JPN369 (FS11): Japan and the West in Motion

Project IV: Cultural Representations of Japan and the West in the Postwar Era through the Figure of the Child

Project IV is an opportunity to examine the relationship between Japan and the West through an in-depth study of a set of Japan’s postwar cultural representations of the U.S.’s atomic bombing of Hiroshima. This set includes such works as Nakazawa Keiji’s “I Saw it (Ore wa mita, 1972) and “Barefoot Gen” (Hadashi no Gen. 2001 [in English]), together with Mori Masaki’s Barefoot Gen (1983) and Barefoot Gen 2 (1986). This project is designed to help us gain a critical understanding of how Mori’s two anime films—produced in the 1980s based on Nakazawa’s earlier autobiographical works—revisit the aftermath of Japan’s history of military engagement with the West and its impact on the collective memory and imagination that inform contemporary Japan’s ongoing endeavors to invent and reinvent its national identity vis-à-vis the West in general and vis-à-vis the U.S. in particular. More specifically, we will examine the ways in which the figure of the child is pointedly employed in retelling, reproducing, and circulating globally Japan’s war-related experiences through the unique language of anime.

Study Guides for Project IV (a three-week module for three-session per week)

**Week 1-A**
Focus: Historical backgrounds

**Week 1-B**
Focus: Hiroshima, children, and education

**Week 1-C**
Focus: Graphic novel as the medium of autobiographical ethnography

**Week 2-A**
Focus: Anime as a Politically Engaged Genre I
* Screening: Mori Masaki’s *Barefoot Gen* (Hadashi no Gen, 1983)

**Week 2-B**
Focus: Anime as a Politically Engaged Genre II
*Screening: Mori Masaki’s *Barefoot Gen* (Hadashi no Gen 2, 1986)

**Week 2-F**
Focus: Post-Screening Discussion on *Barefoot Gen* and *Barefoot Gen II* & critical reception

**Week 3-A**
Focus: Revisiting the child figure and *anime* as a genre

**Week 3-B**
Focus: Project Preparation Day
*Refer to Project Topic Sheet

**Week 3-C**
Focus: Project Presentation Day

1. Presentations: Each Presenter should be prepared to deliver a polished five-minute presentation of his or her critical analysis of *Barefoot Gen* (1983) or *Barefoot Gen* (1986). Presenters have the option of showcasing a pre-recorded exhibition, using Audacity, Photo story, or other presentational tools.
2. Discussions: After each presentation, we will hold a discussion of approximately three minutes.
3. Anonymous Peer Reviews and Project IV Award Nominations: All six projects presented will be peer reviewed, and each member will submit one nomination for the Project IV Award. The nomination template is available on Angel. The Awardees will be announced in class during the session following the presentations.