadishotel.com/> (500 SEK)

<http://www.colonial.se/> (840 SEK)

<http://www.mornington.se/stockholm/> (1300 SEK)

### Dinner

On Thursday evening there will be a welcome dinner at Restaurant Ramen Ki-mama, Birger Jarlsgatan 93, a ten minute walk from the institute.

## **SCHEDULE NAJS 2008**

### **Thursday 27 March**

12.00-12.45 *Registration*

12.45-13.00 *Opening of the conference: A word from the NAJS Steering Committee*

13.00-14.20 *Session 1*

Chair: Bart Gaens

Paper 1: Susanne Kreitz-Sandberg

Discussants: Martin Nordeborg, Annamari Konttinen

Paper 2: Linus Hagström

Discussants: Jakob Nobuoka, Akihiro Ogawa

14.20-14.45 *Coffee break*

14.45-15.30 *Keynote speech* Dick Stegewerns

15.30-16.15 *Keynote speech* Akihiro Ogawa

16.15-16.30 *Short break*

16.30-18.00 *Group discussion 1*

Chair: Susanne Kreitz-Sandberg

Papers: Pia Moberg

Hiroataka Kasai

19.30 *Dinner*

### **Friday 28 March**

08.30-10.30 *Group discussion II*

Chair: Pia Moberg

Papers: Pekka Korhonen

Bart Gaens

Annamari Konttinen

10.30-10.55 *Coffee break*

10.55-12.15 *Group discussion III*

Chair: Marie Söderberg

Papers: Lars-Martin Sorensen

Martin Nordeborg

12.15-13.15 *Lunch*

13.15-15.15 *Session 2*

Chair: Linus Hagström

Paper 1: Bert Edström

Discussants: Pekka Korhonen, Hiroataka Kasai

Paper 2: Marie Söderberg

Discussants: Susanne Kreitz-Sandberg, Dick Stegewerns

Paper 3: Jakob Nobuoka

Discussants: Bart Gaens, Richard Nakamura

15.15-15.45 *Coffee & NAJS in the future: closing of the conference*

## **Lists of participants**

**Bert Edström**, Institute for Security and Development Policy. “Human Security and Cooperation between the Japanese Government and Japanese NGOs”

**Bart Gaens**, University of Helsinki. ”The Transformation of Corporate Japan as Depicted in the Salaryman Manga ‘Shima Kôzaku’.”

**Linus Hagström**, Swedish Institute of International Affairs. ”A Wind of Change? Assessing Transformation Japanese Foreign Policy in the Heisei Era.”

**Mikael Johansson**, Swedish Institute of International Affairs.

**Hiroataka Kasai**, Tsuda College. ”Democracy and Knowledge: Masakazu Nakai’s ‘The logic of Committee’.”

**Annamari Konttinen**, Center for Asian Studies University of Turku. ”The Political and Cultural Determinants of Civil Society a Comparative Study.”

**Pekka Korhonen**, University of Jyväskylä. ”Children For The Nation! Debate On The National Obligations Of Japanese Women.”

**Susanne Kreitz-Sandberg**, Linköping University. ”Demographic Change and Educational Policies.”

**Pia Moberg**, Centre for East and Southeast Asian Studies Lund University. ”The training methods at Matsushita Institute of Government and Management analyzed from the perspective of Complex Leadership Theory.”

**Richard Nakamura**, Växjö University.

**Jakob Nobuoka**, Uppsala University. ”Akihabara: User innovation, consumption and media mix in Japanese culture industries.”

**Martin Nordeberg**, University of Gothenburg. ”Men and Nation in Contemporary Japanese Society.”

**Akihiro Ogawa**, Stockholm University. ”Strategies of a Neoliberal State: Institutionalizing Civil Society in Japan.”

**Dick Stegewerns**, University of Oslo. ”From Taisho Democracy to TV Democracy.”

**Marie Söderberg**, EIJIS/Stockholm University. ”Is there an Asian Model of Development Aid?”

**Lars-Martin Sorensen**, University of Copenhagen. ”The Bestseller Recipe: A Natural Explanation of the Global Success of Anime.”

**Izumi Tytler**, University of Oxford.

## **ABSTRACTS:**

**Bert Edström**, Institute for Security and Development Policy. “Human Security and Cooperation between the Japanese Government and Japanese NGOs”

In 1994 the concept of human security was launched by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and became a key concept of the debate on international security in the wake of the end of the Cold War and the 1991 Gulf War. Already in 1995, the concept was endorsed by Japanese Prime Minister Murayama Tomiichi. Three years later, the new security concept was made a key consideration of Japan’s foreign policy by Prime Minister Obuchi Keizō. This made Japan one of the first countries to introduce human security as a central idea of foreign policy, and a campaign to promote the new security idea was initiated by Obuchi. The campaign was based on cooperation in a domestic, bilateral and multilateral context. The focus of this paper is the evolution of cooperation between the Japanese government and Japanese non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and deals with developments until 2003. Cooperation took place in a context where some factors hindered collaboration while other factors were conducive to it. Cooperation between the government and NGOs in two issue areas, Kosovo and landmines, is dealt with.

