University of California Travel/Study Tokyo Program

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Course Syllabus:
Manga, Anime, Art

Sociology 159: Social Institutions and Culture
Film & Media Studies 160: National Cinemas
East Asian Studies 160: East Asian Cinema
Comparative Literature 141: Popular Culture

Course Description:
In the last fifteen years, both manga and anime have become commonly accepted terms in English. Yet, the social institutions, cultural debates, and political struggles surrounding these media/genres in their Japanese origins and global re-articulations remain far from understood. In this special summer session course, we set as our objective a deeper understanding of the interplay between Japan’s rich narrative traditions of manga and anime, Japanese society, and the global culture industry that as made anime and manga popular around the world. What kind of readers do these genres attract? Where does the pleasure of their texts reside? What are the new fan-based cultures that have emerged? How does the history of manga and anime reflect both class, gendered, and even erotic resistance to dominant political structures? In addition to answering these fundamental questions, we also consider how these media have been summoned into corporate models of production as well as into the art museum circuit and we investigate controversies that explain why the Japanese government remains wary of supporting Japan’s most significant cultural export of the century. To begin the course, we look at prewar traditions of the comic and cartoon. We later trace the emergence of different styles of comics and cartoons in postwar Japan, considering the importance of manga as a proletarian and then feminist form of popular entertainment. After following the transformation of manga into a corporatized, national industry, we then examine the emergence of anime as a dominant cultural force in mid- and late twentieth-century Japan. The course engages the knowledge and interest of long-time manga and anime fans who want a fresh perspective on the texts they love as well as introduces students who know little about these omnipresent Japanese genres. Methodologically, the courses relies upon film and visual studies, textual analysis, and the sociological analysis of contemporary institutions. In addition, we are delighted to welcome professionals active in the field to describe their work and lead hands-on training sessions.

Special Notes for Summer

Because this is an intensive summer-session course, it is strongly advised that you complete before the commencement of the course as many of the readings as possible. As a bare minimum, please make sure you have completed reading the three manga texts in their entirety before arriving in Tokyo for the program. Please acquire in the States the three manga translations as well as Paul Gravett’s Manga, which serve as textbooks for the course.
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<tr>
<th>Basis for Evaluation</th>
<th>Grade %</th>
<th>Timing</th>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance + Participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>All lectures</td>
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<tr>
<td>Short Paper One (5-6 pp)</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Lecture Five</td>
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<td>Midterm Exam</td>
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<td>Lecture Eight</td>
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<td>Short Paper Two (5-6 pp)</td>
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<td>Final Exam</td>
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**Optional Fieldtrips:**
In addition to the program-wide trip to the Ghibli Animation Museum, the course includes one mandatory and one optional field trip. Students must pay for their own transportation.
- Mandatory Field Trip: Suginami Animation Museum, Suginami-ku, Tokyo
- Optional Field Trip: Bandai Visual Museum, Matsudo, Chiba

**Required Critical Books and Articles:**
Students are required to have purchased and read the three manga listed below in their entirety before the start of the program. In addition please make sure you have read the assigned readings for Lecture One before the program begins. Once you arrive in Tokyo, you will have little time.
- Other course readings marked (pdf file) in this syllabus are available as pdf files either online or via email from the instructor.

**Manga titles:**

**Suggested Book: (Not required):**
UNIT ONE: MANGA

Lecture One: Japanese Media amidst the Global Culture Industry
The first lecture of the course introduces students to the methods of analysis used across the course. Interweaving a look at pre-1945 animated works (stop-motion animation, line animation, and cutout animation), the lecture lays out for students two methodologies: one for the formal analysis of narrative, sound, and image, the second the sociological analysis of a cultural institution with a focus on the global culture industry.

Reading:

Lecture Two: Manga Genres in Historical Perspective
Today’s lecture introduces students to the history of Japanese manga images from the Edo period through 1945. The emergence of political cartoons, children’s cartoons, and “red-book” publications is described with visual examples. In addition, the students break into groups, each assigned a different manga magazine taken from recent circulation in Japan. The students are asked to develop a 3-minute presentation on its structure, including presumed market, narrative genre, and the organization and style of image. (Although the materials are in Japanese, this exercise does not presume a knowledge of Japanese.)

Reading:
Lecture Three: The Birth of an Industry: Astro-Boy from the Ashes

Today’s lecture examines the emergence of the informal post-war market for the manga image, the tradition of kami-shibai street narrators and the emergence of rental manga libraries, the kashihonya that define manga during the Occupation. We discuss the presumed readership in a gendered perspective and the transformation of the market following the arrival of corporate capital. A key figure for us in this transition from back-street industry to corporate media is the author of Astro Boy and other highly popular narratives of the mid-century, Tezuka Osamu. Tezuka also serves for us as an important means to think through the interactions between print manga and broadcast animation.

