

Summary

Introduction

Definition and significance of popular culture in Japan; analytical framework linking it to Japan's social, political, and economic history.

Chapter 1 – The worst which has been thought and said? Defining popular culture

Explores how 'popular culture' is defined, and discusses theoretical debates within the Japanese context.

Chapter 2 – Floating worlds – the birth of popular culture in Japan

Origins of Edo-period urban popular culture: kabuki, ukiyo-e, leisure, and consumption.

Chapter 3 – A whole new world – cultural exchanges with East Asia and Europe

Influence of Chinese, Korean, and later Western cultural exchanges; hybridization and the creation of new markets.

Chapter 4 – Naughty and nice – early modern Japan's culture wars

Moral debates, censorship, and the role of the state in shaping early modern entertainment.

Chapter 5 – Popular culture as subject and object of Meiji modernization

Popular culture as both a driver and a reflection of modernization and industrialization during Meiji.

Chapter 6 – Cultural living – cosmopolitan modernism in imperial Japan

Urban leisure, cosmopolitanism, and mass media under imperial Japan.

Chapter 7 – Entertaining empire – popular culture as a 'technology of imperialism'

Culture as an imperial tool; dissemination and propaganda within the empire.

Chapter 8 – 'Our spirit against their steel' – mobilizing culture for war

Popular culture in wartime propaganda and mobilization.

Chapter 9 – Democracy, monstrosity, and pensive prosperity – postwar pop

Postwar reconstruction, consumer culture, and new media such as manga and television.

Chapter 10 – Millennial Japan as dream factory

Japan's global cultural exports (anime, J-pop, kawaii) and 'Cool Japan' phenomena.

Afterword – Contemplating cool

Final reflection on the concept of 'cool' and Japan's cultural future in globalization.

Notes, References, Index

Includes a detailed bibliography, glossary with Japanese terms (kanji), and comprehensive thematic index.