

Degree	Type	Year	Semester
2500244 East Asian Studies	OT	4	0

## Contact

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## Use of languages

Principal working language: catalan (cat)  
Some groups entirely in English: No  
Some groups entirely in Catalan: Yes  
Some groups entirely in Spanish: No

## Teachers

Tomás Grau de Pablos

## Prerequisites

Since most of the readings will be written in English, it is necessary to have a minimum level of reading comprehension in English in order to understand both compulsory and complementary readings.

Since it forms part of the specialisation in Culture, Art and Literature of East Asia, this course is complemented by East Asian Comparative Cultural Studies. Nevertheless, it is not compulsory to enrol in both of the courses if the student does not want to obtain that specialisation.

Students who wish to do their bachelor's degree final project about issues related to popular culture and contemporary art are advised to enrol in this course-otherwise, they would have to independently compensate for methodological and theoretical shortcomings.

## Objectives and Contextualisation

- Acquire theoretical and methodological knowledge relevant to the analysis of the works, products and phenomena related to popular culture and art.
- Apply those theoretical tools to the study of a particular issue under the teachers' supervision.
- Participate in a collective analysis of the documents (films, literary works, etc.) in class.
- Improve the critical sense and the individual analytical ability, as well as the intercultural and communicative abilities in order to debate and exchange ideas and experiences.
- Use theoretical and analytical tools of cultural studies to the study of media and social networks provided by ICT.
- Develop critical thinking and apply it to one's work. Exploit the methodological tools to fully realise the potential of one's own work with rigour and high standards.

## Skills

- Applying knowledge of the art and popular culture to the analysis and comprehension of written texts in the languages of East Asia.

- Developing critical thinking and reasoning and communicating them effectively both in your own and other languages.
- Developing self-learning strategies.
- Ensuring the quality of one's own work.
- Knowing and comprehending the art and popular culture of the countries of East Asia.
- Knowing and using the information and communication technology resources (ICT) in order to collect, produce, analyse and present information related to the East Asian Studies.
- Knowing, comprehending, describing and analysing the values, beliefs and ideologies of East Asia.
- Knowing the great literary, philosophical, and artistic movements of East Asia.
- Producing innovative and competitive proposals in research and professional activity.
- Respecting the diversity and plurality of ideas, people and situations.
- Solving problems of intercultural communication.
- Students must be flexible and capable of adapting to new circumstances.
- Working in interdisciplinary and intercultural groups.

## Learning outcomes

1. Applying knowledge of the art and popular culture to the analysis and comprehension of written texts in the languages of East Asia.
2. Assessing the obtained results in the information search process in order to update the knowledge about history, literature, linguistics, thought and art.
3. Carrying out the documentary search in the specific languages of East Asia.
4. Developing critical thinking and reasoning and communicating them effectively both in your own and other languages.
5. Developing self-learning strategies.
6. Ensuring the quality of one's own work.
7. Knowing and comprehending the art and popular culture of the countries of East Asia.
8. Knowing, comprehending, describing and analysing the values, beliefs and ideologies of East Asia.
9. Knowing the great literary, philosophical, and artistic movements of East Asia.
10. Producing innovative and competitive proposals in research and professional activity.
11. Respecting the diversity and plurality of ideas, people and situations.
12. Solving problems of intercultural communication.
13. Students must be flexible and capable of adapting to new circumstances.
14. Using the specific terminology of history, literature, linguistics, thought and art.
15. Utilising different tools for specific purposes in the fields of history, literature, linguistics, thought and art.
16. Working in interdisciplinary and intercultural groups.

## Content

### Unit 1: Introduction to critical theory and cultural studies

In the first sessions, cultural studies and critical theory's key concepts, schools and thinkers will be introduced in order to provide the students with the tools allowing them to critically begin to study works, actors and phenomena which will be used during the course. However, we will not go deeper in those contents, since they are offered in detail in East Asian Comparative Cultural Studies.

