PAAS 181
Aspects of Japanese Civilisation

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Office hours: Mondays and Thursdays, 1:30-2:30 PM

Objectives
This course will introduce the history and culture of modern Japan to students with little or no prior knowledge of that country. It will cover the period from the Meiji Restoration of 1868 (the start of so-called Modern Japan) to the present day. This is a huge time-period, and so of course the materials presented in class will by no means exhaust the possibilities of further study. Class topics will be selective and introductory, and will concentrate on cultural reflections of historical developments—we will explore the politics, cinema, and literature of a range of eras, with particular emphasis on the developments from one age to the next. Regular attendance in class and completion of all required readings (which will be assigned in class) before they are discussed are politely but strongly recommended. Don’t like to read or to pay attention? Don’t take this class!

In accordance with the policies of the Department of Pacific and Asian Studies, students who miss more than 10% of classes (three classes) will not be permitted to write the final exam.

Many of the issues we will discuss have the potential to be controversial. I am committed to creating an equitable, inclusive, and safe educational space. Intolerant or abusive comments or behaviour will be dealt with appropriately.

Tentative Schedule
Monday, January 4: Introduction to the class
  • Course overview, assignments, goals.

Thursday, January 7: Catching up with Japan’s history—Tokugawa to Meiji: social change
  • Replacing feudalism, creating a nation: State shinto, emperor’s divinity, creation of kokutai, Russo-Japanese War, China, Korea

Monday, January 11: Industrialisation and its legacies
  • Environmental pollution

Thursday, January 14: Urbanisation: Formation of groups/frames, Japanese social structure
  • In-groups, out-groups, and everything else

Monday, January 18: Colonialism, Imperialism, Race
  • The Kanto Earthquake and scapegoating of Korea
  • Contemporary issues regarding race/immigration
Thursday, January 21: Colonialism, Imperialism, Race, 2
• War and its aftermath; Japanese Perceptions of the Pacific War
• Present-day textbook controversy and the Comfort Women; Hotaru no haka
• Assignment One: Annotated Bibliography due

Monday, January 25: Reactions to change—Literature of Meiji/Taisho eras
• language, subject matter, characters: the “I” novel, the Socialists
• politics and censorship

Thursday, January 28: Literature, Part 2: Contemporary fiction
• Murakami Haruki, Yoshimoto Banana, others

Monday, February 1: Theatre in transition, I: present-day akogare—‘yearning’ for the modern

Thursday, February 4: Theatre in transition, II: present-day akogare—‘yearning’ for the modern
• Screening of Japan Live Performance

Monday, February 8: Midterm Exam, in-class, full session

Thursday, February 11: Internationalisation/Localisation
• Japan and the world, always a one way street
• English in Japan: what on earth does it mean?

Monday, February 15: Reading Break

Thursday, February 18: Reading Break

Monday, February 22: Alienation and Consumerism, 1
• The family, karōshi, women’s issues
• Assignment Two: Midterm Essay due

Thursday, February 25: Alienation and Consumerism, 2: Religion and Aum shinrikyo

Monday, March 1: Japanese cinema: an overview, 1: Humanism, Modernism, Postmodernism

Thursday, March 4: Japanese cinema: an overview, 2: Men, Women, Feminism, and a Resistance to Change

Monday, March 8: Technology and the Popular Imagination
• Dystopia, apocalypse, incredible convenience

Thursday, March 11: Manga/Anime: apocalypse and fashion
• Why are manga characters so frighteningly cute?
• Anime: transformation, liberation of the inner individual

Monday, March 15: Watching manga
• Manga Mad

Thursday, March 18: Re-invention of the Self: Cosplay and Fantasy
• Harajuku and the self on display
• Assignment Three: Term Essay Outlines due

Monday, March 22: Reflections of the Contemporary: critique of Japan in film
• The Family Game, Morita Yoshimitsu (Part 1)

Thursday, March 25: Reflections of the Contemporary: critique of Japan in film
• The Family Game, Morita Yoshimitsu (Part 2)

Monday, March 29: Wrapping up the modern, representing the postmodern
• Urban cosmopolitanism, constant change and transforming constants
• Term Essays Due

Thursday, April 1: Final Exam, in class, full session
Monday, April 2: Easter Monday, class cancelled

Thursday, April 8: Final day

Required Texts

See the attached list of readings

Grading

Attendance is mandatory. Students who miss more than 10% of classes may not be permitted to write the final exam.

Midterm Exam: 15%
Final Exam: 15%
Bibliography: 10%
Midterm Essay: 20%
Term Essay Outline: 10%
Final Essay: 30%

Mark Ranges

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Students who do not complete all course assignments may receive an N. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that all course requirements are complete.
Department of Pacific and Asian Studies

Plagiarism and Cheating

The Department of Pacific and Asian Studies upholds and enforces the University's policies on plagiarism and cheating. These policies are described on pp. 22-23 of the current University Calendar. All students are advised to read this section.