**Bart Gaens**, University of Helsinki. ”The Transformation of Corporate Japan as Depicted in the Salaryman Manga “Shima Kōsaku.”

My paper builds on research conducted for a paper presented at the first NAJS conference (2004), and continues exploring the business manga “Shima Kōsaku” by Hirokane Kenshi. While the original paper mainly dealt with representations of the salaryman and the reconstruction of salaryman masculinity, the present paper will focus on how the manga portrays the changes in the Japanese corporate world and its business culture. “Shima Kōsaku” started as a serialized business manga in 1983. Mixing in real-life events and historical developments, the series takes place in real time, following the career of the main character. Including a recently published “prequel” covering the protagonist’s early career, the manga thus allows for an analysis of the author’s views on the transformations of corporate Japan from the 1970s to the present. I intend to examine elements of the manga’s style and format as well as themes central to the narrative, such as ethnicity and the construction of a Japanese national culture.

**Linus Hagström**, Swedish Institute of International Affairs. ”A Wind of Change? Assessing Transformation Japanese Foreign Policy in the Heisei Era.”

Many scholars cling to the idea that Japan tends toward immobilism and reactivity in its international behavior, and that it is still a largely insignificant actor on the world stage. Yet, in recent years many Japan watchers have been rather more preoccupied with Japan’s allegedly changing approach to the world. Any assessment of Japanese foreign policy as “in flux” or “not so,” ideally depends on the conceptualization of “foreign policy” and “change.” That is why it is so surprising to find that both have been largely overlooked in the relevant literature. The contribution of this article is to work within a conceptual framework for foreign policy change. Doing so, it aims to explore to what extent Japanese foreign policy has indeed transformed during the Heisei era. Emphasis will be put on what is believed to be the core of Japanese foreign policy, namely on aspects of national security.

**Mikael Johansson**, Swedish Institute of International Affairs  
Participates without paper.

**Hiroataka Kasai**, Tsuda College. "Democracy and Knowledge: Masakazu Nakai's 'The logic of Committee'."

This paper aims to examine the formation of democratic knowledge by focusing on one of the most brilliant philosophers in the wartime Japan, Masakazu Nakai's "Logic of Committee" (Inkai no ronri). His academic concerns include esthetics, history, and politics in general, and in his essay "Logic of Committee," he seeks to theorize the possibility of making democratic knowledge through the process of contemplation, proposal and discussion, which is the process of transition from the logic of the individual to the logic of the collective. It is primarily a philosophical and historical survey, but at the same time, it can be read as a social practice and a certain type of resistance against the prevailing discourse of the wartime fascism. He was involved also in the publication of a weekly journal "Doyoubi" (Saturday) in 1936. This journal was interesting especially because it aimed to create a new readership between writers and readers in mid 1930s. My paper evaluates these two phases of Masakazu Nakai's intellectual activities, that is, theory and social practice.

**Annamari Konttinen**, Center for Asian Studies University of Turku. "The Political and Cultural Determinants of Civil Society a Comparative Study."

The conventional accounts of Japanese politics focus almost exclusively on the role of bureaucrats and businesses, but the emerging pluralistic Japanese society has recently received significant academic attention.

Until quite recently (late 1990s), literature on Japanese political culture subscribed to the myths broadly associated with Asian civil society and democracy. Recent developments have shown, however, that it is misleading to think that East Asians remain deferential to state authority and unable to build a vibrant civil society critical of state power. This directly challenges arguments such as those proposed by influential writers like Samuel Huntington (1993), who claims that civil society is a Western phenomenon and ill suited to Confucianist East Asia.

On the other hand, the focus of "critical" Western scholars and journalists who emphasize and celebrate the oppositional role of NGOs against a resistant state, needs to be put under careful scrutiny. Instead, a dual role of cooperation and contention can be observed between the two sides. Keiko Hirata writes: "Previously, governmental officials viewed NGOs with suspicion and preferred to take direction from business groups. Now, state officials have begun to view Japanese NGOs in a more positive light and listen to their opinions".

For the study of political communication, the interrelationships of civic actors, enterprises and bureaucracy in Japan offer an exceptionally fertile ground. Recently established "Partnership" initiatives in fields of environmental protection and health care offer opportunities for in-depth case studies involving interviews and on-site observations of these hotbeds for new kinds of communication contexts and contents.