Schools:

- Formalism
- Narratology
- Structuralism
- Post-structuralism
- Psychoanalysis

## **Unit 2: Social changes affecting labour model and family structures**

We will analyse how recent cinematographic production reflects the crisis of family traditional models and androcentric labour models, and how that has been produced by the increase of social precariousness (Anne Allison) and by changes in masculinity model (Sharon Kinsella). We will compare film dramas from Japan (Kurosawa Kiyoshi) and Taiwan (Edward Yang).

## **Unit 3: East Asian youth, the new social actors**

Analytical tools and methodologies observed during introductory sessions can be applied to different society's elements. The analysis of materials will not be focused only in a certain aspect or dimension, but the teacher will also try to guide the reflection towards issues such as the followings:

- Youth as a driving force for change (or for stasis, if applicable)
- New familiar configurations and the crisis of the model of root family, not only regarding cultural tradition, but also regarding certain economic dynamics (for example, the role assigned to the youth housewife, , in post-war society)
- Young women, their expectations and their reactions;
- The weight of the cosmetic and beauty industries in South Korea.
- Young cultures, not only as zoku ( ) for joining by aesthetical affinities-which, in any case, they are not random nor arbitrary-, but also as a result of social circumstances-for example, the yankii, which can be productively compared with collectives closer to Catalan urban space-.

From the point of view of industries offering products or shows for popular consumption, from the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century an unequivocal trend appeared to massively take advantage of youth culture around the world (although there were already different precedents), especially with the globalization, which started from the 70s.

Apart from usual forces (consumerism, music, fashion, rebelliousness), East Asian youth react to a Confucian culture, but each generation makes way for the next generation, which repeats certain operations (Debord's thesis (1967) about the society of show and history).

In contemporary Japan, the interdependence of economy, consumerism and culture is obviously depicted in the art world, with amateur artists in websites such as Pixiv, Drawr and Tegaki. It is also depicted by the insolent attitude of Murakami Takashi and his acolytes in Superflat movement, arising due to the consideration of the art to be an economic activity, and by the exploitation of "Japan's Gross National Cool" (McGray 2001).

We will analyze popular culture products from Korea (Bong Joon-ho), Hong Kong (Wong Kar-wai) and Japan (Nakashima Tetsuya).

## **Unit 4: East Asia through its electronic entertainment**

This session will analyze the images and reflections of East Asia that are transmitted by way of its interactive entertainment, as well as describing the way in which some of these goods act as cohesive texts around which social habits and cultural practices are formalized. Among the items and topics that we'll tackle here, we will include:

- The way in which traditional representations of Korean culture, Japanese culture and Chinese culture are used in certain videogames as an aesthetic or artistic choice (Okami, Nexus and the Shanda trilogy).
- The way in which idealized descriptions of everyday life as well as idealized abstractions of national virtues are used to configure a sense of belonging or even national pride, such as Japanese descriptions of rural life (Boku no Natsuyasumi and the Harvest Moon franchise) and the glorification of national history (Resistance War Online).

- The use of videogames as a tool to explore and express concern about certain issues that currently dominate East Asian societies, such as anxiety over the decline of traditional gender roles in Catherine or the questioning of traditional life expectancies in youth culture, such as in The World Ends with You.

- The formation of social groups and communities around specific games and their progressive institutionalization in the form of visual spectacle and sport events (Korean PC Bangs and Cybercafés). The popularity of these so-called "e-sports" and the unusual recognition that their main starts receive in mainstream media are indicative of the creation of new role models for the youth in these societies.

## **Unit 5: Japan and cross-cultural dialogue**

Since the late seventies, the Japanese cultural industry has maintained a constant presence in the global market through the mass distribution of its cultural goods. As a result, images, concepts and trends that were originally conceived in the context of Japanese popular culture have managed to penetrate and have a meaningful impact on the trends and processes of other cultural regions. The result of this is that, as of today, a considerable number of videogames made in both Japanese and American/European regions have a certain degree of hybridization and mixing between images and ideas that come from different cultures and have a different impact on several parts of the global market.

