Final Exam for POL1006, Fall 2009

Identifications: Answer only 2: 1/2 page each (25% each). Using readings and class lectures, explain the significance of 2 of the following:

1. Kokusanka
   Answer: Indigizenization, or literally National Productionalization. An important element of Japan’s technology policy, tends to prioritize national production over cost and, sometimes, even quality considerations. Samuels has identified four unwritten rules of Kokusanka: 1) domestic supply; 2) if domestic supply is unavailable, licensed production; 3) aim to only import equipment with technological significance beyond the project at hand; 4) import the first one and indigenize the second. Kokusanka does not mean autarchy, but the ability to import foreign technology and turn it into new and improved domestic technology through several incremental stages. Kokusanka has been based upon two other pillars: large scale importation of foreign technology (through licenses) and capital controls used to prevent foreign companies from buying Japanese companies or setting up their own subsidiaries, thereby preventing leakage of indigenized technology to foreign firms.

2. Toyotomi Hideyoshi
   Answer: A warlord of the late 1500s, Momoyama period, who finished Oda Nobunaga job of reuniting Japan for the first time after several hundred years of near civil war. Toyotomi, who was based in Osaka, was too ambitious to be satisfied as merely being the ruler of Japan. Desiring to conquer China as well, he asked the King of Korea for a “road to China.” Korea, a loyal tributary state of China’s rejected the request, and Toyotomi invaded Korea. Although at first successful, in time the Koreans, backed by Chinese aid, drove Toyotomi’s armies from the peninsula. This adventure decisively weakened Toyotomi and advantaged rival Tokugawa Ieyasu. After Toyotomi Hideyoshi died without producing a male heir the Tokugawa defeated Toyotomi’s armies near Kyoto (Sekigahara) in 1603, ushering in more than 250 years of Tokugawa rule over Japan (the Edo era), until the arrival of Admiral Perry’s “black ships” in the early 1850s.

3. Gross National Cool
   Answer: Gross National Cool: A term coined by Colin McGray, this is a form of soft power, refers to non-traditional ways that one nation can influence the values,
world view, desires, and consumption patterns of another. “Cool” in this case refers to the intrinsic attractiveness of a nation’s culture stemming from its underlying artistic vibrancy. A nation with a “cool” culture has more opportunities to get its messages across, and hence more opportunities to influence others. Gross National Cool thus refers to the sum of the nation’s attractive or “cool” culture, and is a takeoff on the economic term “Gross National Product.”

4. **Hosokawa Administration**
   
   Answer: The first non-Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) government since that party was established in 1955, the Hosokawa administration put reform on the Japanese political agenda, and enacted several specific landmark reforms. It enacted a complete overhaul of the Lower House electoral system, replacing the Single Non-Transferrable Vote (SNTV) or multi-member district system with a parallel single-seat constituency system and proportional representation system. The Hosokawa administration also enacted a new and significantly stricter law on political ethics and financial contributions, and deregulated the rice market, replacing an outright ban on rice imports with a high tariff. Finally, Hosokawa became the first Japanese prime minister to apologize to Asian nations for wartime Japanese “aggression,” a term previous Japanese leaders had avoided using. However, this administration lasted only ten months as Hosokawa suddenly resigned on the grounds of an impending personal financial scandal, and as the Japan Socialist Party was leaving the coalition, paving the way for the LDP to come back to power two months later in coalition with the Socialists, after the two month minority Hata government. After the Hosokawa administration subsequent LDP cabinets could not go back to the pre-Hosokawa LDP stance that Japan did not need reform because its political-economic system was the best in the world.

**Essay Questions:**  
Answer only 1: (worth 50%). Answer based upon readings and class lectures.

1. Compare and contrast the views of Katz and Samuels regarding Japan’s model of economic development. What are the points of agreement and disagreement? Assess which view is more convincing.

   Answer: Samuels sees Japan’s model as essentially an unqualified success while Katz views this model as only successful during the “catch-up” phase of development. Once an economy reaches the techno-economic frontier, this “catch-up” model of state
led development, or the Capitalist Development State, as Chalmers Johnson famously conceptualized it, no longer works. At that point the state must abandon this model in favour of free-market economic policies in Katz’s view. Samuels, by contrast, believes that Japan’s model has important lessons even for a fully developed economy and technological leader such as the US. Samuels, in short, thinks the US (and by implication other advanced economies) should emulate some of Japan’s policies for promoting national technological competitiveness.

2. Describe and assess alternative explanations for the almost unbroken dominance of LDP rule over the past 54 years in light of the results of the August 2009 lower house election

Answer: According to one domestic culturalist argument (similar to Nihonjinron), the long-term LDP rule resulted from the lack of significant social cleavages and natural prevalence of social harmony in Japanese society. A related culturalist view holds that Japanese dislike conflict and respect authority, and hence are naturally inclined to vote for the party in power. A culturally based risk avoidance explanation holds that Japanese supported the LDP for so long because they distrusted opposition parties as unknown and therefore risky, and therefore consistently preferred LDP rule even when it proved to be mediocre. A culturalist bandwagoning explanation holds that Japanese domestic interest groups tend to gravitate toward the ruling party to promote their interests, rather than cultivate opposition parties in the hopes that they will give them a better deal if they take power. Many of these explanations are associated with the view that Japan is a “pyseudo” as opposed to a real democracy. A final explanation holds that the nature of Japan’s post-war electoral system inhibited opposition parties from effectively challenging the LDP for control of the government. The SNTV or multi-seat electoral system meant that for a party to have a chance at gaining a majority or even a near majority, it needed to run two or more candidates in most districts as the LDP did. But since voters only had one vote to case and had to vote for candidates rather than parties, parties without large enough voter bases risked candidate fratricide. For example, a party that ran two candidates in a district that had enough supporters two elect one could end up winning no seats as supporters’ votes would be spread too thinly among the two candidates. This, and the power that incumbent politicians tended to have in their own districts, encouraged Socialist incumbents to resist running new candidates in their districts. Rather than expand their base to appeal to average voters the Socialists, the main opposition party,
found it easier to remain ideologically pure/rigid while increasing the prospects for their incumbents winning re-election. At the same time, this electoral system, by forcing the LDP to run multiple candidates in most districts encouraged the rise of factionalism in the party as rival factions arose to support rival LDP candidates in the districts. The leaders of rival factions competed for power in the LDP, and hence the premiership, with the factions tending to polarize around main and anti-mainstream groups. Thus, the LDP often behaved more like a collection of factions, or at least like two parties rather than like a unified single party. Although factions usually did not take consistent policy positions, changes in the factions composing the main and anti-mainstream groups, and hence the factional composition of the government often produced changes in policy comparable to inter-party changes in government in other countries. This system also allowed the LDP to play ruling and opposition party roles simultaneously, since voters often had the chance to vote for anti-mainstream faction LDP candidates in preference to their mainstream rivals, thereby effectively voting against the incumbent LDP while still nonetheless voting for the LDP. When the Hosokawa government came to power in 1993 and replaced the SNVT electoral system with a parallel single-seat district and proportional representation system, this changed the incentives, and hence their behaviour and ultimately the composition of the party system. Because LDP candidates no longer competed against each other, the influence of factions declined and the party became more centralized. The 300 single seat districts hurt the narrowly ideological parties of the left, especially the Socialists and to a less extent the Communists, while encouraging the rise of a second major party that would compete with the LDP for the majority of voters closer to the center. However, the 200 proportional representation seats (later reduced to 180), tended to help the smaller parties, including the now small Socialists, survive and tended to slow down the rise of a second major party. After the new electoral system was launched in 1996, a second major party gradually emerged. Although the organizational failure of Shinshinto, or the New Frontier Party, the first party to try to match the LDP, slowed down the process, the Democratic Party of Japan, or DPJ, continually strengthened from election to election, suffering only one major set-back in 2005 at the hands of a popular LDP prime minister who ran against his own party. In 2007 the DPJ won control of the upper house along with several small opposition parties, and won a huge majority in the lower house election held in August of this year. Overall, these results suggest that the electoral system was the most influential factor preserving LDP rule for nearly 40 years under the old electoral
system. At the same time, the new electoral system, due to the mixed incentives it provided politicians, was slow (5 elections) in producing a true two party system with a change in power. This result tends to cast doubt on the culturalist explanations of long LDP rule, although the interest group explanation emerges in somewhat better shape, since many of the LDP’s interest group supporters have been deserting the party and trying to migrate to the DPJ since the later took power in September of this year.