

Time:	Thursday	9:00 – 11:50
Venue:	LTB	
Instructor:	Xiaolu Ma	Rm.3377; hmxlma@ust.hk
Office hours:	By appointment	
TA:	Yifei Wang	ywangvi@connect.ust.hk

Course Description

This course provides an overview of the various forms of popular culture – food, music, film, TV drama, manga/anime, literature, art and design – in modern East Asia. It explores not only the “uniqueness” of each location’s popular genres but also the shared interconnectedness among different East Asian cultures.

The key questions that this course attempt to raise and address are – How does East Asian popular culture reflect people’s desire for “modernity” or “modernization” at each location? How has each cultural “wave” or “craze” significantly influenced East Asian relations in the post-WWII period? Moreover, as global fascination with East Asian popular culture continues to grow, how has such regional “soft power” begun to inspire global aesthetics and transform both public imagination and understanding of East Asia?

By placing the issues of “modernity vs. modernization” and “localization vs. globalization” in the heart of our discussions, this course aims to develop students’ critical thinking beyond the seemingly popular trends and inspire them to form their own reflections and creative responses to the prevalent cultural phenomena that they experience everyday.

Intended learning outcomes:

On successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

- 1 To become familiar with various popular forms of contemporary East Asian culture
- 2 To understand the social, economic, and political factors that influence the rise of East Asian pop culture
- 3 To integrate one’s interest and creativity with academic inquiry

Schedule

Week 1 Introduction (Sept 4)

TRANSCULTURATION IN EAST ASIA

Week 2 (Sept 11)

Kuan-Hsing Chen, *Asia as Method: Toward Deimperialization* (Selected)

Yen Ping-Chiu, *Proverbs, Songs, Epic Narratives, Folktales of East Asia* (Selected)

Week 3-4 (Sept 18, 25)

Read:

Younghan Cho, "Historicizing East Asian Pop Culture"

Liang Luo, *The Global White Snake* (Selected)

Watch:

Green Snake (1993)

Madame White Snake (Baeksabu-in 백사부인) (1960)

For your reference:

The Legend of the White Serpent (Byaku fujin no yoren 白夫人の妖恋) 1956

Week 5-6 (Oct 2, 9)

Read:

Sharmani Patricia Gabriel and Bernard Wilson, "Introduction -- Convergences, Crossings, Contestations: Children's Literature and Film in Asia"

Juwen Zhang, "Folk and Fairy Tales as Expressions of Identity in Cross-Cultural Communication"

Watch:

Princess Mononoke (1997)

Big Fish and Begonia (2016)

SPACE AND TIME

Week 7-8 (Oct 16, 23) Shanghai and Hong Kong

Read:

Terri Murray, *Studying Feminist Film Theory* (selected)

Shuqin Cui, "Stanley Kwan's *Center Stage*: The (Im)possible Engagement between Feminism and Postmodernism"

Watch:

Centre Stage (1991)

Week 9-10 (Oct 30, Nov 6) Kyoto and Taipei

Read:

Kawabata Yasunari, "The Flowers of Spring" "The Convent Temple and the Lattice Door" in *The Old Capital* (selected)

Zhu Tianxin, "The Old Capital" in *The Old Capital* (selected)

Watch:

Twin Sisters of Kyoto (1963)

Week 11-12 (Nov 13, 20) Tokyo and Seoul

Read:

Introducing cultural studies-Graphic Book

<https://archive.org/details/IntroducingCulturalStudies-English-GraphicBook/page/n11/mode/2up>

Manga: Shinya Shokudo

https://archive.org/details/manga_Shinya_Shokudo/Shinya%20Shokudou%20-%20v01%20c01-14%20%2B%20Omake/page/n9/mode/2up

Watch:

Midnight Diner (2015)

Midnight Diner (2009) Episode 1

Late Night Restaurant (2015) Episode 1

For your reference:

Midnight Diner (2019)

Week 13 (Nov 27) Group project presentation

Assessment

Class Participation	25%
In-class quiz	25%
Final paper	25%
Group project	
Presentation	15%
Peer Review	10%

Class Participation

You are expected to attend all classes and stay for the entire class. I measure class participation based on the following criteria: arriving to class on time (5%), engaging in class discussion (you need to speak up three times to earn 10%), and participating in group assignments (10%). You earn extra points by answering additional questions in class.

To ensure a fair and productive learning environment, the following absence policy will be enforced:

1. **Notification of Absence:** If you anticipate being absent from class, please notify the instructor via email at least 24 hours in advance. In cases of unforeseen circumstances, notify the instructor as soon as possible.
2. **Excused Absences:** Absences will be considered excused for the following reasons:
 - Medical emergencies or illness (with a doctor's note)
 - Family emergencies

- University-sanctioned events (e.g., sports, conferences)
 - Religious observances
3. **Unexcused Absences:** Absences that do not fall under the excused categories will be considered unexcused. Unexcused absences may affect your participation grade and overall performance in the class.
 4. **Attendance Records:** Attendance will be recorded at the beginning of each class. It is your responsibility to ensure that your presence is noted. Repeated tardiness may also be considered as partial absences.

In-class quiz

Pop quizzes will be given at the start of class without prior notice. The quiz usually consists of 8-10 questions and would take no more than 20 minutes. The quizzes are used to test your understanding and comprehension of our weekly readings. There will be no make-up quizzes.

Final paper

5 pp in length. Times New Roman size 12 font, double line spacing, 1-inch margins, and half-inch indentations at the beginning of each paragraph. Critical analysis of one or more of our readings/movies/TV dramas. While there are no right or wrong answers to the final paper, being “truthful, thoughtful, original and introspective” is the key to a successful paper. Please submit it by 8pm of the due date. Please submit it in Word format and make sure that the file is readable. Unreadable files will not be counted as successful submission. Late submission will be accepted as late as two days after the due date but will receive half credit unless permission from the instructor is obtained before the due date.

Academic Honesty

Acts of academic dishonesty are prohibited. Please go to our university webpage on academic dishonesty policy (<http://ugadmin.ust.hk/integrity/index.html>), and read definitions of plagiarism and acts of dishonesty. Acts of dishonesty will lead to a failing grade in this course.

Group Project:

Take a creative approach to introduce a perspective of Hong Kong by producing an original work of art in a form of popular culture. For example, you could create a short film that conveys your version of Hong Kong, write a short story that reflects a new trend among your peers, or compose a song that could become the next global hit like "Gangnam Style."

Post your work on social media and aim to capture a wide audience's attention. While Canvas will be used to share your project with your classmates, your audience should extend beyond just your peers.

For your group presentation, discuss your project with a clear demonstration. Explain why you chose a specific social media platform to publicize your work. Review the results, focusing on how effectively your project attracted an audience (numbers matter!!!). After the presentations, students will vote for the three best projects, and the results will count for 10% of your final grade.