**Pekka Korhonen**, University of Jyväskylä. "Children For The Nation! Debate On The National Obligations Of Japanese Women."

Fertility, the economic role of women, and the national economic structure are related. The contemporary characteristics of the system were established with the rise of the so called postwar Japanese family system, as a support organization for the national economy. During the postwar years Japan built up a national system where both productivity and protection were tuned to a high level, enabling both its famous economic performance and the creation of a safe, reliable and fair society. Since 1990 the national economy has ceased to provide

enough protection. Economic globalization in terms of increased international competition has placed the traditional Japanese company system in jeopardy, with increased levels of unemployment, and the traditional male lifetime employment system no longer working. It has thus become increasingly dangerous for a female to specialize economically on the role of housewife and mother; both the danger of divorce and the danger of husband's unemployment have increased, while staying at home rapidly reduces her market value in the job market. It is much safer to postpone marriage or child birth and cling to any decent job that one has acquired. Thus the numbers of children born are dwindling, but in Japan there is a tendency for public discussion to move rapidly towards disciplinary arguments, instead of accepting the existence of a structural and systemic problem. The result is a steady movement towards an aging, affluent, conservative, postindustrial society consisting of a large number of single household individuals acting as consumers of culture and services. This is a new kind of state, but what does it then mean?

**Susanne Kreitz-Sandberg**, Linköping University. "Demographic Change and Educational Policies."

In this contribution I shall analyse if and how educational policies are answering to questions of demographic change. Changes in the birth quota have some immediate influence on the situation in schools and other educational institutions. With a decline in the birth rate school classes are decreasing, universities are entering into a new competition for students and generational relations within educational institutions are changing. Obviously, demographic change is one, but not the only factor triggering change. It is co-existing and interacting with other factors of influence like for example value change, internationalization and specific youth problems. In this presentation I shall summarise my argument from a handbook article "Educational policies: Framework and challenges" which will be published in 2008. (Florian Coulmas et al. (eds.) *The Demographic Challenge. A Handbook about Japan*. 2008 Leiden: Brill). Building on a short summary of the most recent educational reforms I will describe how schools are changing in or for a society with fewer children. The Japanese example might trigger a discussion on whether and how education policies can or should answer to societal changes. However, I rather would like to address the question how research on education can contribute to a theoretical understanding of contemporary Japanese society.

*Preliminary structure of the article:*

1. Introduction
2. Framework of educational policies
3. Actors in educational policies and their reflections on demographics
  - Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology
  - Teachers unions
  - Employer's organisations and economic institutions
4. Policies under change: Demographic change as factor of influence
  - Demographics as an argument for change
  - Policies as a tool to try initiating change
5. Challenges and potentials of demographic change for education

**Pia Moberg**, Centre for East and Southeast Asian Studies Lund University. "The training methods at Matsushita Institute of Government and Management analyzed from the perspective of Complex Leadership Theory."

As a part of my ongoing research project "Can Good Leaders be Made? A Comparative Study between Japan's Foremost Elite Leadership Institute and its International Counterparts" I will

analyze MIGM within the framework of Complex Leadership Theory (CLT) (Uhl-Bien, Marion and McKelvey 2007). The CLT is a model of leadership based in the academic field of complexity science, where the main ideas are that the future can not be predetermined, but is constantly emerging through creativity and learning; that leadership only can exist within a context with interdependent agents and that organizations to a great extent are self-organizing systems (Uhl-Bien, Marion and McKelvey 2007). In CLT the framework divides leadership roles into Adaptive leadership, Administrative leadership and Enabling leadership. Looking at the framework offered by the CLT, I believe that the pedagogical practices at MIGM will be highlighted from a new perspective.

**Richard Nakamura**, Växjö University.  
Participates without paper.

**Jakob Nobuoka**, Uppsala University. "Akihabara: User innovation, consumption and media mix in Japanese culture industries."

The consumption and export of material and immaterial commodities based upon Japanese popular culture is rapidly growing and continually finds its new fans all around the world. In this paper, I will suggest that some of the competitiveness of these unique cultural phenomena can be traced to the very dense and vivid area of Akihabara in Tokyo. Akihabara is a central place for the organization and production of Japanese cultural industries. The long history as an electronic retail district and a more recent influx of firms and shops focused on popular culture has created a strong place brand that continues to mark Akihabara as the capital of Japanese culture industries. The area function as a space where different consumers, specialist sub-cultures (otaku) and firms can interact. The dynamics are based as much on user-led innovation as on inter-firm linkages. The paper argues that research on innovation milieus must take account of the role of users and their relation to place.

