

GLOBAL MANGA AND THE MONSTROUS

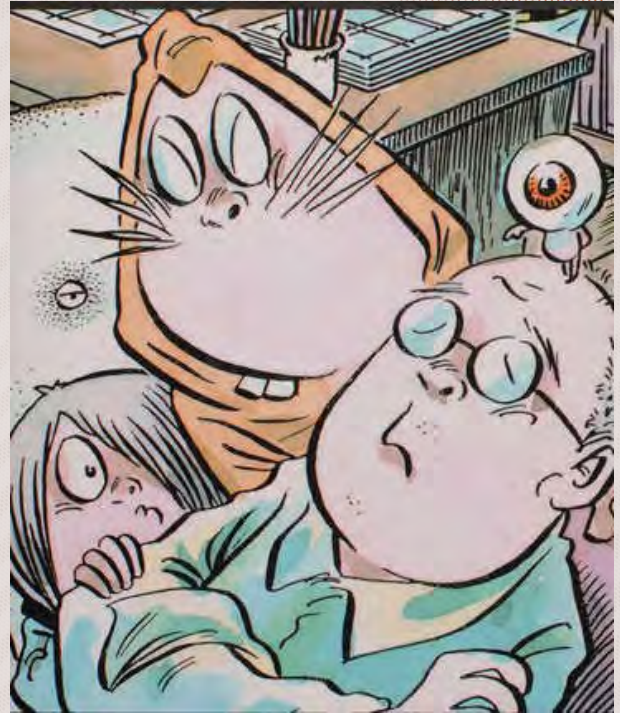
INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH SEMINAR

This seminar connects manga with the monstrous in and thorough postwar Japan, early 1990s Spain, and late 1990s Mexico.

With a special place reserved for Mizuki Shigeru (1922-2015), manga artist and folklorist.

2026 June 18th (Thu)

Time	15:15 - 17:15
Audience	Students and Faculty of Kanazawa University
Language	English
Capacity	170 participants
Venue	Room 401, Human and Social Science Lecture Hall 2



A dialogue between Japanese and Hispanic cultures

Professor
Charles Inouye

TUFTS UNIVERSITY, USA



 GHARLESINOUYE.COM

Dr.
Angélica Cabrera

KANAZAWA UNIVERSITY



 ANGELICACABRERA.SITE

Professor
Eduardo González

KANAZAWA UNIVERSITY



 GONZALEZEDUARDO.COM

Program

15:15 – 15:20 Opening Remarks: Professor Ko Iwatsu, Director, Global Culture and Society Research Center, Kanazawa University

15:20 – 15:50 Seminar 1: Charles Inouye, Professor and Department Chair of International Literary and Cultural Studies, Tufts University

Bring Back the Monsters! Mizuki Shigeru's Critique of Realism

Today we live in Mizuki Shigeru's (1922-2015) world of many monsters. Realism, which would deny the existence of fantastic beings, seems to have weakened its control over our ability to imagine the unrealistic. This loosening comes as the result of many factors, including general changes in the semiotic field that has become increasingly electrified, digitized, and screen-oriented. While the postmodern proliferation of monsters is not any one person's doing, I would like to argue that Mizuki Shigeru's critique of realism and his productive career as a monster-friendly artist has had a significant impact on this shift.

15:50 – 16:00 Q&A

16:00 – 16:10 Break

16:10 – 16:30 Seminar 2: Dr. Angélica Cabrera, Invited Researcher, Center for the Study of Global Cultures and Societies, Kanazawa University

The Invisible World of Mexico: Shigeru Mizuki's Travel Book 幸福になるメキシコ妖怪樂園案内: 水木しげるの大冒険

Societies around the world continue to keep monsters alive because they express the possibility of an existence beyond our own. While many societies have created their own constellation of monsters, the close affinity that Mexican culture shares with these beings is a distinctive feature of its national folklore. This connection has attracted the attention of numerous artists and scholars from around the world, a notable example being the manga artist Shigeru Mizuki, who, after travelling to Mexico in 1999, wrote the book entitled 幸福になるメキシコ妖怪樂園案内: 水木しげるの大冒険 (*Guide to the Mexican Yokai Paradise Where One Can Be Happy: The Great Adventure of Shigeru Mizuki*). This book chronicles his travel experience, documenting through photographs, travel reports, and manga illustrations those beings of the Mexican invisible world.

