Japanese Film in Global Context  
**MDST3584-001**  
Synchronous Online, SP21  
Course Website: [http://jcgc.lorimorimoto.net](http://jcgc.lorimorimoto.net)

**Instructor:** Dr. Lori Morimoto  
**Office Hours:** by appointment for SP21 (schedule on Calendly)  
**Email:** lm8hz@virginia.edu

**Course Description**

There’s a Japanese film industry, and then there’s ‘Japanese Cinema’ – a construct we imagine and create through the stories we tell about it. In the past, ‘Japanese Cinema’ has been imagined in the West as a story of auteurs (Ozu, Mizoguchi, Kurosawa), esoteric national styles (Ozu’s tatami-inspired low-level frame), and bizarre genres (Pink *eiga* and *kaiju* films), and certainly these stories are there for the telling. This course aims to tell a different story – one that puts Japanese film and filmmakers squarely in the context of global film, as one participant in a transnational conversation about film style, narrative, and industries that has continued since the earliest days of cinema.

In this course, we will chronologically trace the various intersections of Japanese cinema with industries and filmmakers in Europe, the United States, and East Asia. We will discuss the transcultural give and take of film form, theory, and storytelling, beginning with the late 19th Century screenings of Lumière films on their portable projector/camera, the Cinématrographe, and ending with regional co-productions and the various ways that Japanese films have been revisited in the West. Finally, we will consider the various ways ‘Japanese Cinema’ has been imagined in American advertising and analysis. *This course has a weekly required screening.*

**About Online Course Delivery**

This course is designated Online Synchronous for Spring 2021, which in this case means that all class activities will be online and we will only be meeting face-to-face via Zoom.

This course will require you to be able to do the following:

- organize your time well, even when managing multiple demands  
- be able to give your full attention to reading, writing, and media viewing  
- use the Internet, including email and the different applications we’ll be using for this course (this website, Zoom, our discussion board, online streaming services)  
- stream video

There will be a weekly synchronous lecture and screening during our scheduled meeting time (Thursdays, 3:30-6:00pm) using Zoom. While attendance is not required at this meeting, participation in it will give you the best experience of the course. All Zoom meetings will be recorded, and all films will be available for asynchronous viewing.
In addition to lectures, readings, and screenings, students will also be required to participate on our course discussion board. The discussion board is hosted on this website, and it is password-protected for your privacy.

Readings & Screenings

We do not have a textbook for this course. Instead, we will be reading a selection of essays and articles, which you can access on the “Schedule” page. Each week we have a required film viewing as well; these are all linked on the website schedule and can be viewed asynchronously. You are expected to have completed both readings and viewing prior to class on Thursdays.

Expectations & Preparation

You are NOT required to attend our weekly Zoom meetings and I will not be taking attendance in the traditional manner there. I will make available recordings of our meetings for asynchronous viewing.

That said, I will be lecturing and holding discussion during these meetings. My experience has been that making a weekly connection with one another benefits your engagement with the course, so I strongly urge you to attend as many weekly meetings as possible.

As I am not taking attendance, your participation in the course will be assessed in the following ways:

1. completion and quality of weekly discussion board assignments
2. completion and quality of writing and other assignments
3. demonstrated engagement with course readings and screenings

Weekly discussion board assignments (discussed in more detail under "Assignments") will be a two-pronged process of posting in response to a question I post and responding to at least one other person's post on the same question.

On-time submission of your work is included in your participation grade. This doesn’t mean that I won’t entertain late assignments; what it does mean is that I don’t want to be surprised by them. If you anticipate being late turning in something, please be sure to let me know by email as soon as possible, so we can make accommodations for you to turn it in late. If you turn in an assignment late without consulting me about it, you will lose one percentage point (i.e. 100% to 99%) for each day it is late.

