The Oxford Handbook *of*
JAPANESE
CINEMA

THE OXFORD HANDBOOK OF

JAPANESE CINEMA

THE OXFORD HANDBOOK OF

JAPANESE CINEMA

Edited by

DAISUKE MIYAO

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Contents

PART III WHAT JAPANESE CINEMA IS!: JAPANESE CINEMA AND THE INTERMEDIAL PRACTICES

List of Contributors

Eric Cazdyn is professor of cultural and critical theory at the University of Toronto. He is the author of the following books: *The Already Dead: The New Time of Politics, Culture and Illness* (Duke University Press, 2012), *After Globalization* (with Imre Szeman, Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), *The Flash of Capital: Film and Geopolitics in Japan* (Duke University Press, 2002); and editor of *Trespasses: Selected Writings of Masao Miyoshi* (Duke University Press, 2010) and *Disastrous Consequences* (*SAQ,* 2007).

Hideaki Fujiki is professor in cinema and Asian studies at Nagoya University, Japan. He is the author of *Making Personas: Transnational Film Stardom in Modern Japan* (Harvard University Asia Center, 2013). He is currently completing a book on cinema audience as social subjects in Japan from a global perspective.

Aaron Gerow is professor in Japanese cinema at Yale University. His publications include *Visions of Japanese Modernity: Articulations of Cinema, Nation, and Spectatorship, 1895–1925* (University of California Press, 2010), *A Page of Madness: Cinema and Modernity in 1920s Japan* (Center for Japanese Studies at the University of Michigan, 2008), and *Kitano Takeshi* (British Film Institute, 2008). With Abé Mark Nornes he also wrote *Research Guide to Japanese Film Studies* (University of Michigan Center for Japanese Studies Publication Program, 2009). He also manages the KineJapan mailing list and runs his own Japanese film website Tangemania (www.aarongerow.com). He is currently writing about the history of Japanese film theory and about Japanese cinema of the 1990s.

Shuhei Hosokawa is professor at the International Research Center for Japanese Studies (Kyoto). His principal research fields are music history in modern Japan and Japanese-Brazilian culture. His publications in Japanese include *A Long Journey of Japanese Language: The Literature of Japanese-Brazilian Immigrants,* 2 volumes (Misuzu Shobo, 2012–13) and *Longing for Home Afar* (Misuzu Shobo, 2008). He has co-edited *Karaoke around the World: Global Technology, Local Singing* with Toru Mitsui (Routledge, 1998) and published articles in *Cultural Studies, Popular Music, Perfect Beat* and other journals.

Dong Hoon Kim is assistant professor of Korean film and literature at the University of Oregon. His research and teaching interests include visual culture, early cinema, film and media spectatorship, and East Asian film, media, and popular culture.

Chika Kinoshita is associate professor of film studies at Tokyo Metropolitan University. Her essays have appeared in *Cinema Journal, Camera Obscura,* and many edited collections both in English and in Japanese. She is completing a book titled *Women on the Edge: The Cinema of Mizoguchi Kenji and Japanese Modernity* (Hosei University Press).

Hiroshi Kitamura is associate professor of history at the College of William and Mary. He is the author of *Screening Enlightenment: Hollywood and the Cultural Reconstruction of Defeated Japan* (Cornell University Press, 2010), which won the Shimizu Hiroshi Award from the Japanese Association for American Studies and the Southeast Conference of the Association for Asian Studies Book Prize. He is currently writing a transnational history of Japanese, Hong Kong, and Hollywood Cinema during the 1950s and 1960s. The Japanese-language version of *Screening Enlightenment* will appear from Nagoya University Press.

Sangjoon Lee is assistant professor in the Department of Screen Arts and Cultures and Asian Languages and Cultures at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. Articles he has written on the Asian Film Festival, transnational horror films, South Korean martial arts films and literatures in the 1960s, and contemporary Pan-Asian epic cinemas have appeared in such anthologies and journals as *Transnational Cinemas, Coming Soon to a Film Festival Near You, East Asian Cinema and Cultural Heritage, Transnational Horror,* and *Contemporary Film Studies*. He is co-editor, with Abé Mark Nornes, of *Hallyu 2.0: Korean Wave in the Age of Social Media* (University of Michigan, forthcoming)

Diane Wei Lewis is assistant professor of film and media studies at Washington University in St. Louis. Her research focuses on Japanese cinema and popular culture, gender and sexuality, and performance. She is completing a book on cinema and sensational media after the 1923 Great Kanto Earthquake and developing a project on film in theater and avant-garde practice in prewar Japan.

Kwai-Cheung Lo, professor in the Department of Humanities and Creative Writing, and director of the Creative and Professional Writing Program at Hong Kong Baptist University, is the author of *Excess and Masculinity in Asian Cultural Productions* (SUNY Press, 2011) and *Chinese Face/Off: The Transnational Popular Culture of Hong Kong* (University of Illinois Press, 2005). Currently he is working on a book manuscript of ethnic minority cinema in China.

Daisuke Miyao is associate professor of Japanese film and cinema studies at the University of Oregon. He is the author of *The Aesthetics of Shadow: Lighting and Japanese Cinema* (Duke University Press, 2013), *Cinema Is a Cat: Introduction to Cinema Studies* (in Japanese, Heibonsha, 2011), and *Sessue Hayakawa: Silent Cinema and Transnational Stardom* (Duke University Press, 2007).

Abé Mark Nornes is professor of Asian cinema at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. He worked in various roles for the Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival for over two decades. His books include *Japanese Documentary Film: The Meiji Era through Hiroshima* (University of Minnesota Press, 2003), *Forest of Pressure: Ogawa Shinsuke and Postwar Japanese Documentary* (University of Minnesota Press, 2007), *Cinema Babel: Translating Global Cinema* (University of Minnesota Press, 2008), and *A Research Guide to Japanese Cinema* (University of Michigan Center for Japanese Studies Publication Program, 2009).

Hidenori Okada is curator of the National Film Center (NFC), the National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo. He is involved at NFC in film preservation, programming, education, archiving of nonfilm material, and exhibitions. Okada has contributed essays to numerous books, mainly in Japanese, including *Cinema and Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere* (edited by Kenji Iwamoto, Shinwasha, 2004), *Documentary Cinema Speaks* (edited by Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival, Miraisha, 2006), *The Encyclopedia of Indonesia in the Pacific War* (edited by William H. Frederick, Iris Heidebrink, and Shigeru Sato, Brill, 2010), *Reviving Somai Shinji* (edited by Tatsuya Kimura, Jinshi Fujii, and Hideyuki Nakamura, Insukuriputo, 2011), and *Images of Postwar Japan: The Documentary Films of Iwanami Productions* (edited by Yoshiyuki Niwa and Shunya Yoshimi, University of Tokyo Press, 2012). He has also edited a Japanese anthology, *Paris in Cinema* (Kashiwa Shobo, 2010).