16:30 – 16:40 Q&A

16:40 – 17:00 Seminar 3: Eduardo González de la Fuente, Associate Professor, Center for the Study of Global Cultures and Societies, Kanazawa University

The Spanish 'Mangamanía' of the Early 1990s and Its Monstrous Object

In 1992, the *Mangamanía* swept through Spain for the first time. It sparked an unprecedented sociological and editorial phenomenon that amazed many and horrified others. Large numbers of Spanish children and youth became infected with an almost frenetic passion for manga and anime. Amid this upheaval, newspapers, media outlets, parents' associations, cultural luminaries, and even politicians soon began to express much concern. Where some discovered in manga a fascinating aesthetic and narrative mode that also fostered the cultural exchange between Japan and Spain, others sensed the dreadful arrival of a foreign form of visual storytelling, inferior in quality and pernicious in its ambiguous treatment of violence and sex.

17:00 – 17:10 Q&A

17:10 – 17:15 Closing Remarks: Professor Haruyuki Kojima, Dean, Graduate School of Human and Socio-Environmental Studies, Kanazawa University

Speaker bios:

Charles Inouye is a Professor of Japanese Literature and Visual Culture at Tufts University in Medford, Massachusetts, where he serves as the Chair of the Department of International Literary and Cultural Studies and has previously served as Dean of the Colleges for Undergraduate Education. His academic background includes a BA from Stanford University (1978), an MA from Kobe University (1982), and a PhD from Harvard University (1988). His research focuses on premodern and modern Japanese literature, figurality, gothic studies, realism, lyricism, animism, and eschatology. Among others, he is the author of *In Light of Shadows: More Gothic Tales by Izumi Kyoka* (2004), *Evanescence and Form: An Introduction to Japanese Culture* (2008), and co-editor of *A Tokyo Anthology: Literature from Japan's Modern Metropolis, 1850–1920* (2017).

Angelica Cabrera Torrecilla is a researcher that has worked extensively on interdisciplinary approaches to time and space in culture, including the study of the multiverse, techno-digital contexts and scientific phenomena, material/visual culture, fictional narratives, and East-West encounters. Among his most recent publications: 'The technological invasion in the cyber/punk graphic narratives of *Blame!*, *We3*, and *The Private Eye*,' in the *Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics* (2026); *The Multiverse as Theory in Postmodern Speculative Fictional Narratives* (Routledge, 2024); or 'Ontological Ambiguity: Crisis, Hyperfiction and Social Narratives in Postmodern Japan' (in *The Anthropology of Ambiguity: Theory, Praxis and Critique*, Manchester University Press, 2024).

Eduardo González de la Fuente, a sociologist of culture by training, specializes in Japan-related studies, with a specific focus on popular culture, media and martial arts. Okinawan studies occupy his other main line of research. He also investigates the cultural circulation between Japan-Spain and Japan-Mexico. His latest publications include: 'Luchadores, Monsters, and Karate Killers: The Early Reception of East Asian Martial Arts in Mexican Cinema,' (in *Combat Sports and Martial Arts in Latin America and Europe*, Routledge, 2025); and 'Japan and Spain in the 1960s: International Relations, Economy, Culture' (in *Japan in the 1960s: Ten Years of Turning Points*, Routledge, 2024).



Global Manga and the Monstrous A dialogue between Japanese and Hispanic cultures in visual studies

Over the past twenty years, the academic study of manga has expanded markedly across Japan and the global scholarly community. However, analysis on manga as a visual culture still face much *terra incognita* in thematic, authorial, chronological, regional and truly interdisciplinary terms. This international research seminar connects manga with the monstrous in and thorough postwar Japan, early 1990s Spain, and late 1990s Mexico.

By moving across these three national imaginaries and sociocultural contexts surrounding the manga–monster nexus, with a special place reserved for Mizuki Shigeru (1922-2015), this seminar explores unfamiliar grounds. Consequently, it generates an offshoot in visual studies that encourages fresh perspectives and lively debate, while advancing towards a more comprehensive, genuinely global understanding of manga and Japanese culture.