

Feminism and political change in Japan and Western welfare states  
in comparative perspective ( 4 sessions)

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Teaching plan for the course:

Feminisms have negotiated for the rearrangement of the intimate and public spheres in modern welfare states. The second waves after 1965 proposed and stimulated new conceptualisations of the intimate and public spheres which deeply influenced the reflexive change of welfare states. They problematised motherhood/fatherhood, sexuality as well as the gender division of labour and of power in the national gender order. They went on to question and deconstruct the meaning of “women” and “gender”. They also raised the issues of gender, class and “race” and they engaged in global networking. Their discourses and their trajectories were different in diverse welfare states as Germany, Japan, Sweden and the US. Therefore a comparative perspective is very interesting understanding the varieties of feminisms and their results.

The course will look at the different women’s movements in these welfare states, especially their conceptualisations of the intimate and public spheres. It will then consider their impact on the rearrangements between these spheres.

1. Session: Feminisms and types of welfare states: Theoretical and historical issues
2. Session: Feminisms, sexualities and motherhood
3. Session: Feminisms and empowerment: Education, work and politics.
4. Session: The impact of feminisms in different types of welfare state.