Michael Raine has taught film studies and Japanese studies at Yale University and the University of Chicago. He is currently assistant professor of film studies at Western University, Canada. He is finishing a manuscript *Modernism, Materiality, and ranscultural Mimesis: New Japanese Cinemas, 1955-1964* and has also written on the "culture of the sound image" in 1930s Japan and on wartime cinema in Japan and its territories.

Carlos Rojas is associate professor of Chinese cultural studies, women's studies, and arts of the moving image at Duke University. He is the author of *The Naked Gaze: Reflections on Chinese Modernity* (Harvard University Asia Center, 2008), *The Great Wall: A Cultural History* (Harvard University Press, 2010). He is the co-editor, with David Der-wei Wang, of *Writing Taiwan: A New Literary History* (Duke University Press, 2007) and, with Eileen Cheng-yin Chow, of both *Rethinking Chinese Popular Culture: Cannibalizations of the Canon* (Routledge, 2009) and *The Oxford Handbook of Chinese Cinemas* (Oxford University Press, 2013).

Ayako Saito is professor in the Department of Art Studies at Meiji Gakuin University. She has written articles on film theory from psychoanalytic and feminist perspectives, melodrama, and postwar Japanese cinema. Her publications include "Hitchcock's Trilogy: A Logic of Mise-en-Scène" (*Endless Night: Cinema and Psychoanalysis, Parallel Histories,* edited by Janet Bergstrom, University of California Press, 1999), "Reading as a Woman: The Collaboration of Ayako Wakao and Yasuzo Masumura" (*Reclaiming the Archive: Feminism and Film History,* edited by Vicki Callahan, Wayne State University Press, 2010), "Women and Fantasy: Yoshida Kiju and Okada Mariko" (*Yoshida Kiju: 50 Years of Avant-garde Filmmaking in Postwar Japan,* edited by Dick Stegewerns, Norwegian Film Institute, 2010). She has also edited a Japanese anthology, *Film and Body/Sexuality* (Shinwasha, 2006) and co-authored books in Japanese, including *Actress Wakao Ayako* (Misuzu Shobo, 2003)*, Male Bonding: East Asian Cinema and Homosociality* (Heibonsha, 2004), and *Fighting Women: Female Action in Japanese Cinema* (Sakuhinsha, 2009).

Miryam Sas is professor of film and media and comparative literature at the University of California, Berkeley. Her most recent book is *Experimental Arts in Postwar Japan: Moments of Encounter, Engagement, and Imagined Return* (Harvard University Asia Center, 2010). Earlier work has explored models for thinking about avant-garde

movements cross-culturally (*Fault Lines: Cultural Memory and Japanese Surrealism,* Stanford University Press, 2001), buto dance (in *Butos,* edited by Odette Aslan and Béatrice Picon-Vallin, CNRS, 2002), and technology and corporeality (in *Histories of the Future,* edited by Daniel Rosenberg and Susan Harding, Duke University Press, 2005). She recently contributed an article on intermedia to the catalogue *Tokyo: A New Avant-Garde* (The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2012) and has forthcoming writings on experimental animation and Pink film. Her next project focuses on contemporary art from the 1960s to the present with a focus on transcultural media theory.

Ben Singer is professor of film in the Department of Communication Arts at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. He is the author of *Melodrama and Modernity: Early Sensational Cinema and Its Contexts* (Columbia University Press, 2001) and is currently completing a book on cultural and universal dimensions of melodrama in global filmmaking traditions. His interest in Japanese cinema was enhanced by a semester teaching in the Associated Kyoto Program at Doshisha University.

Mitsuyo Wada-Marciano is associate professor of film studies at Carleton University (Canada). Her research interests are Japanese cinema, especially its relationship to Japanese modernity, the impact of digital technology on cinema, and East Asian cinema in global culture. She is the author of *Nippon Modern: Japanese Cinema of the 1920s and 1930s* (University of Hawai'i Press, 2008); the Japanese translation was published by Nagoya University Press in 2009. She is also the co-editor of *Horror to the Extreme: Changing Boundaries in Asian Cinema* (Hong Kong University Press, 2009). Her latest publications are *Japanese Cinema in the Digital Age* (University of Hawai'i Press, 2012; in Japanese, Nagoya UP, 2010) and the edited book *Viewing "Postwar" in the 1950s Japanese Cinema* (in Japanese, Seikyusha, 2012). She recently conducted research at Kyoto University for books on the cinema in postoccupation Japan 1952–1960, and on the cinema in colonized Taiwan, 1895–1945.

Ichiro Yamamoto is producer at Shochiku Co., Ltd. He is currently at Shochiku Eizo Center and works on licensing. He was a visiting scholar at the UCLA School of Theater, Film, and Television from 2006 to 2008. The films that he produced include *Kyoto Story (Kyoto Uzumasa monogatari,* 2010)*, About Her Brother (Ototo,* 2010)*, Love and Honor (Bushi no ichibun,* 2006, also as a co-screenwriter), *Quill: The Life of a Guide Dog* (2004), *Café Lumière* (2004), and *Twilight Samurai* (*Tasogare Seibei*, 2002).

Alexander Zahlten is assistant professor in the Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations, Harvard University. His dissertation mapped the structural equivalence of systems of production and dissemination and textual meaning for popular film genres in Japan, such as Pink Film, Kadokawa Film, and V-Cinema. Recent publications have examined the role of postcolonial fantasy in Korean "remakes" of Japanese films, the question of categories in a media mix environment, and the history of German sexploitation cinema. He has curated film programs for institutions such as the German Film Museum and the Athene Francais Cultural Center, Tokyo, and was program director for the Nippon Connection Film Festival, the largest festival for film from Japan, from 2002 to 2010.

