

Subject

Japanese Studies-Ecology through Animations [Fall]

Subject numbering

LACL3400

Lecturer

Onabe Tomoko

Laboratory: St. Andrew Hall 7F Room 721

Office hours: Lunch break on Thursdays

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Number of credits

2 credit(s)

Tentative List of Topics to be Presented

Two of the global leaders in popular animation, Ghibli Studios and Disney, have created captivating animations with endearing characters in archetypal stories that reflect a deep spiritual empathy with nature. In this class we will compare and contrast Japanese and Western thoughts about ecology as seen through some seminal films of these two animation giants. By examining these popular art works within the context of their historic Christian, Shinto, and Buddhist philosophies, as well as modern ecological movements and thinking, we will come to better appreciate the similarities and differences between Western and Japanese thinking, and their development in the past few decades.

Each class will present a comparison of one aspect of ecological thinking and its distinct expression in one Ghibli or Disney film. These “case studies” will demonstrate an understanding of ecological thinking and analysis.

Students are expected to review each week’s topic after class focusing on specific scenes of analysis.

1. Overview: How and why do we study ecology in popular culture?
2. Nature worship: Our Neighbor Totoro 1
3. Nature worship: Our Neighbor Totoro 2
4. Questioning the hierarchy of human beings, animals, and plants: Bambi 1
5. Questioning the hierarchy of human beings, animals, and plants: Bambi 2
6. Questioning the hierarchy of human beings, animals, and plants: Bambi 3
7. Summary and Mid-term exam
8. Japanese popular ecological thought in Princess Mononoke 1
9. Japanese popular ecological thought in Princess Mononoke 2
10. Japanese popular ecological thought in Princess Mononoke 3
11. Deep ecology: harmony through female power in Nausicaa and Cinderella 1
12. Deep ecology: harmony through female power in Nausicaa and Cinderella 2
13. Deep ecology: harmony through female power in Nausicaa and Cinderella 3
14. Deep ecology: harmony through female power in Nausicaa and Cinderella 4
15. Summary/Final exam

Evaluation

Examination: 100%

Report: 0%

Others: %

Mid-term and final exams 100%

Attendance at every lesson is the general rule; 5 or more absences will result in disqualification from assessment. However, authorized absences are excluded. 3 tardies of 15 minutes or more will count as 1 absence. It is desirable that students have the English language skills to understand almost 100% of the class content and what other students say, as no explanations will be given in Japanese. Group discussions must also be conducted in English only. Students must understand that the course is entirely in English only.

Textbooks & Suggested References

Keywords

Japanese ecology, popular culture, gender studies

Class Time

Monday 5th period