



CIEE Kyoto, Japan

Course Name:	Analysis of Japanese Popular Culture
Course Number:	EAST 3003 KYJA
Program offering course:	Ancient and Modern Japan
Language of Instruction:	English
US Semester Credits:	3
Contact Hours:	45
Term:	Spring 2020

Course Description

This course will provide students with the conceptual tools, which will allow for a careful analysis of popular culture in Japanese society. Students will be provided with opportunities to engage with the imagination, emotions, aesthetics, and technologies within the various facets of Japanese popular culture, all of which can be found in the various forms of media such as music, film, literature, and fashion. Students will also have the opportunity to reflect and analyze their experiences of Japanese popular culture based on dialogic, reflective, and cooperative learning.

Learning Objectives

By completing this course students will:

- Understand different perspectives on contemporary Japanese popular music and culture.
- Analyze cultural phenomena through a range of theoretical lenses.
- Critique and deconstruct terms, concepts, and techniques employed in creating connections between cultural products and audiences.
- Apply a variety of analytical approaches to primary sources, developing original research outputs.

Course Prerequisites

Previous completion of an introductory course related to Japanese popular culture or popular culture studies is recommended.

Methods of Instruction

This course will incorporate in-class lectures, discussions, readings, videos, and field research.

Assessment and Final Grade

- Class Participation 20%
- Online Journal 20%
- Midterm Paper 20 %
- Project Presentation 20%
- Final Exam 20%

Course Requirements

Class Participation

You are expected to follow CIEE's attendance and participation policies as outlined in the CIEE Academic Manual for students.



Online Journal

You will be expected to post a short journal entry of 125 to 150 words to the online discussion group by 11:59pm about the readings assigned that day. You must also respond to at least two posts made by two different classmates to generate discussion online. These posts and responses will aid in the in-class discussion to be held the following day.

Midterm Paper

You will write a scholarly essay of 1500 to 2000 words in which you develop a critical argument about a topic related to the course, subject to instructor approval. Your paper must demonstrate sufficient understanding of key concepts explored in class, and must follow conventions of academic writing.

Project Presentation

You will perform an in-class presentation on a topic of your choosing, which relates to materials of the course. Depending on class enrollment you will conduct your research either individually or as a group. You must submit a proposal for a presentation that would be no longer than 15 minutes. Have your topic approved by the instructor by Week 6. The proposal should be 750 to 1000 words and include (1) Topic you will present on; (2) How it is relevant to the course; (3) The critical viewpoints that you hope to discover through research and share with the class; and (4) An outline of how your presentation will be structured. Your Proposal is 25% of the Project Presentation grade.

Depending on the nature of their project, students may be required to use out-of-class time to make field visits, or to explore library and other resources. Students will be advised on their project proposal in terms of how to organize such out-of-class work.

Final Exam

You will write short essays in answer to three questions prompted by the instructor. Each answer must be 500 to 600 words (total word count of 1500 to 1800 words). Your answers must demonstrate sufficient understanding of key concepts explored in class and must follow conventions of academic writing.

Weekly Schedule

NOTE: the following schedule and assignments are subject to change

Week 1:

Day 1.1.

Introduction

- Course overview
- No readings

Day 1.2.

Unpacking “Japanese” “popular” “culture”

Popular culture and the fame of Japan

- Shirana Masakazu and Ikeda Teiichi. 2017. “Japan is Great.” *The Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus* 15(3): 1-8.
- Homework due 11:59pm: Online Journal

Day 1.3.



Unpacking “Japanese” “popular” “culture” (cont.)

How “Japanese” is Japanese popular culture?

- Gabriella Lukacs. 2010. “Iron Chef Around the World: Japanese Food Television, Soft Power, and Cultural Globalization.” *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 13(4): 409-426.
- Homework due 11:59pm: Online Journal

Week 2:

Day 2.1.

Popular Music and Authenticity

Nostalgia, intimacy, authenticity in enka.

- Christine R. Yano. 2005. “Covering Disclosures: Practices of Intimacy, Hierarchy, and Authenticity in a Japanese Popular Music Genre.” *Popular Music and Society* 28(2): 193-205.
- Homework due 11:59pm: Online Journal

Day 2.2.

Popular Music and Authenticity (cont.)

Music, language, and race: how “Japanese” is enka?

- Neriko Musha Doerr and Yuri Kumagai. 2014. “Race in Conflict With Heritage: ‘Black’ Heritage Language Speaker of Japanese.” *International Multilingual Research Journal* 8(2): 87-103.
- Homework due 11:59pm: Online Journal

Day 2.3.