INTRODUCTION

DAISUKE MIYAO

JAPANESE cinema has historically and theoretically been one of the world's important national cinemas. First, while Japanese cinema enjoyed its golden age in the domestic market in the 1950s, it obtained a significant international status in the art cinema movement and greatly contributed to the rise of auteurism in film criticism. Then, in the 1960s–1970s, while the Japanese film industry rapidly declined because of the popularity of TV, an academic field that could be called Japanese film studies flourished during the emergence of film studies as a legitimate academic discipline. As Mitsuhiro Yoshimoto and Abé Mark Nornes pointed out, "film studies deployed 'Japanese film' to consolidate itself into an institutionalized field of study."[1]

Currently, with the Japanese government's institutionalization of new measures to promote Japanese films as content, Japanese film appears to be booming again in the domestic market as well as in international film festivals.[2] However, Japanese film studies seem to be triply marginalized: marginalized in film and media studies as one regional cinema (Yoshimoto and Nornes even stated that the field of Japanese film studies had disappeared by 1999); marginalized in area studies as one area of cultural studies; and marginalized by the Japanese governmental policies as nonuseful for commodification of cinema. In addition, even though numerous filmmakers and regular filmgoers/film critics/cinema scholars in Japan had substantial conversations on practices and theories of filmmaking in the early period (1910s–1930s, and 1960s–1980s to some degree), the gap between theories/criticisms and practices has grown deeper. Yoshimoto and Nornes asked already in 1999,

> Exactly what "use value" does Japanese "film" now have for area studies, literature, and other segments of the academy? . . . [I]s it possible for us, scholars of Japanese cinema, to "use" Film Studies and area studies for our agendas?

The Oxford Handbook of Japanese Cinema tries to go further than their outcry.

The aim of *The Oxford Handbook of Japanese Cinema* is to provide the reader with a multifaceted single-volume account of Japanese cinema. This volume addresses productive debates about what Japanese cinema is, where Japanese cinema is, as well as what and where Japanese cinema studies is, at the so-called period of crisis of national boundary under globalization and the so-called period of crisis of cinema under digitalization. By doing so, this collection responds to a number of developments in the rapidly changing field of cinema and media studies. It also challenges a number of underdeveloped areas in the discipline. Our ambition has been to build bridges and foster dialogue among Japanese scholars of Japanese cinema, film scholars of Japanese cinema based in Anglo-American and European countries, film scholars of non-Japanese cinema, nonfilm scholars, film archivists, and film producers who are familiar with film scholarship.

There is an urgent need for a comprehensive but up-to-date volume that grasps Japanese cinema under the rubric of the global, which fills the gap between Japanese and non-Japanese film studies and between theories and practices, and eventually challenges the deep-rooted culturalism of Japanese cinema.[3] The reality of transnational innovation and dissemination of new technologies has yet to make a dent in the deep-seated culturalism that insists on reinscribing a divide between the West and Japan, even in realms of technological activity that are quite evidently dispersed across cultures. Cinema and media studies are not immune to this trend, and they continue to fret over the "Westernness" of film technologies vis-à-vis the apparently self-evident "Japaneseness" of other modes of cultural production. One of the main goals of this volume is to counter this trend toward dichotomizing the West and Japan and to challenge the unwitting yet nonetheless pervasive culturalism of today's cinema and media studies.

These goals orient the volume's division into three parts. The four chapters in Part 1 reevaluate the position of Japanese cinema within the discipline of cinema and media studies and beyond. Questioning profoundly the ways Japanese national cinema has been studied hitherto, each chapter proposes theoretical and historical methodologies that would overcome the tendency of culturalism that Japanese cinema studies has embraced. The focus of all four chapters in this part is on how to examine the complexity of the concept of a nation and the contradictions of a national cinema. Such methodologies cover psychology, politics, aesthetics, religion, spectatorship, and social education.

In Chapter 1, Eric Cazdyn challenges the dominant ways of theorizing the relation between globalization and film. He performs an alternative analysis by examining Japanese cinema without the usual ballast of Japan, or of the nation more generally. Following a close reading of Tanaka Hiroyuki's (Sabu's) 2005 film *Monday*, based on how the film mobilizes the social relationships of its characters in terms of number and how each number (including zero) implies crucial psychological, political, aesthetic, and religious meaning, Cazdyn's chapter then moves to a more general examination of contemporary Japanese film and the world. Focusing on the problem of amnesia, the second part of the essay places the work of contemporary Japanese directors (Kurosawa Kiyoshi, Tsukamoto Shinya, and Miike Takashi) in relation to a series of global directors and problems.

In Chapter 2, Ben Singer closely reviews the discussions about the styles of Japanese cinema in the field of cinema studies. The literature on Japanese film style has been shaped especially by the work of three scholars: Donald Richie, Noël Burch, and David Bordwell. According to Singer, Richie and Burch have promoted a paradigm of Japanese exceptionalism, stressing the salience of traditional cultural aesthetics, while Bordwell has rejected that "*nihonjinron* (theory of Japaneseness)" premise. Underlying the principle disagreement about the alterity of Japanese aesthetics, however, Singer argues, their positions are complex and paradoxical. The notions of Japanese traditionalism advanced by Richie and Burch, although fundamentally aligned, are basically incompatible; whereas Bordwell, their most forceful critic, is also the most persuasive expositor of Japanese stylistic difference. Singer analyzes the debate, particularly with respect to the proposition that Japanese national film style may be distinguished by an accentuation on overt stylization and the prominence of stylistic "flourishes."

In Chapter 3, Aaron Gerow traces the historical role of film criticism in Japan, specifically focusing on its relation to film theory and spectatorship. Starting from the pure film movement in the 1910s and continuing to the post millennium film world, he narrates the development of two dominant tendencies, impressionist and ideological criticism, as well as the alternatives to them explored before and after the New Wave by figures such as Tsurumi Shunsuke, Ogawa Toru, and Hasumi Shigehiko. In this history, according to Gerow, film criticism has functioned less to represent film reception than to serve as a site for struggle over the nature of spectatorship. But it is its inadequate relation to theory, especially its lack of self-critical awareness of its own role, he argues, that has left it ineffective in responding to the decline of criticism in the age of new media.

In Chapter 4, Hideaki Fujiki discusses how the movie audience was imagined in relation to the fashionable term, *minshu* ("the people"), from the Taisho democracy in the 1920s until the total war regime in the 1940s. According to Fujiki, the word was predominantly used in the discourse surrounding, as well as the policies impacting, social education and popular recreation as articulated by the bureaucrats and associated intellectuals of the Japanese Ministry of Education. These authority figures regarded the people who typically flocked to movie theaters as immature. But they also thought that if the people could come to appreciate educational movies, this would lead them to develop willingly into the ideal subjects of a harmonious society that would uphold the imperial state. At this juncture, Fujiki argues, movie audiences were constructed as "the people," and this view remained dominant in the film policy of the total war regime in the 1930s and early 1940s.