In this block we will discuss a number of topics that have been reflected in some of these cultural texts, and we will outline the way in which hybridization has affected their presentation to consumer audiences and their impact in different sectors of the global market. The case studies will be:

- The Metal Gear franchise and its way of tackling the uses of nuclear energy and the effect of technological innovation in modern society.

- The creation and use of "universal" constructs that are intimately related to Western narrative conventions, such as The Legend of Zelda.

- The use of these objects as a way of exploring and reflecting particular forms of resistance among the youth, such as the problematization of gender roles in Persona or the insertion of environmentalist claims in Final Fantasy VII.

- The localization of a certain notion of "Japaneseness" by way of separating and signaling specific mechanical and aesthetic choices in videogames as a way of denoting Japanese culture, such as the elevation of JRPG or shoot'em ups as "culturalized" genres and the role that the so-called Japanese Media Mix has in this signalization process.

## **Methodology**

### **Methodology**

(To see assessment activities mentioned in the following methodological explanations, refer to the "Assessment" section in this syllabus).

Critical and cultural analysis methodology will be acquired by studying, reading and commenting different important figures' contributions in cultural studies, as well as by applying that methodology to text fragments-films, chapters from series or printed extracts-. The activity, consisting on comments done in common, will be carried out every week.

In short, this course requires a high reading commitment in order to acquire relevant theoretical tools and the ability to add them in a productive way to intellectual and dialogical abilities. The type of critique and analysis to be developed by means of these classes is not like the media and informational critique model usually employed-both articles presentation and written work cannot be just argumentative summaries or comments from blogs having been recycled, but they have to be supported in academic structure and argumentation.

## **Activities**

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Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning outcomes
<b>Type: Autonomous</b>			
Personal reading	65	2.6	1, 2, 8, 9, 7, 5, 4, 3, 10, 11, 15, 14, 6

## Evaluation

### Assessment criteria

- Test on the Critical Theory contents of the course: 25%
- Essay delivered on multimedia support (blog): 35% (2000-2500 words)
- 2 Oral presentations introducing key texts that will be discussed in class: 20%+20%

For more information on the university policies pertaining to evaluations, see the document "Normativa acadèmica de la Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona" (p. 43, "Capítol II. Avaluació i qualificació"):

[http://www.uab.cat/doc/TR\\_Normativa\\_Academica\\_Plans\\_Nous](http://www.uab.cat/doc/TR_Normativa_Academica_Plans_Nous)

More information:

<http://www.uab.cat/web/study-abroad/undergraduate/academic-information/evaluation/what-is-it-about-13456700>

### Evaluation activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning outcomes
Blog entry offering a detailed analysis of a work of art or popular culture	35%	40	1.6	1, 2, 8, 9, 7, 5, 4, 3, 10, 12, 11, 13, 16, 15, 14, 6
Oral presentation introducing an assigned reading	20%	12.5	0.5	1, 2, 8, 9, 7, 5, 4, 3, 10, 12, 11, 13, 16, 15, 14, 6
Oral presentation introducing one of the assigned readings	20%	12.5	0.5	1, 2, 8, 9, 7, 5, 4, 3, 10, 12, 11, 13, 16, 15, 14, 6
Written practice assessing the assimilation of Critical Theory tools	25%	20	0.8	1, 8, 9, 7, 5, 4, 15, 14, 6

## Bibliography

The following list is a very basic bibliography which will be increased with relevant and specific bibliography regarding issues related to popular culture and art.

### Popular culture:

(Cultural studies, anthropology, sociology, art, literature and other disciplines)

Storey, John (1997, 2009) Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: An Introduction. <

[http://cataleg.uab.cat/record=b1405435~S1\\*cat](http://cataleg.uab.cat/record=b1405435~S1*cat) >

Storey, John (2009) Cultural Theory and Popular Culture:A Reader. <

[http://cataleg.uab.cat/record=b1847666~S1\\*cat](http://cataleg.uab.cat/record=b1847666~S1*cat) >

### Japan:

Goodman, Roger; Imoto, Yuki; Toivonen, Tuukka (eds) (2012) A Sociology of Japanese Youth. From Returnees to NEETS. < [http://cataleg.uab.cat/record=b1892656~S1\\*cat](http://cataleg.uab.cat/record=b1892656~S1*cat) >