Reading:

Lecture Four: Political Images: Gekiga amidst Social Transformation and Turmoil

In this lecture, we look at the narrative and aesthetic innovations found within the gekiga (dramatic images) tendency. Often radical in content, Gekiga were aimed at the working class culture of the dekasegi contract laborers who came from the countryside to Japanese urban centers in the 1950s and 1960s to build the country’s postwar economic miracle. This social class became the organizing force and main market of a new aesthetic form that grew in tandem with the newly politicized and social function of manga. We look at the most important serial to promote the gekiga style, *GARO*, which ran from 1964 to 1996. In taking as example the work of Shirato Sampei and his epic *Story of Kamui* serialized within *GARO*, we consider ethnic, class, and anti-capitalist rhetoric and image. We also encounter modern incarnations of the gekiga genre.

Reading:
Lecture Five: Manga for more than Girls: Shojo Manga and Social Critique
Short Paper One: Due in Class Today (5-6 pages)
Shojo manga, or young girls’ comics, emerged as a major genre fairly late in the history of manga, significantly. Yet, from the beginning of their broad commercial distribution in the 1970s, *shojo manga* became both a popular source of revenue as well as a powerful critique of a patriarchal Japan. We also use the juncture to explore the emergence of *yaoi* or “slash” comics as a privately printed and exchanged alternative to the corporate behemoths. Not surprisingly, *yaoi* have suggested strongly both an anti-normative politics and social roles.

**Reading:**

Lecture Six: Ambivalent: Manga as Social Anxiety, Manga as Global Commodity
In this concluding lecture of the Manga Unit, we examine the circulation of manga in their domestic Japanese and global dimensions. We look to the rise of the “otaku,” as well as media and governmental anxiety about manga as social phenomenon, and the circulation and reinvention of manga in East Asia and North America.
Lecture Seven: Manga Praxis
Guest Prof. Hiroki Mafuyu, “The History and Appeal of Manga & Illustration”
During this lecture, we welcome Prof. Hiroki Mafuyu from the Tokyo Communication Arts School. Professor Mafuyu, a well-established manga-writer and illustrator, will offer a guest lecture, demonstration of his work, and a hands-on manga-drawing-workshop.

Lecture Eight: Midterm Exam (20%) + Screening
The first half of class is set aside for the midterm examination. During the second half of the class, we screen (partial clip only) an important film from the history of animation in anticipation of our second unit.

UNIT TWO: ANIMATION

Session Nine: Introduction to Anime I (Mandatory Field Trip)
The first lecture for the second unit in this course takes place at the Suginami Animation Museum. After viewing the museum, engaging its curators, and experiencing the museum’s hands-on activities, the class will consider the emergence of Japanese anime in historical and sociological perspective. Drawing from concrete visual examples, we think about the form of limited animation that developed in 1950s and 1960s as a Japanese response to global market and domestic socio-cultural forces. Then, we consider visually the three categories of animation the mark the aesthetic and economic contours of domestic production today in Japan: anime, art animation, and Ghibli animation. We learn what defines each anime sub-genre and what pushes at its limits.

Reading:

Session Ten: Introduction to Anime II: What is Ghibli?
We continue the introduction of the first anime lecture with special attention paid to Ghibli animation. We define how Ghibli work rejects the dominant concerns of Akihabara based otaku culture. We also look to the representation of abnormality and immorality in Ghibli vis-à-vis Disney productions.

Reading:
Session Eleven: Technologies and their Ends
Any examination of anime in the postwar and post-postwar contexts demands a recognition of the importance of the technological imagination and that imagination’s relation to Japanese atomic experience. In this lecture, we consider the role of technology against the backdrop of wartime suffering and the ambiguities of rearmament in the postwar peace.

Reading:

Session Twelve: Otaku Culture and the Emerging Canon
In this unit, we consider the emergence of a specific anime youth culture with its own canons and codes of legibility. The question of audience participation within the culture is addressed by looking at the overwhelming system of conventions both in Japan and abroad.

Reading
• Murakami Takashi, “Earth in My Window” and “Otaku Talk” in Little Boy: The Arts of Japan’s Exploding Subculture (New York: Japan Society, 2005) 98-150 and 164-185

Session Thirteen: Anime Praxis
Short Paper Two: Due in Class Today (5-6 pages)
During this lecture, we welcome Prof. Hiroyuki Morita of Tokyo Communication Arts and of Ghibli Animation Studios. Prof. Morita is the director of the popular 2002 Ghibli Studios-produced animation, The Cat Returns (Neko no onegaishi). Professor Morita will give examples of the different illustration style used in the industry, as well as describe the aesthetic concept of moe strongly associated with the adolescent female.

Reading:
Session Fourteen: Shojo in Motion
In this unit, we look at the various dimensions in which gender and sexuality both inform and motivate anime-ic representations. We trace origins in manga culture, but also identify the specific new audiences and questions for those audiences that the anime medium allows.

Reading:

Session Fifteen: Anime as Global Cultural Force:
In this lecture, we consider the circulation of anime in global art and commodity markets. Drawing on sociological concepts of the global culture industry introduced at the beginning of the course, we consider the passage of a series of objects through Tokyo and global contexts. Our work considers the rise of game cultures and the prominence of artists such as Murakami Takashi and Nara Yoshitomo within commodity markets.

Reading:

Session Sixteen: Final Exam (20%)
+ Concluding Comments: Otaku—Who Are You??
The final exam for the course is followed by a concluding lecture for the course

Reading: