UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Japanese Culture

2526-1-E2002R010

Course title

Japanese Culture

Topics and course structure

Topics and program of the course
The course is designed as introduction to the study of Japanese history and culture: a wide-ranging overview, starting from the earliest evidence regarding the origins of the people and their culture, to Japan's introduction into the international framework in modern and contemporary times. The first part of the course provides a historical framework, useful for introducing - in the second part of the course – to the study and research insights related to its cultural development in artistic, philosophical-religious and literary fields. Focuses are planned on some topical moments of cultural-historical evolution, highlighting points of contact with 'other' cultures.

Objectives

The course aims to provide students with a basic knowledge of historical and cultural issues about Japanese history and culture. Students will be able to effectively synthesize the acquired knowledge by enhancing the specificities of Japanese culture and integrating it with knowledge related to monographic topics (see texts of their choice) or possibly acquired in other disciplines.

Methodologies

Frontal lectures with audio-visual aids, focusing on some issues related to the current world.
On the e-learning page relative to the course, reading/video materials are uploaded in order to deepen the topics covered during the frontal lecture.

Online and offline teaching materials

Programme and references

Programme
The ancient age: origins of Japanese people and culture/formation of a unitary state/cultural influxes from the Asian continent and “native” evolution

- The “feudal age” (12th-16th centuries): the Kamakura shogunate and Ashikaga hegemony/early contacts with the West/ pacification and unification of the “country at war”
- The Edo period (17th-19th centuries): introduction of the Bakuhan system/Confucian philosophy and ethics/urban spaces and popular culture/peculiarity of sakoku
- The Meiji period (1868-1912): the Meiji Restoration and the formation of the nation-state
  modern/westernisation or modernisation?
  -The 20th and 21st centuries (1912 to the present): the fruits of modernity and an emerging mass society/nationalism and militarism/the war and postwar period/from the postwar period to the present

References
Paul Varley, Introduzione alla cultura giapponese, ed. Lindau, Torino, 2020
(mandatory text for everyone)
in addition:
Two texts to choose from:

- Tosolini Tiziano, *Shintoismo*, EMI editrice, Buri (VR), 2015
- (a cura di) Follaco Gala Maria, *Cultura letteraria giapponese*, Hoepli, Milano, 2023
- Tollini Aldo, *L’ideale della via. Samurai, monaci e poeti nel Giappone medievale*, Einaudi editore, Torino, 2017
- Marino Susanna e Vecchia Stefano, *Ainu. Un popolo alla ricerca dell'identità negata*, ed. inriga, Bologna, 2022
- Raveri Massimo, *Il pensiero giapponese classico*, Piccola Biblioteca Einaudi, Torino, 2014
- Morena Francesco, *Gli impressionisti e il Giappone. Arte tra Oriente e Occidente. Storia di un'infatuazione*, Giunti editore, Milano, 2022
- Marino Susanna e Vecchia Stefano, Genshiryoku: da Hiroshima al post Fukushima. Il dibattito sul nucleare tra storia e attualità, inriga edizioni, Bologna, 2026
    - (a cura di) Ciapparoni La Rocca Teresa, *Fuori dal cono d’ombra. Storie di donne tra l’Italia e il Giappone*, ed. Lindau, Torino, 2024

Assessment methods

Oral exam about institutional program and two texts of your choice

Office hours

By appointment, contact the lecturer by e-mail:
susanna.marino@unimib.it

Programme validity

Programs are worth two academic years

Course tutors and assistants

Sustainable Development Goals

QUALITY EDUCATION