

‘Cool Japan’

Concrete Policy or Illusion?

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 Online or at *Campus Condorcet, Bâtiment EHESS, salle A427*
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Japanese popular culture, in the form of anime, manga, and other cultural products, has become popular around the world. The Japanese government has made efforts to profit economically from this phenomenon by adopting the term ‘Cool Japan’. Cool Japan ‘policy’, however, has been patchy, disjointed and confusing. In this seminar, **Nobuko Kawashima** (Doshisha University, FFJ Visiting Researcher) will examine the background and emergence of the policy, its stated aims, its implemented programs and its gradual transformation since the early 2000s. This period corresponds with the changing political structure and administrative reform, whereby the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) has come to assume a central role at the Cabinet Office in making cross-departmental policies, of which Cool Japan is one. However, despite the ambition of METI, Cool Japan lacked substance as a policy: clear aims, evidence of needs, concrete programs to address specific needs, and resources needed for implementation; hence, it is better understood as a *campaign* than as a policy.



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