

In April 2011, the Social Science Research Council and New York University Press inaugurated the [Possible Futures Series](#) with three volumes examining the world economy after the global financial crisis. The fifth volume in this series, *Japan: The Precarious Years Ahead*, was inspired by the unprecedented natural and man-made disasters in March 2011. Realizing that the triple disaster of March 2011 warranted a multidisciplinary look into Japan's future, the SSRC convened seventeen social scientists in Kanagawa, Japan in July of 2012 to look beyond the immediate recovery process Japan's years ahead and examine political leadership, nuclear policy, demography, gender issues, science and technology, rivalry with China, and security policy. This volume, to be published by NYU Press, is a compilation of the essays resulting from that meeting.

On January 31, 2014, the SSRC and the University of Southern California co-sponsored a public symposium "Possible Futures for Japan" to publicize the forthcoming book and stimulate discussion of the issues facing Japan. The event featured four of the volume's authors, co-authors Saori Katada (University of Southern California) and Gene Park (Loyola Marymount University), William Simbieda (California Polytechnic State University), and Lawrence Repeta (Meiji University), who spoke on the following topics: finance and the economy, preparing for future disasters (earthquakes), and revision of the constitution. The presentations and following discussions argued that in the near future Japan is likely to encounter a series of challenges: controlling the fiscal debt while simultaneously pursuing Abenomics to stimulate growth, restructuring disaster management systems, maintaining democratic principles while revising the constitution, finding ways to deal with the deteriorating job and life prospects for youth, and seeking to establish good relations with neighboring countries.

See more information [here](#).

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