**Martin Nordeborg**, University of Gothenburg. "Men and Nation in Contemporary Japanese Society."

Masculinity in Japan has often been synonymous with the rather negative image of a "coporate warrior", the salaryman. Recently, though, alternative forms of masculinity have begun to appear in media and popular culture. Even the government is backing policies supporting a "softer" man. In the light of these changes, this paper intends to investigate how schools deal with the matter. The focus is on literary education in junior high school. At a time when boys are on the verge of becoming men what forms of masculinity are they confronted with? Are these reflections of general educational policies?

Although perhaps more tolerant in Japan than in the West, popular culture (e.g. manga) is often condemned by teachers preaching the importance of "high" culture. Therefore three school books used in literary education (kokugo for 9th grade) in the Tokyo area will be analyzed alongside examples of popular culture, the increasingly popular e-texts, downloadable to your mobile phone. The latter may be seen as a form of contesting, approving or resisting the representations of masculinity offered during schooltime. These text analysis are part of the project "The Construction of Masculinity in Japanese Junior High Schools" and done as preparation for field work planned for the summer of 2008.

**Akihiro Ogawa**, Stockholm University. "Strategies of a Neoliberal State: Institutionalizing Civil Society in Japan."

This paper provides an ethnographic account of the institutionalization of “civil society” in Japan through Nonprofit Organizations (NPOs). These new groups have been populating the Japanese third sector following the enactment of the Law to Promote Specified Nonprofit Activities (popularly called the NPO Law) in 1998. Over the past decade, the number of NPOs has exceeded thirty thousand. Japanese NPOs were expected to provide increased accommodation and scope for enhancing democracy. However, I argue that the NPOs have been strategically co-opted by the state for a neoliberal social and political structure. With penetration of the NPO Law, I have primarily observed the mobilization of a type of subjectivity under the pretext of volunteerism. This subjectivity could be characterized as a Foucauldian coercive subjectivity—what I refer to as volunteer subjectivity. At present, the self-disciplined subjectivity to support voluntary NPO activities is systematically reproduced as a national project through Japanese education. I maintain that the standardized volunteer subjectivity embodied in citizens—or *shimin*—is creating docile subjects who match the ideology of the current neoliberal politics in Japan. These individuals are intended to be collaborative partners participating in public affairs for the betterment of society, as part of the devolution of social services from the state to the NPOs. Ironically, this move has strengthened government control of civil society by means of performance targets or cost cutting by streamlining public administration through collaboration with the NPOs. Furthermore, I document strong internal tensions coupled with frustration and resistance to such an artificially created state discourse on “civil society.”

**Dick Stegewerns**, University of Oslo. ”From Taisho Democracy to TV Democracy.”

**Marie Söderberg**, EIJIS/Stockholm University. ”Is there an Asian Model of Development Aid?”

Japan was the world's largest donor of Official Development Aid (ODA) during the 1990s. In Japan, ODA, was most often seen as being part of the wider concept of economic cooperation (*keizai kyōryoku*), that besides the aid part also includes other official flows (OOF) and private direct investment. Most of Japan's ODA has gone to Asian countries and a large share of it has been loan aid instead of grant and technical assistance. There has been a belief in Japan's own model of development, that is through industrialisation and export led rapid economic growth. To day quiet a few of the main recipients of Japanese ODA, such as China, South Korea and Thailand, has become donors themselves. As Japanese aid, the aid from these countries have some characteristics which are different from traditional western ODA. This article seeks an answer to the question if there is an Asian model of development aid.

**Lars-Martin Sorensen**, University of Copenhagen. ”The Bestseller Recipe: A Natural Explanation of the Global Success of Anime.”

It has become routine for articles on anime to set out marvelling at its tremendous global success. But while there is an abundance of texts around to detail the culture specific peculiarities of anime, universalistic explanations of the success are hard to come by, despite the repeatedly acknowledged fact that viewing anime has indeed become a universal phenomenon. This paper aims to sketch an explanation as to why viewers from vastly different cultural spheres, but equipped with the same biological hardware to make meaning with, enjoy watching films, which – at some levels of meaning and in some but not all cases – are not readily accessible to viewers who are uninformed on the Japanese backgrounds. Put simply, the intricacies of referential meaning in films, allusions and references to Japanese society, history, mythology, and religion for instance, presumably go largely speaking undetected by non-Japanese viewers. But this, apparently, does not diminish the marketability

of anime, or the fascination demonstrated by non-Japanese viewers. Therefore, there must be other aspects that lend themselves to universal fascination. Clever marketing hardly accounts adequately for the current boom in anime exports. The films themselves must be capable of catching and sustaining audience attention and interest. Otherwise anime would not be as cross-culturally contagious as it has proved to be over the last couple of decades. My proposition is that anime could be characterized as a 'minimally counterintuitive' film form.

**Izumi Tytler**, University of Oxford.  
Participates without paper.