Contacting Me

To schedule an appointment, you can either use the Calendly widget under “Make an Appointment” in the “Start Here” menu above, or go to my page on the Calendly website. If a time slot is visible, I’m available to meet with you at that time. You can also contact me by email at lm8hz [at] virginia [dot] edu. I’m happy to meet with you for any reason, including just touching base throughout the term or chatting about fandom – please don’t hesitate to reach out (if the idea of doing so makes you anxious, know that I also suffer from social anxiety and totally get that, and that’s why I can promise I will never consider an appointment an imposition).
Additionally, if you have any questions, please feel free to email me through my UVA email. I typically respond to emails between 10 am and 5 pm on weekdays, and it may take me up to 24 hours to respond to you. Unless your email is urgent (which you should indicate by including “URGENT” in the subject line), I generally do not respond to emails on the weekend. In email correspondence, you can refer to me as Dr./Prof. Morimoto, but please don’t call me “Mrs. Morimoto.”

**Video/Audio/Screen Accessibility**

This course is intended to be as accessible as possible to everyone in the course. If there is something I can do on my end to make the materials and discussion more accessible for you, please don’t hesitate to let me know. If you require a screen reader that can handle PDFs, check out the Read&Write toolbar that’s available to all students through ITS.

The course website is our hub for the semester, and it’s where you’ll find information, links to readings, screenings, and Zoom meetings, our discussion board, and offsite resources.

We’ll still be using Collab for certain things, including accessing Zoom and some screenings, submitting written assignments and the gradebook. For assignment submission, I’ll provide a link on the website to the assignment on Collab, or you can go directly to Collab to upload your work.

**Accommodations for Disability**

If you are in need of accommodations for a disability (physical or cognitive) in order to perform to the best of your ability in this course, you’re encouraged to apply for Student Disability Access Center services as soon as possible and submit appropriate documentation to begin the intake and eligibility process. I cannot implement accommodations you may need without the required paperwork registering your disability. For your privacy, I am not made aware of your specific disability, only the accommodations you require.

Possible accommodations include:

- Note-taking services
- Assistive Technology
- ASL-English interpreting
- Reasonable modification of assignment deadlines
- Reasonable modification of course attendance policy

**Academic Honesty**

As per UVA policy, an honor offense is defined as an intentional act of lying, cheating or stealing which warrants permanent dismissal from the University. Three criteria determine whether or not an honor offense has occurred: act, intent and seriousness. If you’re unsure what plagiarism looks like, you can either consult the examples on the Understanding Citations, Plagiarism, and Paraphrasing page, or you can talk with me directly. There are no bad questions when it comes to academic honesty.
If I have a burning hatred for one kind of plagiarism, it’s the commissioned paper. There are certain tells that strongly suggest when someone submits a paper they’ve paid for, but because it’s next to impossible to prove the violation often goes unchecked. Nonetheless, they’re an insult to your intelligence, to my work in planning and running this course, and to your fellow students who did bother to do the assignment. Remember: I would always rather read your work than that of a total stranger – just... don’t.

**Participating in Online Discussion on the Discussion Board and Zoom**

Since we won’t be meeting face-to-face except virtually, and some of our communications will be done over text on the discussion board, we have to work harder than usual to create a sense of community and shared goals this term. These are my expectations for how you should engage with one another.

_Above all, respect is paramount._

Please make sure to

- maintain an appropriate tone in your communications with me and other students, whether in email, on the discussion board, or in our Zoom meetings
- disagree respectfully
- approach unfamiliar or even uncomfortable ideas and discussions with open-mindedness
- respect my and other students’ privacy: do not republish (i.e. screenshot, cut-and-paste, quote, etc.) others’ work or conversations from our classroom spaces

**Assessments**

**Weekly Discussion Board**

There are eight discussion topics throughout the semester.

Your response to the weekly prompt is worth 5 points, and your response to someone else’s prompt response is also worth 5 points, for a total of 10 pts/week, or 80 pts for the semester. I will calculate these grades based on your work at the end of the semester. Discussion Board participation constitutes 10% of your final grade.

