

“Contemporary Japan in the Global Context”

**Special Program in English for Master Course Students
(Erasmus Mundus Master Program)**

**Graduate School of Letters
Osaka University (Japan)**

oct.-dec. 2008

Five course units will be offered at Osaka University for students of Erasmus Mundus Master Program (Euroculture). Each course unit consists of ten lectures and will be given during the period of October through December.

The lectures will highlight modern aspects of Japanese culture, society, history, arts, literature and language from the perspective of interrelationship and mutual impact between Japan and Europe, The US, and Asia.

Each class will be so organized that discussion will be conducted bi-/multi-directionally, based on the argument of an English literature on the present-day Japan.

Course units in 2008 include: “Contemporary Japanese Culture”, “Contemporary Japanese Thought”, “Modern Japanese History”, “Modern Japanese Literature” and “Comparative Arts”.

Contemporary Japanese Culture (Satoshi Kinsui)

Sub-title : "Role Language" and other Prototypical Expressions in Japanese Pop-culture Works

Course description : What the Japanese know about the Japanese language is far from being linguistically correct, and it can be said that it is constructed based on imaginative stereotypes.

The role language divided by these stereotypes were constructed in Japanese history and dispersed and mediated by means of popular culture works, and have been implanted deeply in the minds of the Japanese. We should not only enjoy a work as a product, we should also question the historical origins of the system of underlying stereotypes and read the message that is unexpectedly released within the work.

Contemporary Japanese Thought (Taro Mochizuki)

Sub-title : Social Thought and Philosophy of Postwar Japan

Course description : In addressing the political, historical and cultural issues that have dominated Japanese society after World War II, the course will cross a range of disciplines, including intellectual history, literary theory, ethics and philosophy. A special focus will be put on the the thought of civil society movement and its development.

Modern Japanese Literature (Takayuki Yokota-Murakami)

Sub-title : Representations of Love and Sex

Course description : We will be examining the way the western notion of romantic love was introduced to Japan, how it modified the traditional sexual ideology, and how it shaped the modern idea, analyzing its representations in classical works of literature from Futabatei Shimei, Natsume Soseki, via Tanizaki Junichiro, Kawabata Yasunari to Murakami Haruki, Murakami Ryu.

Comparative Arts (Haruhiko Fujita)

Sub-title : Art and Design in Japan: Tradition and Innovation

Course description : Survey of art and design in ancient and modern Japan. Discussion of aesthetic ideas of East Asia. Theoretical and historical contrasts between the West and the East, particularly Europe and Japan.

Modern Japanese History (Toshihiro Minohara)

Sub-title : Diplomatic and Political History of Modern Japan

Course description : The objective of this course will be to provide an introduction to prewar Japanese diplomatic and political history from the late Edo Period to the Postwar period. The emergence of Japan as a major power was a major event in global history, most notably because it was the first non-white power to attain that status in the post-industrial revolution era. The process of Japan's emergence and her imperialistic ambitions will be traced in conjunction with her relations with the superpowers of the time, namely Great Britain (pre-WW1) and the United States (post-WW1). The course will also examine the dark valley of the 1930s which began with the Manchurian incident, as well as Japan's fateful decision to attack Pearl Harbor. Towards the end of the course, Japan's return to the international system and the postwar economic recovery will be touched upon in addition to insight into the possible future scenarios for Japan's future.

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