Rethinking Japan: Introduction to Modern Japanese Society and Culture

Module Code  Credits/Level  Module Type  Previous Name
LNLN023S4  30/4  Academic  N/A
ARMC001S5  30/5

Teaching Pattern
22 one-and-a-half hour sessions

Synopsis
This module aims to provide you with a critical understanding of crucial aspects in Japan's modern cultural and social history. It will give you an opportunity to learn some of the main ways to explore Japanese history, culture, and especially its cultural products. You will be introduced to key texts (historical, literary, visual, cinematic, and theoretical) which represent and chart two central developments: Japan's emergence as a modern, 'westernized', powerful, and imperialistic nation-state (early twentieth century); and Japan's post-war transformation into a high-tech consumer society (1945- present).

We will consider notions of 'Japaneseness' and the changing discourses on national and cultural identity, with which Japan sought to position itself vis-à-vis the west and Asia; and in turn, we will scrutinise western images of Japan and the 'Far East'. Some of the topics we will look at include Japan as a nation and community, identity in modern Japan, Japan in Asia, Western images of Japan, multi-cultural Japan, and gender in Japan.

Entrance Requirements
N/A

Indicative Content
- Inventing the nation: Meiji Japan and modernisation
- The Imperial Rescript on Education and the Meiji Constitution
- Building an Empire
- Total War and Total Defeat
- Occupation: demilitarisation and democracy?
- Re-building Japan: Post-war economic growth
- High Speed Change: Social and political protest
- Japan in the world: Post-war to Post-bubble
- The politics of Japaneseness
- Orientalism and Occidentalism
- Post colonialism
- Globalization and Japan
- Gender, sexuality and family in contemporary Japan
- Popular Music in Japan: The problem of authenticity
- Media production and consumption in Japan: issues of power, freedom and control
- Media and culture in Zero Generation

Coursework/Assessment

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<th>Component</th>
<th>Basic Requirements</th>
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Popular Culture in Japan and East Asia

Module Code: ARMC145S5  Credits/Level: 30/5  Module Type: Academic  Previous Name: N/A

Teaching Pattern:
11 three-hour sessions

Synopsis:
Popular Culture in Japan and East Asia examines the development and academic significance of various forms of Japanese popular culture from multidisciplinary perspectives and in East Asian contexts, including China, Korea, Hong Kong and Taiwan.

In this topical and theoretically grounded module, students explore those forms of Japanese and East Asian popular culture that have drawn worldwide scholarly attention, including manga, animation, fashion, video games and pop music.

Entrance Requirements:
Rethinking Japan

Indicative Content:
- Theory of Japanese Popular Culture
- Creative Industries and Nation Branding
- Cultural Consumption: Kawaii as ideology?
- Idols and Celebrity
- Half, Gaijin and the politics of Japaneseness
- East Asian Pop Culture
- Korean Wave and East Asian Nationalism
- Masculinity in Japanese Pop Culture
- Representation of Women in Japanese Pop Culture
- Precariat in Japan

Coursework/Assessment:

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Theorising Japanese Cinema

Module Code:  ARMCO093S5
Credits/Level:  30/5
Module Type:  Academic
Previous Name:  Japanese Cinema History

Synopsis
The module explores key critical approaches to the study of Japanese cinema. It introduces you to some of the key theoretical frameworks such as national and transnational cinemas, post-colonial thought, gender, spectatorship and concepts such as genre, new wave, avant-garde, and alterity/otherness. In your encounter with film from across the twentieth- and twenty-first centuries, you’ll consider styles and subject matter, film genres and movements, and studios and directors, in their cultural, social, political, technological and industrial contexts. Films selected for this module are sub-titled in English. There is no Japanese language requirement for this course.

Entrance Requirements
Introduction to Cinema or Rethinking Japan

Indicative Content
- Introduction to film style and national cinema
- Talking silent
- Cinema and modernity: the studio system, genre and film style
- National and transnational cinema: mediating defeat and US occupation policy on cinema
- The post-studio era and the Japanese New Wave
- Cinema genre, avant-garde filmmaking
- Japanese anime and cultural policy
- J-horror and global cinema
- Women’s filmmaking in Japan: representations of gender and sexuality
- Japanese cinema and representing others
- Cinema, memory and trauma

Coursework/Assessment

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Advanced Seminar in Japanese Culture and Society

Module Code | Credits/Level | Module Type | Previous Name
ARMC203S6 | 30/6 | Academic | N/A

Teaching Pattern
11 three-hour sessions

Synopsis
This module aims to develop understanding of various current issues in Japanese culture and society from interdisciplinary and theoretical perspectives. Topics include politics, international relations, economy, gender/sexuality, religion, and education. Students will also develop proficiency in the Japanese language in an academic context through the study of various key issues in contemporary Japan. Course materials are taken not only from scholarly writings in English but also from a variety of up-to-date Japanese language media so that you will be able to engage with “real” materials.

Entrance Requirements
Rethinking Japan and Japanese 3

Indicative Content
- Being a Foreigner in Japan
- Unfinished History and the Rise of Nationalism
- Japan—USA Relationship
- Left Wing—The Dankai Generation Wanting to Do Sōkatsu?
- “Gap-Widening Society” and Neoliberalism
- School Education
- Religion
- Gender and sexuality
- Ontology of Yankees
- Fukushima—what is “Nippon”? What is Kizuna?

Coursework/Assessment

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Manga and Anime

Module Code: ARMC187S6
Credits/Level: 30/6
Module Type: Academic
Previous Name: Manga and Animation

Teaching Pattern:
11 three-hour sessions

Synopsis:
Manga and Anime have been extremely popular media in Japan. This module will look at a wide spectrum of social, political, economic, and cultural issues through these media. The module also explores cultural production of these media and looks at how they have been represented in the Japanese as well as the global discourse. It further explores medium-specific aesthetics. The module aims to build on the skills and knowledge students will have gained through level 4 and 5 modules, and to further develop their critical and analytical thinking.

Entrance Requirements:
Rethinking Japan and Japanese 5

Indicative Content:
- History of Manga and Anime
- Japanese Animation and Japanese Culture
- Animating the City: Tōkyō Capital of Postmodernity (?)
- War Memory
- Bad Boys in Japan
- Representation of Otaku, Hikikomori and the Lost Decade
- The Field of Production
- The Media Mix: Transmediality and Japanese Entertainment
- Race in Anime
- Gender and Sexuality in Girls’ Manga

Coursework/Assessment

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Content modules available in 2015/6 (additional modules with cross-cultural content, available for all languages) can be viewed on this link:
http://www.bbk.ac.uk/languages/current-students/undergradstudy/CultureModules2015-6.pdf