**Cinema Year Book of Japan 1936-37 Analysis**

Due: Mar 4 by 3 pm on Collab (500-700 words)

**This is an assignment in three parts:**

1. Familiarize yourself with the publication, _Cinema Year Book of Japan 1936-37_, keeping in mind the "PAPER" acronym in "How to Read a Primary Source." You do not need to read everything, but be sure to go through the entire publication; there are interesting statistics, advertisements, and other things towards the back of the book.
2. Choose four or five things (any combination of essays, reviews, statistics, photograph galleries, incidental information, advertisements, etc.) that seem interesting to you for what they say about how the authors of the book perceive Japanese cinema: its place amongst global filmmaking, its modernity (or lack thereof), its particular characteristics, its struggles, etc.

3. Based on these four or five things, write an essay of between 500-750 words that addresses such questions as **who the book appears to be aimed at** (who is its target audience?) and how you know that, **what kind of information it's presenting to that audience and why**, and **what generalizations or conclusions you can make about the state of Japanese cinema in relation to global filmmaking practices based on the evidence** (your four or five things) the book provides.

You should submit this assignment as an essay, following the [formatting guidelines linked here](#). This assignment is worth 100 pts and constitutes 15% of your final grade.

**Analog Anime Abroad**
Due: Mar 25 by 2:30 pm on Collab (500-750 words)

Details about this assignment will be made available at a later date.

This essay is worth 100 points for a total of 20% of your final grade.

**Final Project**

- Topic and Thesis on Collab (Apr 1)
- Individual Consultation with the Instructor on Zoom (week of Apr 5-9)
- Annotated Bibliography on Collab (Apr 29)
- Final Project due NO LATER THAN May 13 on Collab

The final project will be completed in four parts. Part one involves writing a 250-300-word project abstract that will introduce your topic – what it is, its background, what makes it noteworthy – and set out your thesis. This portion of the project will be graded on a 100 pt. scale (10% of your final grade).

During the week of Apr 5-9, you’ll meet with me on Zoom for a 10-15 minute meeting to discuss your proposed topic, thesis, and the format you plan to use to submit your work. This portion of the project is worth 20 points and is worth 10% of your final grade.

On Apr 29, you’ll submit five-item (minimum) annotated bibliography. This portion of the project is worth 100 points and is worth 10% of your final grade.

Your final project will present your findings and analysis in one of a variety of formats: a research paper (1500-2000 words), a video essay, or a podcast episode. If there’s another format you’d like to use, please consult with me. Each format will have specific requirements you’ll need to meet, and you’re encouraged to choose the one most useful to you (either as something you might include in a portfolio, or as something you’d like to learn how to create or improve your performance on). This portion of the project will be graded on a 100 pt scale and will be worth 25% of your final grade.
**Note:** the final project is due no later than May 13 – no exceptions. I only have a couple of days to get all your work graded and final grades submitted from that point. You’re welcome to turn in your final project earlier than May 13, but I will not be accepting any work after May 13 without prior consultation.

**Grading**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Board</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cinema Year Book of Japan 1936-37 Analysis</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Analog Anime Abroad</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Project (cumulative)</td>
<td>55%</td>
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**Final Project Grade Breakdown:**

<table>
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<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Topic &amp; Thesis</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Consultation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Annotated Bibliography</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Project</td>
<td>25%</td>
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**Schedule**

**Week 1: Histories of Japanese Film (Feb 4)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Read (Req’d)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Read (Req’d)</strong></td>
<td>Yomota, “Introduction”</td>
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<td>Yomota, “Motion Pictures: 1896-1918”</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Read (Optional)</strong></td>
<td>Sharp, “Chronology”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Zhang, “Mapping: Ethnography, Transnational Cinema, and Film Studies”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Miyao, “Serialities and Japonisme”</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Watch</strong></td>
<td>Orochi (Buntarō Futagawa, 1925)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Discussion Board</th>
<th>Respond to weekly prompt by Feb 7 (Sun)</th>
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<td>Respond to another response by Feb 10  (Wed)</td>
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**Week 2: The Transnational Logics of Early Japanese Cinema (Feb 11)**