The eight chapters in Part 2 situate Japanese cinema within the broader fields of transnational film history. Aaron Gerow claims in his illustrious monograph, *Visions of Japanese Modernity: Articulations of Cinema, Nation, and Spectatorship, 1895–1925,*

> Japanese film studies have focused increased attention on the issue of "national cinema," but even those that recognize that motion pictures are not the manifestation of some age-old national essence, and that they in fact participate in the modern construction of national identity, seem to be compelled to reduce films to the singular

nation, even if that nation is constructed or inherently engaged in transnational systems of difference. By making the national the central category, even supposedly to deconstruct it, many studies have nonetheless made the cinema revolve around the question of the nation, effectively homogenizing it.[4]

As a handbook of Japanese cinema, this volume also engages in the potential "homogenizing" project of a nation. Yet, the contributors of this volume share a concern that the study of Japanese cinema should focus more on "the fissures and contradictions within Japanese film history itself—by considering categories such as class, subjectivity, and modernity that may not be conterminous with the category of the nation."[5]

Technological and artistic maneuvers of film and media do not presuppose any cultural or national conflict in nature. Filmmaking should be located within the transnational discursive and practical network of a preoccupation with and representation of technological modernity. At the same time, however, in Japanese reality, the practices of filmmaking have historically been stabilized and exhibited in close relation to Japan's cultural, national, and colonial politics. Japanese filmmaking has been an *international* affair, to say the least. There has historically been an unequal geopolitical relationship, or an imbalance of power, between Japan and the United States, in particular. There is no doubt that Hollywood has played a ubiquitous role in the development of lighting technology in Japan. Yet, the relationship between Hollywood and Japanese cinema has not simply been a binary opposition between the production and distribution center and periphery, between cultural dominance and resistance, or between global and local. Bearing in mind such tension in the geopolitical perspective between transnationality and a nationality, each chapter describes the historical process of how Japanese cinema has been formulated in the discourse of modernity in Japan.

In Chapter 5, Michael Raine focuses on the topic of adaptation to argue that Japanese cinema has been less bound by traditional culture than by low culture in general, and Hollywood film in particular. Focusing on the 1930s, Raine's chapter shows Japanese studios shamelessly imitating Hollywood technologies and Japanese filmmakers (most prominently Ozu Yasujiro) shamelessly appropriating Hollywood genres as part of an ambivalent project of "transcultural mimesis." As the geopolitical incline between the United States and the rest of the world levels out, transcultural mimesis, the concept that Raine insightfully proposes, draws more broadly on contemporary critical discourse than Miriam Hansen's text-based "vernacular modernism," to remind us that cinema, on the margins of the world film system, has always been a form of adaptation, from something closely identified with the West into something more ambiguous that could split the difference between homage and parody, and sometimes even become an instrument of reflexive understanding.

In Chapter 6, Chika Kinoshita investigates the seemingly self-evident, and yet contested relations among modernization, modernism, modernity, and cinema in interwar Japan. Her focuses are on the *Tokyo March* (*Tokyo koshinkyoku*) phenomena constituted of the well-known 1929 popular song and its accompanying media texts, particularly the film adaptation directed by Mizoguchi Kenji. Made at the time of multidimensional

crisis—class struggle, political polarization, and culture war—in modern Japanese history, according to Kinoshita, the *Tokyo March* texts went beyond mere emblems of "*modan*" (modern) or "*modanizmumu*" (modernism), surface inscriptions of changing social mores in a big city. By closely examining the contemporary discourse, her chapter reveals that, in the realm of mass culture, the *Tokyo March* texts articulated sensorial alienation caused by industrial capitalism by politicizing the city symphony format through montage, an idiom of Soviet avant-garde, and, thereby, condensed the possibilities and limitations of Japanese modernity itself.

In Chapter 7, I examine how female stars emerged in Japanese cinema from a transnational perspective. In Japan, female motion picture actors did not exist until arguably as late as 1918 when Hanayagi Harumi starred in *Sei no kagayaki* (*Radiance of Life*), a product of the film modernization movement. Before this film, the majority of female characters in motion pictures were played by *onnagata,* female impersonators in kabuki. Even in 1919, only three films out of about 150 films released in Japan during that year used female actors for female roles. Under such circumstances, how was a Japanese version of female actors/stars born? In conjunction with the Japanese reception of the star image of Aoki Tsuruko (1891–1961), a female Japanese actor/star in early Hollywood, as well as that of film production technologies that created her stardom, I argue that female stars were born in Japan as a result of a tension-ridden process of translation of stardom in Hollywood and Aoki's embodiment of *Madame Butterfly*. I also examine how Hollywood technologies of lighting and make-up were skillfully incorporated in the composition and lighting of a kabuki convention.

In Chapter 8, Dong Hoon Kim deals with the complexity of colonialism and Japanese cinema. He examines *byeonsa,* a voice performer/narrator who provided live narration for silent films, and its role in the development of film culture in Korea under Japanese colonial rule. Through the discussion of this film practice, which originated from Japanese *benshi,* Kim interrogates questions and problems in historicizing both Korean and Japanese national cinemas in the colonial context. In particular, he explores the ways in which modes of exhibition were inextricably tied to the construction of national cinema, nationalism, and national identity. By investigating Korean film spectators' attempts to decode and re-signify the meanings of film texts and the *byeonsa*'s role as a mediator between those texts and Korean audiences, Kim's argument elucidates the physical and discursive formations of colonial and national cinema at the sites of film exhibition and consumption.

In Chapter 9, Hiroshi Kitamura tackles the notion of "global Hollywood" and its relationship to Japanese cinema. In particular, he examines Paramount's business campaign in Japan during the decade following the Allied occupation. Focusing on the studio's subsidiary office run by Metori Nobuo in Tokyo, Kitamura explores the diverse ways in which the company constructed and disseminated a widespread entertainment culture across the island nation. Key to this effort, according to Kitamura, was the presentation of Paramount culture as "respectable" and "modern" entertainment. Kitamura argues that looking at this cross-cultural process not only reveals "Hollywood entertainment" as a hybrid creation formed by Japanese bridge figures, but also illustrates the

role U.S. studios played in enlivening Japan's cinematic culture in an era of robust local filmmaking. His case study helps us understand Hollywood's hegemonic but contested impact upon postwar Japan.

In Chapter 10, Kwai Cheung Lo turns to the issues of international co-productions. He examines Japan-Hong Kong film productions in light of historical developments and analyzes the ideologies behind these films. He focuses on a number of Japanese-Hong Kong co-productions and investigates how various film genres, under the shadow of the nation's faded economic supremacy, manifest Japan's fantasy of Hong Kong in order to express the nostalgia for its former glory as well as its anxiety over a looming China. Japan's cinematic co-productions and their imaginary depictions of foreign Asians are discussed in connection with its imperialist era, when cinema was used as a propaganda tool to promote its empire, and when Japanese Asianism was an ideology in the service of its nationalist aggression. Lo suggests that the incorporation of Asian foreignness in these films may invite further reflections on Japan's situation and test its willingness to recognize the presence of China in reconfiguring its self-identity in a new era.

The last two chapters of Part 2 examine arguably the most impactful phenomenon in the recent history of Japanese cinema, in terms of transnationalism and globalization, namely, film festivals. In Chapter 11, Sangjoon Lee examines the transnational significance of the Asian Film Festival that began in the early 1950s. As the first inter-Asian film organization in the region, the Federation of Motion Picture Producer's Association of Asia (FPA) began in 1953 under the passionate leadership of Nagata Masaichi, president of Daiei studio in Japan. A year later, FPA's annual event, the Asian Film Festival was held in Tokyo. According to Lee, the festival was not a conventional film festival but a regional alliance summit for film executives of "free Asia" that accompanied the screenings of each participant's annual outputs, a series of forums, and film equipment fairs and exhibitions. Lee's chapter delineates the cultural, economic, and political logic(s) that gave rise to and modified the Asian Film Festival by arguing that the history of the festival, at least the first five years, resulted from the U.S.-driven Cold War politics that enunciated the new map of "free Asia," an anti-communist bloc that was controlled by a new hegemonic regime, America.

In Chapter 12, Abé Mark Nornes charts the history of the international film festival circuit's relationship to Asian cinema, using Japanese cinema to explore the circuit's ideological underpinnings. It concludes with a short history of the Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival to assert the importance of smaller, regional festivals that hold the potential for creating extremely productive short circuits in the system.

It is significant to note that since the end of the twentieth century, new digitalized multimedia technologies and commodities (Internet, cable television, DVD, cellular phone, etc.) have rapidly developed into a dispersed phenomenon. In a world full of multiple and multilateral moving images, the relationship, or physical and psychological distance, between visual images and spectators has drastically changed, as such terms as *access, interface,* and *interactivity* have been used in daily conversations. In particular, as a result of the high mobility of digital videos and easy accessibility to editing software and online exhibition and communication, new possibilities of filmmaking operations

are being discussed among both filmmakers and spectators. In other words, the strict line between producers and recipients of visual images has been rapidly blurring. Simultaneously, however, in recent years, film and media studies have largely rejected theories of cinema that imply technological determinism, in the manner of Jean Louis Baudry or Jean Louis Comolli who saw the monocular lens of the movie camera as *the* key to understanding the history and impact of film. It is now more common to see the effects of cinema as almost continuous with the general structure of modern environments, and as intertwined with other media and technological devices.

The eight chapters in Part 3 examine the materiality of Japanese cinema, scrutinize cinema's relationship to other media, and identify the specific practices of film production and reception. In Chapter 13, Hidenori Okada an archivist at the National Film Center of the National Museum of Modern Art in Tokyo, reveals the history of *film* in Japan, the essential material of filmmaking before the digital era. In 2012, there are only two countries that still produce raw film for motion pictures: the United States and Japan. Production of raw film for motion pictures needs extremely sophisticated technology so that it is not surprising to see such a situation of oligopoly. However, Okada asks, why Japan, in addition to the United States? In order to answer this question, Okada goes back to the period when the first nitrate film was produced in Japan and examines the complicated relationship between the raw-film industry and the filmmaking industry. Okada depicts the fluid environment around Japanese cinema of the 1930s in detail from a materialist and technological viewpoint.

In Chapter 14, responding to Rick Altman's work on film sound, musicologist Shuhei Hosokawa explores how the practices of sound making and filmmaking were historically intertwined. In the early period of filmmaking, according to Hosokawa, a brass band, a sonic symbol for Western civilization, played on the street in front of the theater uninterruptedly ("ballyhoo") to call attention to the passersby and to arouse a certain mood in the theater. With the development of the art of *benshi,* synchronized (in diverse senses) sound making was regarded as an efficient and artful device for the perception of the audience. Yet during the 1910s, Hosokawa argues, the sound practice became gradually fixed with the formalization and industrialization of spectacle.

In Chapter 15, focusing on Yamada Yoji's 2002 film, *Twilight Samurai* (*Tasogare Seibei*), Ichiro Yamamoto, a producer at Shochiku, one of the major film companies in Japan, describes the actual practices of production, distribution, and exhibition of films in contemporary Japan. The current statuses of major film studios, major directors, actual filmmaking practices (scripts, location shootings, postproductions), distribution network, and domestic and international film festivals, among others are meticulously analyzed based on the firsthand experience of the author.

In Chapter 16, Ayako Saito, examines symptomatic discourses of the body valorized in the postwar popular cultural imagination, including literature, stage performance, and cinema. She discusses the contradictory representation of liberated women on screen as one of the most illuminating visual icons of the reformed postwar Japan, including Kinoshita Keisuke's 1951 *Karumen kokyo ni kaeru* (*Carmen Comes Home*) and 1952's *Karumen junjo su* (*Carmen Falls in Love*), as well as some other films by Suzuki Seijun,

demonstrating that the female body as privileged signifier of postwar liberation and defeat continues to haunt the cinematic imagination and memory in the years to come.

The connection between the materiality of cinema and memory in the postwar popular cultural imagination is further explored in Chapter 17. Mitsuyo Wada-Marciano addresses how Matsumoto Toshio's documentary film, *Nishijin* (1961), encapsulated memories of the postoccupation period in Japan. As historian John W. Dower revealed, Wada-Marciano claims, the Japanese people remarkably embraced their defeat along with the United States' support (1999). But, according to Wada-Marciano, further questions remain: whether the Japanese were so accepting, in a unilateral sense, of the new alignment of power, and how they managed the recovering process as cultural subjects. She argues that the postwar period's culture was constituted by a diverse population, shaped by differences in locale and class, especially in the postoccupation period (1952–1960), when the United States had officially ceded control and the Japanese government was desperately seeking a way forward. Viewed in that context, Wada-Marciano argues, *Nishijin*'s depiction of a craftsmen's forced life in the traditional textile trade of Kyoto, Japan, discloses the multiplicity of the Japanese as well as offering an instance to contemplate the role of cinema as the most popular culture at that time. She concludes that the film encapsulates various peoples' multiple memories of cultural center and locale, tradition and modernity, art and craft, and the Japanese and the West. Such memories reveal the dialogue of multiple subjects.

In Chapter 18, examining Matsumoto Toshio's work as well, Miryam Sas shifts gears to the intermedial practices of cinema. Her chapter traces the development of intermedia art in Japan from early proto-intermedial work by Matsumoto, Yamaguchi Katsuhiro, and Jikken kobo (Experimental Workshop) in the 1950s through the rise of intermedia with the exhibition *From Space to Environment* in 1966, experiments in multiprojection, and expanded cinema in the late 1960s, and the transnational event known as "CROSS TALK Intermedia" in 1969. In an era of rapid technological and media change, Sas argues, intermedia art attempts to contend with the situation of the subject's failure in the face of larger systems and structures beyond any individual's grasp. Sas's chapter reveals that art works and theoretical writings by Tono Yoshiaki, collaborations with sound engineer Okuyama Junosuke, and elements of infrastructure "behind the scenes" take on a key role in understanding intermedia artists' response to the overwhelming environment of images and information in 1960s Japan.

In Chapter 19, Carlos Rojas examines the intermedial, or even transmedial, perspective that Nakata Hideo's 1998 film *Ringu* presents. Together with the broader genre of J-Horror within which the film is positioned, Rojas argues, *Ringu* both thematizes and exemplifies a phenomenon of cultural contagion. Like the film's haunted videotape (which kills its viewers unless they help the tape reproduce by making a copy of it), *Ringu* is very much a product of its own infectious self-reproduction. Suzuki Koji's original 1991 novel has inspired a wide range of adaptations, sequels, sequels of adaptations, and adaptations of sequels in media ranging from literature to radio, television, film, *manga,* and even video games. A key element in the original novel, and one that recurs either explicitly or implicitly in all of its adaptations and sequels, is that of the virus, and

this article uses the figure of the virus as its entry point into an analysis of Nakata's film and the broader cultural context within which it is embedded.

The close attention to the intermedial expansion of cinematic practices by Sas and Rojas is the central theme of the closing chapter of this volume by Alexander Zahlten. In Chapter 20, Zahlten traces the media mix system in Japan by focusing primarily on examples from anime and manga. For this, he utilizes a metaphoric approach to analyze the effects of underlying and structuring metaphors such as single and multiple worlds or liquidity. Taking theories on the media mix from Japan into account, he, on the one hand, connects them to specific practices and discourses in law, policy, economy, and consumption that the media mix is tied to. On the other hand, Zahlten examines how these practices and discourses are related to certain textual strategies that become increasingly prominent in media mix texts. Finally, he proposes that the media mix encourages a potentially problematic perception of history and possible futures.

Notes

1. Mitsuhiro Yoshimoto and Abé Mark Nornes, "Kinema Club Workshop: Japanese Cinema Studies in the Rear View Mirror: Re-Viewing the Discipline" (1999). http://pears.lib. ohio-state.edu/Markus/workshop/wconclusion.html. This book has preserved Japanese name order, which places the family name first (e.g., Tanaka Hiroyuki), except for the authors of the chapters of this book and famous persons and scholars who are commonly referred to by their given names first (e.g., Mitsuhiro Yoshimoto). In principle, this book does not use macrons for Japanese transliterated texts, except when authors think it would be more appropriate to use them.
2. Aaron Gerow, "Recent Film Policy and the Fate of Film Criticism in Japan" (July 11, 2006). http://www.midnighteye.com/features/recent-film-policy.shtml
3. There have been only a few single-volume account of Japanese cinema and its history in English language: the works of Donald Richie and Joseph L. Anderson in the 1950s–1960s (*The Japanese Film: Art and Industry,* 1959, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982, to begin with) and Noël Burch in the 1970s (*To the Distant Observer: Form and Meaning in the Japanese Cinema,* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979) are still regarded as the essentials. Even though there have been large numbers of scholarly works, critical essays, and substantial reviews on Japanese cinema, they focus on more specific and specialized topics, areas, and personnel. As for a single-volume account of Japanese cinema, only Isolde Standish's *A New History of Japanese Cinema: A Century of Narrative Cinema,* New York: Continuum, 2006 has been added recently to the small list. Even though there are other recently published survey-type monographs and anthologies, including *Reframing Japanese Cinema: Authorship, Genre, History,* edited by Arthur Nolletti, Jr. and David Desser, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992; *Word and Image in Japanese Cinema,* edited by Dennis Washburn and Carole Cavanaugh, Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001; *Japanese Cinema: Texts and Contexts,* edited by Alastair Phillips and Julian Stringer, London and New York: Routledge, 2007; and Keiko I. McDonald's *Reading a Japanese Film: Cinema in Contex,* Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2006, they tend to be compilations of essays that focus on analyses of individual texts, whether canonical ones or not, even

though this volume does not intend to downplay the singularity of the film but explore how the film text itself could be located in the network of global film culture historically, theoretically, and practically.

4. Aaron Gerow, *Visions of Japanese Modernity: Articulations of Cinema Nation, and Spectatorship, 1895–1925* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), 13.

5. Ibid., 14.

WHAT IS JAPANESE CINEMA STUDIES?: JAPANESE CINEMA AND CINEMA STUDIES

CHAPTER 1

JAPANESE FILM WITHOUT JAPAN: TOWARD A NONDISCIPLINED FILM STUDIES

ERIC CAZDYN

OVER the past several years, many scholars and critics working on Japanese film have been arguing over the role of the nation. How do we think about East Asian studies without dividing up the discipline into Chinese, Korean, and Japanese studies? How do we think about film studies without comparing national film canons? And from the other direction, how do we reconfigure these disciplines without completely disintegrating their respective objects of study (namely, the particular national histories of China, Korea, and Japan as well as the specificity of film)? My own position is that both East Asian and film studies as presently configured are no longer suitable for our contemporary moment and that it is a mistake to build a field called "Japanese film studies."

This is not an argument against East Asian and film studies in particular but against the contemporary form of the university system in which they exist. We should resist the temptation to claim academic turf and strive to retain the rigorous study of Japanese film as an activity without discipline, one that shakes up Japanese studies, not to mention the humanities and the social sciences more generally. What it might mean to be rigorous and not academically disciplined is an ideal that harks back to what was once radical about film studies. For those scholars who wanted to pursue structuralism or poststructuralism but could not do so in philosophy departments, film studies represented a liberated zone for such work. For those who wanted to pursue a psychoanalytic critique but could not do so in psychology departments; a feminist critique but not in English; non-Western textuality but not in literature; or for those who just wanted to politicize their work but could not do so in political science, film studies lit up academia like a beacon in the night.

To be rigorous and not academically disciplined is a difficult circle to square these days because contemporary scholarship militates against such work. The university usually produces three types of knowledge. First is what we might call a disciplined rigor. This is the very straight and solid scholarship within the disciplines, the work that we need and depend upon and that must continue in any vibrant intellectual culture. But this scholarly heavy lifting is contained by each discipline's respective canon, so that an intellectual problem can only be pursued by way of an agreed upon trajectory. Second is an unrigorous discipline: a weak scholarship that coasts on an already established disciplinary tradition. This makes up the bulk of the work conducted in the contemporary university, scholarship that substitutes proper names and buzzwords for thinking and that gains legitimacy by way of mutually interested academics policing an inside track to institutional resources. The third type of knowledge is an unrigorous nondiscipline (the worst kind of academic amateurism that often hides behind the moniker "inter-disciplinary"). These three types of knowledge production are driven by the growth of the corporate form of the university (in which academic "excellence" is measured by the number of articles published, students placed, and dollars raised) as well as the ideology of academic neutrality and the celebration of ever-narrowing specialties.

To challenge these limits we cannot simply turn to a mode that ignores the mediation of the nation or that of the university. Rather we must try to organize a different type of inquiry, a rigorous nondisciplined activity that stands on different theoretical ground—one that is not driven by a certain national or academically disciplined epistemology. Even when scholars are celebrating the global and are weary of a nation-based study, they tend to smuggle in (however unconsciously) a way of thinking that is organized by national categories. To criticize the "national" is to suggest not that the nation does not matter anymore (this claim has always been absurd and more of a red herring within the globalization debate) but that the national, as such, coordinates with a historical moment of modernity that is no longer dominant. Likewise, even when scholars are celebrating the more capacious fields of visual studies or cultural studies, they are still at risk of employing discipline-based assumptions. There is a formal component to thinking, in other words, that continues to rely on national and disciplinary modes of scholarship. This has more to do with how we organize knowledge than in what our objects of study actually are—an anachronism that also penetrates much of the work coming out of the one field that was supposed to be immune to such parochialisms, namely globalization studies itself.

Rather than occupying ourselves with a metadiscussion about how globalization processes might transform East Asian and film studies, I want to present a model of what type of questions and answers—what type of readings—can be generated by an alternative vision. This model will be inspired by the following challenge: *Is there a way of thinking about the relationship between globalization and film that is neither a study of the globalization of film nor a study of the films of globalization—the two usual ways through which this relationship is thought.* The former (the globalization of film) consists of studies that track how film production and distribution circulates around the world (this work is usually driven by more social scientific concerns and methods),

while the latter (the films of globalization) consists of studies that examine particular films about globalization (studies usually coming from the humanities and that focus on the representational strategies of content-based themes, such as diasporic flows, multilingual relationships, transnational finance, or geopolitical intrigue). There is a tremendous amount of social knowledge that can be acquired by asking the question in these two ways, but I want to argue that the most generative theorization of globalization and film today—and for the study of Japanese film more specifically— must produce an alternative way of thinking about this relationship. The following is an attempt to perform this alternative and will begin with a close reading of a single Japanese film (not in terms of globalization themes) before moving to a more general examination of contemporary Japanese film and the world (not in terms of production or distribution matters).

Counting by Laughter

Let's start with Tanaka Hiroyuki's 2005 film *Monday*. Waking to the Monday morning weather report, salaryman Takagi Koichi finds himself in an empty hotel room. He cannot remember where he has been or how he got there and he is suffering from an intense hangover. Reaching into his pocket, he begins to remove items that trigger his memory, slowly unraveling the events of the past few nights: an explosion at a bizarre funeral, a hysterically dull conversation with his girlfriend, accidentally falling in with the *yakuza*. The more he recalls, the more sinister his circumstances prove to be. Bouncing back and forth across moments in time in order to make sense of the present, director Tanaka (who prefers to go by the single name Sabu) playfully confuses reality, emphasizing the instability and rewritability of history. *Monday*, above all else, is about laughter (the laughter of the characters and the laughter of the audience) and inspires us to examine the political, cultural, and psychological stakes of laughter. We can identify five key moments of laughter in *Monday*, each of which corresponds to a different number and to a different mode of social relations and that opens up to an argument about contemporary film, Japan, and the world.

Let's begin with the "Number One": the salaryman laughing by himself when meeting for drinks with his girlfriend. Earlier that day, Takagi attends an open-casket funeral of a friend. In the middle of the ceremony, a doctor calls to inform the mourners that the corpse still contains a working pacemaker that must be immediately disabled. Takagi is chosen for this task. Not quite sure which wire to cut (he is supposed to cut the white one, but both are stained with blood), Takagi carefully snaps a wire and everyone seems relieved. But suddenly the corpse's eyes open and the body explodes. Later that evening we see the traumatized Takagi with his girlfriend at a bar. She rattles on about her life without listening to him. He finally erupts with the information about his unbelievable day and begins to laugh hysterically. She leaves the restaurant in disgust, leaving Takagi alone and still laughing.

FIGURES 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, AND 1.4

(*Source:* Tanaka Hiroyuki's *Monday*, 2005).

This is the laugher of the One. Separate, isolated, alienated. Apoplectic laughter. Laughter that distances and does not communicate. The laughter of the loner. The madman. The hysteric. The crackpot who (no longer capable of relating to others) cracks up, freefalls irretrievably down into his own schizoid fantasy world. In the case of *Monday* it is how the salaryman expresses the trauma he just witnessed (the exploding corpse) when faced with his narcissistic girlfriend, who demands repression, distraction, and forgetfulness (however, she herself can remember—impressively so—all twenty-three wards of Tokyo). The trauma of the corpse is the trauma of the unbelievable or, even more so, the incommunicable. It is the literalization of that "you're not going to believe this" moment; yes, you are quite literarily not going *to be able to* believe this and I am quite literally not going *to be able to* communicate this—this gap, this lack (that laughter flashes) is built right into our beings and is terrifying precisely because it makes us only too aware of something, not that something's missing but that nothing's missing and we are still living at a loss. This is not simply an existential horror but a political one—for if one cannot communicate and represent and thus join with others then one cannot challenge injustice and produce social change. The exploding corpse, therefore, is not just the trauma that cannot be communicated, but it also alludes to the film's genre— *Monday* is a horror film, if by horror we understand (as Kurtz did in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*) that horror has a face and we must make a friend of horror, or at least we must laugh at it. And we must find someone to laugh with, and in the salaryman Takagi's case it is not his girlfriend, but a new friend, an amateur palm reader he meets at a different bar later that evening. And this takes us to the "Number Two."