Itô Mizuko, Okabe Daisuke, Tsuji Izumi (eds) (2012): Fandom Unbound: Otaku Culture in a Connected Age. < <http://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/0300158645> >

Martinez, Dolores P. (ed) (2007) Modern Japanese Culture and Society. 4 vols. < [http://cataleg.uab.cat/record=b1823242~S1\\*cat](http://cataleg.uab.cat/record=b1823242~S1*cat) >

Miller, Laura; Bardsley, Jan (eds) (2005) Bad Girls of Japan. < [http://cataleg.uab.cat/record=b1892512~S1\\*cat](http://cataleg.uab.cat/record=b1892512~S1*cat) >

Mes, Tom; Sharp, Jasper (2005) Midnight Eye Guide to New Japanese Film, The. < [http://cataleg.uab.cat/record=b1675354~S1\\*cat](http://cataleg.uab.cat/record=b1675354~S1*cat) >

Sugimoto, Yoshio (ed) (2009): Cambridge companion to modern Japanese culture. Accés a versió electrònica: < [http://cataleg.uab.cat/record=b1866341~S1\\*cat](http://cataleg.uab.cat/record=b1866341~S1*cat) >

#### China:

McGrath, Jason. (2008) Postsocialist modernity: Chinese cinema, literature, and criticism in the market age. Stanford University Press < <http://www.amazon.es/Postsocialist-Modernity-Chinese-Literature-Criticism/dp/0804758743> >

Geremie R. Barmé (1999) In the Red: On Contemporary Chinese Culture. Columbia University Press < [http://cataleg.uab.cat/record=b1491069~S1\\*cat](http://cataleg.uab.cat/record=b1491069~S1*cat) >

Latham, K. (2007) Pop culture China!: media, arts, and lifestyle. < [http://cataleg.uab.cat/record=b1715180~S1\\*cat](http://cataleg.uab.cat/record=b1715180~S1*cat) >

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#### **Bibliography on electronic entertainment:**

Consalvo, Mia (2006) "Console video games and global corporations: creating a hybrid culture." *New Media Society*, 2006 8: 117.

Aoyama, Yuko e Izushi, Hiro (2003) "Hardware gimmick or cultural innovation? Technological, cultural, and social foundations of the Japanese video game industry." *Research Policy*, 32, pp. 423-444.

Galbraith, Patrick W. (2011) "Bishōjo Games: 'Techno-Intimacy' and the Virtually Human in Japan." *Game studies*, 11 (2).

JETRO (2007) "Japanese Video Game Industry." URL: [http://www.jetro.go.jp/en/reports/market/pdf/2007\\_02\\_r.pdf](http://www.jetro.go.jp/en/reports/market/pdf/2007_02_r.pdf).

Kinder, Marsha (1991) *Playing with Power in Movies, Television and Video Games*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Kirkpatrick, Graeme (2012) "Constitutive Tensions of Gaming's Field: UK gaming magazines and the formation of gaming culture 1981-1995." *Game Studies*, 12 (1). URL: <http://gamestudies.org/1201/articles/kirkpatrick>.

O'Donnell, Casey (2011) "The Nintendo Entertainment System and the 10NES Chip: Carving the Video Game Industry in Silicon." *Games and Culture*, 6 (1), pp. 83-100.

Daliot-Bul, Michal (2014) *License to Play: The Ludic in Japanese Culture*. University of Hawaii Press.

Nie, Annie Hongping (2013) "Gaming, Nationalism, and Ideological Work in Contemporary China: online games based on the War of Resistance against Japan" *Journal of Contemporary China*, vol. 22, No. 81, 499-517.

Mandiberg, Stephen (2014) "Playing (with) the Trace: Localized Culture in Phoenix Wright" *Kinephanos*, Volume 5, Geemu and media mix: Theoretical approaches to Japanese video games, 111-141.

Kim, Hyeshin (2009) "Women's Games in Japan. Gendered Identity and Narrative Construction" Theory Culture Society vol. 26(2-3): 165-188.