Popular Music and Authenticity (cont.)

Rock and colonialism in Okinawa

- James E. Roberson. 2011. “‘Doin’ Our Thing’: Identity and Colonial Modernity in Okinawan Rock Music.” *Popular Music and Society* 34(5): 593-620.
- Homework due 11:59pm: Online Journal

Week 3:

Day 3.1.

Participation and the practice of “media mix”

Fan activity and youth culture.

- Mizuko Ito. 2010. “Mobilizing the Imagination in Everyday Play: the Case of Japanese Media Mixes.” In: Stefan Sonvilla-Weiss, ed., *Mashup Cultures*. Pp. 79-97. Wien: Springer-Verlag.
- Homework due 11:59pm: Online Journal

Day 3.2.

Convergence culture

Popular culture from bottom up.

- Henry Jenkins. 2006. “Worshipping at the Alter of Convergence.” In: *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*. New York: NYU Press. Pp. 1-24.
- Homework due 11:59pm: Online Journal

Day 3.3.

“Media mix” and marketing discourses.



Popular culture through institutional process.

- Marc Steinberg. 2012. "Media Mixes, Media Transformations." In: *Anime's Media Mix: Franchising Toys and Characters in Japan*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. Pp. 135-169.
- Homework due 11:59pm: Online Journal

Week 4:

Day 4.1.

Idol Culture, 1

Overview of Japanese idol culture.

- Patrick W. Galbraith and Jason G. Karlin. 2012. "Introduction: The Mirror of Idols and Celebrity." In: P. Galbraith and J. Karlin eds., *Idols and Celebrity in Japanese Media Culture*. London: Palgrave MacMillan. Pp. 1-34.
- Homework due 11:59pm: Online Journal

Day 4.2.

Idol Culture, 1 (cont.)

Institutional structures in Japanese idol culture.

- W. David Marx. 2012. "The *Jimusho* System: Understanding the Production Logic of the Japanese Entertainment Industry." In: P. Galbraith and J. Karlin eds., *Idols and Celebrity in Japanese Media Culture*. London: Palgrave MacMillan. Pp. 35-55.
- Homework due 11:59pm: Online Journal

Day 4.3.

Idol Culture, 1 (cont.)

Idols, television and advertising.

- Jason G. Karlin. 2012. "Through a Looking Glass Darkly: Television Advertising, Idols, and the Making of Fan Audiences." In: P. Galbraith and J. Karlin eds., *Idols and Celebrity in Japanese Media Culture*. London: Palgrave MacMillan. Pp. 72-93.
- Homework due 11:59pm: Online Journal

Week 5:

Day 5.1.

Idol Culture, 2

Idols, fandom, and fantasy.

- Kazumi Nagaike. 2012. "Johnny's Idols as Icons: Female Desires to Fantasize and Consume Male Idol Images ." In: P. Galbraith and J. Karlin eds., *Idols and Celebrity in Japanese Media Culture*. London: Palgrave MacMillan. Pp. 97-112.
- Homework due 11:59pm: Online Journal

Day 5.2.

Idol Culture, 2 (cont.)

Idols as mediators of society.



- Patrick W. Galbraith. 2012. "Idols: The Image of Desire in Japanese Consumer Capitalism." In: P. Galbraith and J. Karlin eds., *Idols and Celebrity in Japanese Media Culture*. London: Palgrave MacMillan. Pp. 185-208.
- Homework due 11:59pm: Online Journal

Day 5.3.

Idol Culture, 2 (cont.)

Idol fans and fan idols. Fandom as labor.

- Patrick W. Galbraith. 2016. "The Labor of Love: On the Convergence of Fan and Corporate Interests in Contemporary Idol Culture in Japan." In: P. Galbraith and J. Karlin eds., *Media Convergence in Japan*. Kinema Club. Pp. 232-264.
- Homework due 11:59pm: Online Journal

Week 6:

Day 6.1.

Globalization, 1

Cultural globalization

- John Tomlinson. 1999. "Globalization and Culture." In: *Globalization and Culture*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Pp. 1-31.
- PROJECT PROPOSAL Due
- Homework due 11:59pm: Online Journal

Day 6.2.

Globalization, 1 (cont.)

In-Class Screening and Discussion: *Global Metal* (S. McFadyen and S. Dunn, dir., 2007)

- No Readings

Day 6.3.

Globalization, 1 (cont.)

Metal and Cuteness.

- Lorraine Plourde. 2016. "Babymetal and the ambivalence of cuteness." *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 21(3): 1-15.
- Homework due 11:59pm: Online Journal

Week 7:

Day 7.1.

Globalization, 2

Global circulation of Japanese fashion: Gothic/Lolita

- Masafumi Monden. 2008. "Transcultural Flow of Demure Aesthetics: Examining Cultural Globalisation Through Gothic & Lolita Fashion." In: M. Stavros, ed., *New Voices Volume 2*. Sydney: The Japan Foundation. Pp. 21-40.
- Homework due 11:59pm: Online Journal

Day 7.2.

Globalization, 2 (cont.)

Politics of cultural appropriation



- Dorinne Kondo. 1997. "Orientalizing: Fashioning Japan." In: *About Face: Performing Race in Fashion and Theater*. New York: Routledge.
- Homework due 11:59pm: Online Journal

Day 7.3.

Globalization, 2 (cont.)

Appropriating cultural appropriation

- Ann Marie Leshkovich and Carla Jones. 2003. "What Happens When Asian Chic Becomes Chic in Asia"? *Fashion Theory* 7(3/4): 281–300.
- MIDTERM PAPER Due
- Homework due 11:59pm: Online Journal

Week 8:

Day 8.1.

Otaku Culture

The changing images of otaku.

- Patrick W. Galbraith. 2010. "Akihabara: Conditioning a Public 'Otaku' Image" *Mechademia* 5: 210-230.
- Homework due 11:59pm: Online Journal

Day 8.2.

Otaku Culture (cont.)

- In-class screening and discussion: *Otaku no Video* (T. Mori, dir., 1991)
- No readings

Day 8.3.

Otaku Culture (cont.)

Anonymity and virtual communication.

- Shunsuke Nozawa. 2012. "The Gross Face and Virtual Fame: Semiotic Mediation in Japanese Virtual Communication." *First Monday* 17(3): n.pag.
- Homework due 11:59pm: Online Journal

Week 9:

Day 9.1.

Consumption and Popular Culture

Theory of "narrative consumption."

- Eiji Otsuka. 2010. "World and Variation: The Reproduction and Consumption of Narrative." Translated by Marc Steinberg. *Mechademia* 5(1): 99-116.
- Homework due 11:59pm: Online Journal

Day 9.2.

Platforms

"Media mix" revisited.



- Marc Steinberg. n.d. "The Second Kadokawa Media Mix Era: The Rise of the Game Master and the Platform Producer." (A revised version of: Chapter 5, *Anime's Media Mix: Franchising Toys and Characters in Japan*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.)
- Homework due 11:59pm: Online Journal

Day 9.3.

Platforms (cont.)

Mobile platforms. i-mode and the history of the idea of 'platform.'

- Marc Steinberg 2017. 2017. "A Genesis of the Platform Concept: i-mode and Platform Theory in Japan." *Asiascape: Digital Asia* 4: 184-208.
- Homework due 11:59pm: Online Journal

Week 10:

Day 10.1.

Technologies of Reading/ Seeing

Texts and events of contact in video streaming sites.

- Jinying Li. 2017. "The Interface Affect of a Contact Zone: Danmaku on Video-Streaming Platforms." *Asiascape: Digital Asia* 4(3): 233-256.
- Homework due 11:59pm: Online Journal

Day 10.2.

Popular Literature

Patterns of textuality in keitai shosetsu (the cellphone novel).

- Jun Mizukawa. 2016. Reading 'On the Go': an Inquiry into the Tempos and Temporalities of the Cellphone Novel. *Japanese Studies* 36(1): 61-82.
- Homework due 11:59pm: Online Journal

Day 10.3.

Popular Photography

Purikura ('print club') and affective labor.

- Mette Sandbye. 2018. "Selfies and Purikura as Affective, Aesthetic Labor." In: J. Eckel, J. Ruchatz, S. Wirth, eds., *Exploring the Selfie: Historical, Theoretical, and Analytical Approaches to Digital Self-Photography*. London: Palgrave Macmillan. Pp. 305-326.
- Homework due 11:59pm: Online Journal

Week 11:

Day 11.1.

Technologies of Listening

The Walkman effect. Individualism, consumption, and music.

- Shuhei Hosokawa 1984. "The Walkman Effect." *Popular Music* 4: 165-180
- Homework due 11:59pm: Online Journal

Day 11.2.

Technologies of Listening (cont.)

Muzak as a platform of affect management. Sounds and social relations.



- Lorraine Plourde. 2017. "Sonic Air-Conditioning: Muzak as Affect Management for Office Workers in Japan." *The Senses and Society* 12(1): 18-34.
- Homework due 11:59pm: Online Journal

Day 11.3.

Technologies of Listening (cont.)