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<th>Activity</th>
<th>Read (Req’d)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Read (Req’d)</strong></td>
<td>Raine, “Adaptation as ‘Transcultural Mimesis’ in Japanese Cinema”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Rael, “Predatory Reading”</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Week 3: Cinema of the Japanese Empire (Feb 18)

| Read (Req’d)          | Yomota, “Film Production in the Colonies and Occupied Lands”  
|                       | Davis, “Moving Pictures of Japaneseness”          |
| Read (Optional)       | Kim, “Performing Colonial Identity”               |
| Watch                 | Tuition (Choi In-kyu, 1940)                      |
| Discussion Board      | Respond to weekly prompt by Feb 21 (Sun)          
|                       | Respond to another response by Feb 24 (Wed)       |
| Research              | Begin reading through *Cinema Year Book of Japan 1936-37*  
|                       | Read, “How to Read a Primary Source”            |

### Week 4: Japanese Cinema and/as International Art Film (Feb 25)

| Read (Req’d)  | Centeno-Martin, “The Misleading Discovery of Japanese National Cinema” |
| Read (Optional) | Akutagawa, "Rashomon” and “In a Grove”         |
| Watch         | Rashōmon (Akira Kurosawa, 1950)                |
| Write         | *Cinema Year Book of Japan 1936-37* Analysis (DUE Mar 4 by 2:30 pm on Collab) |
### Week 5: Coproduction and the Cold War (Mar 4)

| Read (Req’d) | Provencher, “Bizarre Beauty: 1950s Runaway Production in Japan” |
| Read (Optional) | Stephenson, “A Star by Any Other Name” |
| Watch | *House of Bamboo* (Samuel Fuller, 1955) |
| Discussion Board | Respond to weekly prompt by Mar 7 (Sun) Respond to another response by Mar 10 (Wed) |
| DUE | *Cinema Year Book of Japan 1936-37* Analysis (by 2:30 pm on Collab) |

### Week 6: Japanese Films Talk Back (Mar 11)

| Read (Req’d) | Domenig, “A Brief History of Independent Cinema in Japan” Ogawa, “Reinhabiting the Mock-Up Gallows” |
| Read (Optional) | Desser, “Oshima, Korea, and 1968” |
| Watch | *Death by Hanging* (Nagisa Ōshima, 1968) |
| Discussion Board | Respond to weekly prompt by Mar 14 (Sun) Respond to another response by Mar 17 (Wed) |
| Research | Begin reading through *Animerica* Vol. 3 (1994), Issues 1-3 |

### Week 7: Home Video and (Global) Anime (Mar 18)

| Read (Req’d) | Condry, “When Anime Robots Became Read” |
| Read (Optional) | Denison, “Anime is (Not) Cult” |
### Week 8: Behind the Scenes, Below the Line (Mar 25)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Watch</strong></th>
<th><em>Otaku no Video</em> (Takeshi Mori, 1982 &amp; 1985)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Write</strong></td>
<td>Analog Anime Abroad Essay (DUE Mar 25 by 2:30 pm on Collab)</td>
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#### Read (Req'd)
- Tezuka, “The Globalization of Film Finance”

#### Read (Optional)
- Monk, “From ‘English’ Heritage to Transnational Audiences”

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<th><strong>Watch</strong></th>
<th><em>Maurice</em> (James Ivory, 1987)</th>
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| **Discussion Board** | Respond to weekly prompt by Mar 28 (Sun)  
Respond to another response by Mar 31 (Wed) |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------|