Practices that are not acceptable include:

- Persuading or paying someone else to write your assignments, or otherwise presenting someone else's work as your own;
- Downloading essays or articles from the Internet, or copying passages from books or journals, and presenting them as your own work;
- Copying from another student or sharing information in examinations or tests;
- Bringing notes or other materials into an examination or test, except as authorised by the examiner or instructor.

In addition, the following kinds of behaviour, unless specifically authorised by the instructor, are unacceptable in an examination: talking or communicating by computer or other electronic device with another student; looking at the work of other students while writing an exam; consulting books, electronic materials or other sources of information.

In every course, the instructor may choose to conduct an additional oral examination, in the presence of another faculty member from the Department, so as to ascertain the level of a student's knowledge or understanding of the course material.

Departmental Policy Regarding Penalties for Plagiarism and Cheating

The possible penalties for plagiarism and cheating are outlined in the Calendar. All cases of plagiarism will automatically be referred to the Chair of the Department of Pacific and Asian Studies. In the Department of Pacific and Asian Studies, the penalty for a first offence will be an automatic F grade (0%) for the assignment, examination or test, with a note from the Instructor going on file with the Department. Students will not be permitted to rewrite an assignment, examination or test on which they have been found to be cheating. Departmental records of cheating and plagiarism will be destroyed once a student has completed a degree program without any further offence. Depending upon the seriousness of the offense and the weight of the assignment, the Chair may assign an automatic F grade (0 GPA) for the course.

In the case of a second offence in the same course, the student will automatically receive an F grade (0 GPA) for the course, and the department will refer the matter to the Dean of the Faculty of Arts. In cases where the student is on record for having plagiarised or cheated in another course, the student will receive an automatic F grade (0 GPA) for the course, regardless of whether this is a first or second offense for that course, and the matter will be forwarded to the Dean of the Faculty of Arts for further disciplinary action.

If you have any doubts about the University's policies, or want to know if a practice is acceptable or not, you should raise your concerns with your course instructor.
PAAS 181
Contemporary Japanese Culture
Course Readings

Copies of most of the following are on reserve in McPherson Library, in the Reserve Section. Many of these articles are available for download from JSTOR or Project Muse, online academic-journal storage services. Go to the Uvic Libraries gateway at http://gateway.uvic.ca/index.html. Find JSTOR or Project Muse. To search or download from these services, you’ll need your UVic Netlink ID and password. Articles are available as PDF files. Other links are as listed.

1. Required Articles (in the Reserve section of McPherson):

- Industrial Pollution in Japan (Chapters will be assigned in class): online at:
  http://www.unu.edu/unupress/unupbooks/uu35ie/uu35ie00.htm

  Search for title through JSTOR

  Search for title through JSTOR

  http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/positions/toc/pos8.2.html

- Ito, Takuya “Cooperativeness and Buraku Discrimination,” electronic journal of contemporary japanese studies
  http://www.japanesestudies.org.uk/discussionpapers/2005/Ito2.html

  http://www.metapress.com/(loaxpmunikhmzw55wnaa2a55)/app/home/issue.asp?referrer=parent&backto=journal, 9,18;linkingpublicationresults,1:104606,1

  Search for title through JSTOR

  http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/south_atlantic_quarterly/toc/saq99.4.html

  Search for title on JSTOR

  Search for title through JSTOR

2. Required Short Stories (on reserve in McPherson):


- Shiga Naoya, “At Kinosaki,” Modern Japanese Literature, Donald Keene, editor

• Kawabata Yasunari, “One Arm,” The Shôwa Anthology, Van Gessel, editor

• Tsushima Yûko, “The Marsh,” Unmapped Territories, New Women’s Fiction from Japan, Yukiko Tanaka, editor

• Kurahashi Yumiko, “The House of the Black Cat,” The Woman with the Flying Head and Other Stories, Kurahashi Yumiko


Recommended Articles:

  http://www.metapress.com/(loaxpmunikhmzw55wnaa2a55)/app/home/journal.asp?referrer=parent&backto=linkingpublicationresults,1:104606,1

  http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/washington_quarterly/toc/wq23.2.html

  Search for title through JSTOR

• Zeng, Kangmin and Le Tendre, Gerald “Adolescent Suicide and Academic Competition in East Asia,” Comparative Education Review, 42 (4), 1998, pp. 513-528
  Search for title through JSTOR

  http://www.metapress.com/(uzcfzv55bufkky2pbrzh45)/app/home/contribution.asp?referrer=parent&backto=issue,1,10;journal,7,16;linkingpublicationresults,1:105481,1

Recommended Links:

• Tsunoda, Yukiko, “Sexual Harassment and Domestic Violence in Japan”

• Miki, Emiko, “Divorce And Child Custody Issues In International Cases In Japan”
  http://www.tuj.ac.jp/newsite/main/law/lawresources/TUJonline/FamilyandDivorce/mikidivorce.html

• Various articles on Women’s Issues (Employment, Domestic Care, Sexual Harassment, etc) from:
  http://wom-jp.org/e/JWOMEN/index.html