Picard, Martin (2013) "The Foundation of geemu: A Brief History of Early Japanese video games" Game Studies, vol. 13 No. 02

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## Art:

### Japan:

Favell, Adrian (2012) Before and after Murakami. A Short History of Japanese Contemporary Art. 1990-2011. Ed. Timezone 8.

Yamaguchi, Yumi (2007) Warriors of Art. A Guide to Contemporary Japanese Artists. <  
<http://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/4770030312> >

Natsume, Fusanosuke; Saito, Nobuhiko (curators, eds) (2009): DNA 50 (DNA of Sunday and Magazine. The 50 Years of Weekly Shonen Manga Magazines.) <  
<http://www.kyotomm.jp/english/event/spe/sundaymagazinedna.php> >

Toku Masami (curator, ed); Masuda Nozomi (contributor); Yamada Tomoko (contributor) (2008) ——Shojo Manga! Girl Power!. <  
[http://www.kyotomm.jp/HP/2008/05/shojo\\_manga\\_power.php](http://www.kyotomm.jp/HP/2008/05/shojo_manga_power.php) >

### China:

Gao, Minglu (2011) Total modernity and the avant-garde in twentieth-century Chinese art. MIT Press <  
[http://cataleg.uab.cat/record=b1852614~S1\\*cat](http://cataleg.uab.cat/record=b1852614~S1*cat) >

## Additional bibliography and other resources:

- du Gay P., Stuart Hall, Linda Janes, Hugh Mackay, and Keith Negus. 1997. Doing Cultural Studies: The Story of the Sony Walkman. London: Sage, in association with The Open University.
- Gunster, Shane. 2004. Capitalizing on culture: Critical theory for cultural studies. Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press.
- Hall S. 1997. Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices.: Sage.
- Lewis, Jeff. 2002. Cultural studies: The basics. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Storey, John. 1998. An introduction to cultural theory and popular culture. Athens, GA: Univ. of Georgia Press.
- Storey, John. 1997, 2009. Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: An Introduction.  
<[http://cataleg.uab.cat/record=b1405435~S1\\*cat](http://cataleg.uab.cat/record=b1405435~S1*cat)>
- Storey, John. 2009. Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: A Reader.  
<[http://cataleg.uab.cat/record=b1847666~S1\\*cat](http://cataleg.uab.cat/record=b1847666~S1*cat)>
- Taylor, Paul, and Jan Li Harris. 2008. Critical theories of mass media: Then and now. Berkshire, UK: Open Univ. Press.
- .

Online bibliography about cultural studies and Japan updated until 2012: The Margins: <  
<http://themargins.net/csbib.html> >

Associations and centers:

Association for Cultural Typhoon

<http://cultural-typhoon.com>

British Association for Japanese Studies

<http://www.bajs.org.uk/>

Nissan Institute of Japanese Studies

<http://www.nissan.ox.ac.uk/>

European Association for Japanese Studies

<http://www.eajs.org/>

German Institute of Japanese Studies

<http://www.dijtokyo.org/?lang=en>

The Japanese Studies Association of Australia

<http://www.jsaa.info/>

Edwin O. Reischauer Institute of Japanese Studies

<http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~rijs/>

Center for Japanese Studies

<http://www.international.ucla.edu/japan/resources/links.asp>

English Language Journals

Cultural Studies journals (for more East Asia focused cultural studies journals, see following sections):

