Japanese cuisine, Japanese painting, Japanese dogs, Japanese sports, Japanese animation, the Japanese race ... there was a time when these concepts did not exist. How did they come about? When? Why? This course will understand daily life in Japan as a process of co-invention. On one side were outsiders to Japan and on the other Japanese. The invention of Japanese painting, for example, required both the American Ernesto Fenollosa, an American art critic and curator, and Okakura Kakuzo, his Japanese student.

This course will explore the various ways in which Japan was invented through a mix of readings, short lectures, and student presentations. Each class will feature short presentations by three students. The presentations will explore the invention of a practice in Japan, compare it to analogous practices invented elsewhere in the world, and relate it to recent events. The invention of Japanese cuisine, for example, will include a discussion of the history of cuisine in Japan, its comparison to other cuisines (such as Chinese or French cuisine), and a discussion of how today Japanese cuisine has become both a multi-billion dollar industry and a pillar of Japanese national identity.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

All students are required to lead and participate in discussions.

**PRESENTATIONS AND SHORT PAPERS**

Each student will be responsible for three presentations and three short papers. Paper writers will become "experts" on the day’s topic and will each be given 7-10 minutes at the beginning of class to present their findings and lead the day’s discussion. To impart their expertise to the class, each expert will write a short essay (approximately 2 pages double spaced) and be prepared to answer questions and lead discussion on the readings.

Copies of each essay should be posted onto Blackboard 24 hours before the beginning of the seminar. All students are expected to read the student essays as part of the required readings each week.

**CLASS PREPARATION**

All students will be asked to do the readings and come to class prepared to answer a few questions that will be handed out during the previous class.

**RESEARCH PAPER**

Each student is required to write a research paper (10-12 pages double spaced) on one of the topics discussed in the course. The paper will incorporate some of the material discussed in the course, but will also require outside research. The paper will be due on Tuesday December 20 at 4 pm.
REQUIRED TEXTS
You are not required to purchase any texts. All readings will be posted on Blackboard or available online.

GRADING AND ASSIGNMENTS
Three presentations and short papers 15% each
Final paper 35%
Class attendance and participation 20%

Short papers are due 24 hours before the beginning of class. The final paper is due on December 20 at 4 pm. Late papers will be marked down 2/3 of a grade for the first day and 1/3 of a grade for every day thereafter. One week after the due date they will no longer be accepted.

FILM SCREENING
We will be watching three movies in the context of this class: “The Last Samurai,” “Fires on the Plains,” and “Spirited Away.” These films are required and will be discussed during seminar and in conjunction with the readings for the week. Even if you have seen them, it is recommended that you watch it again in the context of the readings for this course

HONOR CODE
All students are expected to adhere to the Oberlin Honor Code on all written assignments.

WRITING ASSISTANCE
Students are encouraged to visit the Writing Center in Mudd Library where tutors from the Writing Associates Program can provide strategies for improving writing skills.

OFFICE HOURS
Mondays and Wednesdays 3:45-4:45 pm or by appointment.
Students are encouraged to come see the instructor with questions about any aspect of the course.

CLASS SCHEDULE
INTRODUCTION
Sep. 7 (W) Introduction

Race and the Breeding of Fascism’s Furry Friends
Sep. 12 (M)

Sep. 14 (W)

The Way of the Warrior
Sep. 19 (M)


*Screening of “The Last Samurai” in King 243 at 7pm on Tuesday September 20.*

Sep. 21 (W)


The Way of the Warrior in the Age of Automatic Weapons
Sep. 26 (M)


Sep. 28 (W)

Japanese Painting and Western Painting
Oct. 3 (M)


Oct. 5 (W)

Alphabets and Ideograms
Oct. 10 (M)

Oct. 12 (W)


Spring Recess

Origins of the Iron Chef
Oct. 17 (M)


Oct. 19 (W)

Chadō: The Way Tea
Oct. 31 (M)


Nov. 2 (W)

Gandhi and the Sewing Machine
Nov. 7 (M)

Nov. 9 (W)

**Nation, Narration, and Film**
Nov. 14 (M)


*Reminder: Screening of “Fires on the Plain” in King 337 at 7pm on Tuesday Nov. 15.*

Nov. 16 (W)

**Japan: Green or Toxic**
Nov. 21 (M)

Nov. 23 (W)

**Toyota and the Magic of the Japanese Production System**
Nov. 28 (M)

Nov. 30 (W)

*Reminder: Screening of “Spirited Away” in King 337 at 7pm on Thursday Dec. 1.*

**When did Animation become Anime?**
Dec. 5 (M)

Dec. 7 (W)

Dec. 12 (M)
Discussion of papers

**Final Paper Due on Tuesday December 20 at 4 PM**