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<tr>
<th><strong>Write</strong></th>
<th>Final Project Topic and Thesis Statement (DUE Apr 1 by 2:30 pm on Collab)</th>
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### Week 9: Financing Japanese Film (Apr 1)

| **Read (Req'd)** | Davis and Yeh, “The Power of Small Screens”  
Wakabayashi, Yamada, and Yamashita, “The Power of Japanese Film Production Consortia” |
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<tr>
<td><strong>Read (Optional)</strong></td>
<td>Zahlten, “Home Video in Japan”</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Watch</strong></th>
<th><em>Jam Films</em> (omnibus, 2002)</th>
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</table>

| **Discussion Board** | Respond to Weekly Prompt by Apr 4 (Sun)  
Respond to another response by Apr 7 (Wed) |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------|

| **DUE** | Final Project Topic and Thesis Statement (by 2:30 pm on Collab)  
Schedule a meeting with me to discuss your final project |
|----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
**Week 10: Regional Coproduction (Apr 8)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Read (Req’d)</strong></th>
<th>Tezuka, “Pan-Asian Cinema?”</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Read (Optional)</strong></td>
<td>Morimoto, “The Good Fandom”</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Watch</strong></td>
<td><em>Moumانتai</em> (Alfred Cheung, 1999)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| **Discussion Board** | Respond to weekly prompt by Apr 11 (Sun)  
Respond to another response by Apr 14 (Wed) |

**Apr 15: Student Break – NO CLASS**

**Week 11: Transcultural Japanese Film (Apr 22)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Read (Req’d)</strong></th>
<th>Bingham, “Original Visions”</th>
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</table>
Niskanen, et.al., “Japanese: Baltic Sea Region Film Co-Production” |
| **Watch** | *Kamome Diner* (Naoko Ogigami, 2006) |
| **Write** | Final Project Annotated Bibliography (DUE Apr 29 by 2:30 pm on Collab) |

**Week 12: Streaming and Simulcasting (Apr 29)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Read (Req’d)</strong></th>
<th>Lobato, “Making Global Markets”</th>
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</table>
Read (Optional) | Parasecoli, “Midnight Diner: From Manga to Netflix”
---|---
**Watch** | *Midnight Diner: Tokyo Stories*, “Omlette Rice” (Jōji Matsuoka, 2016, NETFLIX)  
*Terrace House Tokyo 2019-2020*, “We’re Back in Tokyo” (NETFLIX)

**DUE** | Final Project Annotated Bibliography (Apr 29 by 2:30 pm on Collab)

**Week 13: The Transnational Media Mix (May 6)**

**Read (Req’d)** | Denison, “Tracing Asian Franchises”
---|---
**Read (Optional)** | Fung and Choe, “Cultural Capital and Affect at Work”

**Watch** | *Hana Yori Dango* (Yasuyuki Kusuda, 1995)  

**Write** | Final Project (DUE May 13 by 11:59 pm on Collab)

**FINAL PROJECT DUE NO LATER THAN MAY 13**

**Other Resources:**

**Mental Health**

If you are feeling overwhelmed, stressed, or isolated, there are many individuals here to help. The Student Health and Wellness Center offers Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) for its students; call 434-243-5150 to speak with an on-call counselor and/or schedule an appointment. If you prefer to speak anonymously, you can call Madison House’s HELP Line at any hour of any day: 434-295-TALK. Alternatively, you can call or text the Disaster Distress Helpline (1-800-985-5990, or text TalkWithUs to 66746) to connect with a trained crisis counselor; this is toll free, multilingual, and confidential, available to all residents in the US and its territories.

**Reading/Writing Help**

The Writing Center has moved its services online and can assist in:
● **all stages of the writing process:** brainstorming, drafting, revision, argument structure, editing, and other concerns

● **any kind of writing:** essays for classes, conference papers, dissertations/theses, cover letters for applications, personal statements, resumes, etc.

What they won’t do is proofread or edit your work, so please keep this in mind if you seek out their assistance.

If you struggle with any aspect of reading, including dyslexia, English as a foreign language, eyesight issues, and so on, I recommend checking out the Read&Write toolbar available for free through UVA ITS. With it, you can create mp3 recordings of readings and select other texts, translate unfamiliar words, write using speech-to-text, and so on.