- [Angelaki: Journal of the Theoretical Humanities](#)
- [Asian Ethnology](#)
- [Boundary 2](#)
- [Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies](#)
- [Continuum: Journal of Media and Cultural Studies.](#)
- [Critical Inquiry.](#)
- [Cultural Critique.](#)
- [Cultural Studies.](#)
- [Cultural Studies Review.](#)
- [Culture, Theory and Critique.](#)
- [differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies.](#)
- [European Journal of Cultural Studies.](#)
- [Feminist Media Studies.](#)
- [Globalizations.](#)
- [Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power.](#)
- [Inter-Asia Cultural Studies.](#)
- [International Journal of Cultural Studies.](#)
- [Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies.](#)
- [Journal of Intercultural Studies.](#)
- [Journal of Japanese & Korean Cinema.](#) Forthcoming.
- [Journal of Popular Culture. \(Issues\)](#)
- [Journal of Popular Film and Television.](#)
- [Media, Culture, Society.](#)
- [Mediations.](#)
- [Mechademia.](#)
- [New Formations.](#)
- [New Left Review.](#) In [Spanish.](#)
- [October.](#)
- [Parallax.](#)
- [Popular Culture Studies Journal, The.](#)
- [Positions. East Asia Cultures Critique.](#)
- [Public Culture.](#)



- [Science Fiction Studies](#). A [JSTOR](#).
- [Social Text](#).
- [Social Identities](#). [Journal for the Study of Race, Nation and Culture](#).
- [South Atlantic Quarterly](#)
- [Space and Culture](#).
- [SubStance](#).
- [Television & New Media](#).
- [Theory, Culture & Society](#).
- [Theory and society](#).
- [Third Text](#).
- [Traces](#).

Japan journals:

- [Contemporary Japan](#)
- [Early Modern Japan: An Interdisciplinary Journal](#)
- [Electronic Journal of Contemporary Japanese Studies](#)
- [Gaiko Forum](#)
- [Japan Echo](#)
- [Japan Focus: Asia-Pacific Journal](#)
- [Japan Forum](#)
- Japan Quarterly
- [Japan Studies Association Journal](#)
- [Japan and the World Economy](#)
- [Japanese Journal of Religious Studies](#)
- [Japanese Language and Literature](#)
- [Japanese Studies](#)
- [Japanese Studies Review](#)
- [Journal of International and Advanced Japanese Studies](#)
- [Journal of Japanese Philosophy](#)
- [Journal of Japanese Studies](#)
- [Journal of Renga & Renku](#)
- [Journal of the Japanese and International Economies](#)
- [Journal of the Japanese Archaeological Association](#)
- [Monumenta Nipponica](#)
- [Review of Japanese Culture and Society](#)
- [The Shingetsu Electronic Journal of Japanese-Islamic Relations](#)
- [Sino-Japanese Studies](#)

- [Social Science Japan Journal](#)
- [Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan](#)
- [U.S.- Japan Women's Journal](#)

Asia/East Asia journals:

- [Acta Asiatica](#)
- [Ars Orientalis](#)
- [The Asia-Pacific Journal](#)
- [Asia Pacific Studies](#)
- [Asia Pacific World](#)
- [Asian Affairs](#)
- [Asian Anthropology](#)
- [Asian Culture](#)
- [Asian Ethnology](#)
- [Asian Journal of Criminology](#)
- [Asian Literature and Translation \(ALT\): A Journal of Religion and Culture](#)
- [Asian Survey](#)
- [Asiascape: Digital Asia](#)
- [Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London \(BOAS\)](#)
- [Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies, London Institution](#)
- [Critical Asian Studies](#)
- [East Asian History](#)
- [East Asia: An International Quarterly](#)
- [East Asian Journal of Popular Culture](#)
- [East Asian Science, Technology, and Medicine](#)
- [East Asian strategic review](#)
- [Education About Asia](#)
- [Far Eastern Affairs](#)
- [Far Eastern Quarterly](#)
- [Graduate Journal of Asia-Pacific Studies](#)
- [Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies](#)
- [Historiography East & West](#)
- [The International Journal of the Asian Philosophical Association](#)

- [International Journal of Asian Studies](#)
- [International Relations of the Asia-Pacific \(IRAP\)](#)
- [Journal of American-East Asian Relations](#)
- Journal of the American Oriental Society (JAOS)
- [The Journal of Asian Studies](#)
- [Journal of East Asian Archaeology](#)
- [Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies](#)
- The Journal of Northeast Asian History
- [Modern Art Asia](#)
- [Pacific Historical Review](#)
- [Positions: east asian cultures critique](#)
- [Stanford Journal of East Asian Affairs](#)

PROVISIONAL