Distant intimacy through sounds.

- Joceline Andersen. 2015. "Now You've Got the Shiveries: Affect, Intimacy, and the ASMR Whisper Community." *Television & New Media* 16(8): 683-700.
- Homework due 11:59pm: Online Journal

Week 12:

Day 12.1.

Technologies of Singing

The history of karaoke.

- "The Genesis of Karaoke: How the Combination of Technology and Music Evolved. In: T. Mitsui and S. Hosokawa eds., *Karaoke Around the World*. London: Routledge. 29-41.
- Homework due 11:59pm: Online Journal

Day 12.2.

Technologies of Singing (cont.)

Karaoke and the 'space' of popular music.

- Shuhei Hosokawa. 1998. "The Effects of Karaoke on Music in Japan." In: T. Mitsui and S. Hosokawa eds., *Karaoke Around the World*. London: Routledge. Pp. 43-52.
- Homework due 11:59pm: Online Journal

Day 12.3.

Technologies of Singing (cont.)

- FIELD TRIP: visit karaoke establishment(s)
- No readings

Week 13:

Day 13. 1.

Voice, Fame, and Collaborative Creativity

Virtual idols and peer production.

- Alex Leavitt, Tara Knight, and Alex Yoshiba. 2016. "Producing Hatsune Miku: Concerts, Commercialization, and the Politics of Peer Production." In: P. Galbraith and J. Karlin eds., *Media Convergence in Japan*. Kinema Club. Pp. 200-229.
- Homework due 11:59pm: Online Journal

Day 13. 2.

Vocaloids and Participatory Culture

The Kagerou Project.



- Marc Steinberg. 2017. "Converging Contents and Platforms: Niconico Video and Japan's Media Mix Ecology." In J. Neves and B. Sarkar, eds., *Asian Video Cultures*. Durham: Duke University Press. Pp. 91-113.
- Homework due 11:59pm: Online Journal

Day 13.3.

Culture of Voice Acting

Voice acting as an interface between fans and characters.

- Shunsuke Nozawa. 2016. "Ensoulement and Effacement in Japanese Voice Acting." In: P. Galbraith and J. Karlin eds., *Media Convergence in Japan*. Kinema Club. Pp. 169-199.
- Homework due 11:59pm: Online Journal

Week 14:

Day 14.1.

Popular Protest Through Music

Music performance in anti-nuclear protest.

- Noriko Manabe. 2013. "Music in Japanese Antinuclear Demonstrations: The Evolution of a Contentious Performance Model." *The Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus* 11(42): n. pag.
- Homework due 11:59pm: Online Journal

Day 14.2.

Project Presentations

Students will present their research projects in class.

- No Readings

Day 14.3.

Project Presentations (cont.)

Students will present their research projects in class.

- No Readings

Week 15:

Day 15.1.

Popular Protest Through Music (cont.)

The folk song movement in the 1960s.

- Dorsey, James. 2013. "Breaking Records: Media, Censorship, and the Folk Song Movement of Japan's 1960s." In: J. A. Lent and L. Fitzsimmons, eds., *Asian Popular Culture: New, Hybrid, and Alternate Media*. Lanham: Lexington Books. Pp. 79-107.
- Homework due 11:59pm: Online Journal

Day 15.2.

Final Exam Workshop

Final exam questions will be distributed and discussed in class.

- No Readings

Day 15.3.



FINAL EXAM

Course Materials

- Patrick W. Galbraith and Jason G. Karlin, eds. 2016. *Media Convergence in Japan*. Kinema Club.
- Jason G. Karlin and Patrick W. Galbraith, eds. 2012. *Idols and Celebrity in Japanese Media Culture*. London: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Joshua Neves and Bhaskar Sarkar eds. 2017. *Asian Video Cultures: In the Penumbra of the Global*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Toru Mitsui and Shuhei Hosokawa, eds. 1998. *Karaoke Around the World: Global Technology, Local Singing*. London: Routledge.
- Christine Yano. 2002. *Tears of Longing: Nostalgia and the Nation in Japanese Popular Song*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Ian Condry 2006. *Hip-Hop Japan: Rap and the Paths of Cultural Globalization*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Marc Steinberg. 2012. *Anime's Media Mix: Franchising Toys and Characters in Japan*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- *Global Metal*. 2007. Dir. Scot McFadyen and Sam Dunn. Seville Pictures. DVD.
- *Otaku no Video*. 1991. Dir. Mori Takeshi. Gainax. DVD.
- *Perfect Blue*. 1997. Dir. Kon Satoshi. Rex Entertainment. DVD.