The laughter of Takagi and the palm reader at the bar is coupled, obsessive, convulsive, infectious, unstoppable. This is a laughing spell that builds for nearly six minutes of cinematic time. The bodies are joined. By the hand and by the prophetic future. There

FIGURES 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, AND 1.8

(*Source:* Tanaka Hiroyuki's *Monday*, 2005).

is something sensual and private about the two. A pact against the world. A *Thelma and Louise* embrace. Double suicide. The laughter of the two must be cut off from others; it is a secret that is betrayed the moment it is shared with anyone else. The partner in this pair is a lover or sometimes—as in the case of *Monday*—a stranger, and together they must protect against the incursions of the world. The boisterous, obnoxious, garrulous laughter in the bar acts as a fortress against a world that must be held at bay. For like the One, the Two is (are) also alone, separate, and lacking…and in *Monday*, this Two is interrupted by a woman in white, by heterosexual desire, by the third—which takes us to the "Number Three."

At the bar Takagi meets a beautiful woman and her man, a *yakuza* boss. One thing leads to another, and Takagi finds himself holding a shotgun and aiming it at two *yakuza*. So as not to be killed, each *yakuza* must laugh. When one of the *yakuza* begins to laugh,

FIGURES 1.9, 1.10, 1.11, AND 1.12

(*Source:* Tanaka Hiroyuki's *Monday*, 2005).

Takagi takes aim at the other. Then the other *yakuza* begins to laugh and Takagi aims at the first. This goes back and forth for a while.

In this case one laughs in order to save one's own life. This is at-the-end-of-a-gun laughter. Murderous laughter. Oppositional, extortionist, vengeful, hair-triggeringly dangerous. This is the logic of the Three, in which the One is against the Two, the Two against the One, with the One, the Two, and the Three playing each position in turn. In this mode, and despite the circularity, the third is always sacrificed. Sometimes by self-defense. Sometimes by jealousy. Or sometimes by a big gun going off accidently. Something always manages to kick the Three back into its most basic elements, the Two and then the One. In *Monday*'s case, it is the killing of the *yakuza* boss. Sometimes, however, the dissolution of the Three moves in the other direction, as is also the case in *Monday* when the Three turns into the Four, which takes us to the extraordinary scene of group laughter near the end of the film.

After holing up in the hotel room all day and finally realizing that he is the target of a national manhunt, Takagi finds himself standing outside facing a huge crowd composed of police, members of the media, city workers, and a dense assortment of curious onlookers. Every gun is trained on Takagi, and the situation is tense. He proceeds to make a speech, a kind of Rodney King moment in which he implores everyone to "just get along." A sniper throws down his gun. Then another. And another until the entire crowd erupts into a euphoric party of collective laughter.

This is the laughter of the collective, of "the Four." The unification of the One, the Two, and the Three. All different groups. Contradictory. Antinomal. Structurally opposed terms (media, politicians, *yakuza*, workers, police, innocent bystanders). This is a utopian moment. Everyone drops their weapons or their microphones or brooms and enters into a hat-flinging, shoulder-slapping, bellyaching, group-hugging slow motion celebration. But, no one who knows the history of Japan can fully smile at such a scene, especially when remembering Japan's militarist past (in which a similar

FIGURES 1.13, 1.14, 1.15, AND 1.16

(*Source:* Tanaka Hiroyuki's *Monday*, 2005).

unanimity formed while dissent was snuffed out)—difference sacrificed in the name of the emperor. And so the Four takes us back to the One, not the isolated individual but the fascist collective. At least as it is indelibly imprinted on the history of modern Japan.

Up until this point we have established quite a sad and pathetic mathematics. Everything adds up to nothing. But there is one more number that we need to explore. And this number is wild, so much so that it reverses the value of everything. Now "the One" is about freedom, "the Two" about love, "the Three" about experimentation, and "the Four" about inclusivity.

This fifth number, however, is not Five, but Zero, that number that is not quite a number, but not quite nothing either. The Zero in *Monday* is us, the spectators: our laughter that breaks open *Monday*'s narrative and pulls apart the various ideologies and formal conventions that suture cinematic narrative more generally. In a different place and a different time than the places and times in *Monday* itself, our laughter is inextricably tied to *Monday*, without which the movie would not exist. Only with the introduction of Zero can a structure be constituted, and only with the introduction of a structure can we imagine (however impossibly) a more radical form of social relations that exceeds this very structure—a form that trumps the others as represented by the One, the Two, the Three, and the Four.

In his *Transcritique*, Karatani Kojin reminds us that zero was invented in India and was originally the name for not moving a bead on an abacus. If it were not for zero, the numbers 205 and 25 would be indistinguishable. Zero in Sanskrit is the same as the word for the Buddhist concept of emptiness (*sunyata*). But the Buddhist nothing, or *ma* in Japanese aesthetics (the gap, the difference, the negative space, the structuring absence, the interstitial), is not nothing, but neither is it something. It is precisely when we reach this paradoxical nothing/something that things get interesting, even laughable. It is Hotei, the Laughing Buddha, who is regarded as an incarnation of the bodhisattva who will be Maitreya (or the Future Buddha) once the teachings of the current Gautama Buddha are completely forgotten. Laughter, in this legend, therefore, prophesizes a future event that marks radical change and is linked to forgetting—not too far away from the stuff of *Monday*.

This nothing/something is not unlike what we sometimes call a *relation*—it is the structuring absence that gives meaning to all of the positive elements that make up our lives and when pushed to its limit deconstructs meaning itself, slapping us with the unbearable truth that meaning itself only exists insofar as we desire it. This emptiness—this relation—is a floating signifier that structures being and that keeps open the possibility for a revolution of being. When we move from Buddhist philosophy to film art, relation turns into the concept and practice of editing and narrative transition, the cinematic techniques that mediate one shot with the next and one scene with the next. We can think about these edits and transitions with an eye on how Sabu takes us from number to number.

The first cut to the funeral comes after Takagi reaches into his suit pocket for a pack of cigarettes and finds some purification salts that remind him of the exploding corpse. The cut to the One (laughing alone with his girlfriend) comes when he accidently sees

a picture of himself and his girlfriend when opening his datebook. The transition to the Two, the bar scene with the palm reader, comes after the scene with his girlfriend and some sounds unintentionally escape his mouth (small whines); he then looks up and this takes us to the next bar and to Takagi's new friend, who also emits faint sounds (*dame da*, *dame da ta*, or "it's hopeless, hopeless"). The following cut to the woman in white and to the *yakuza* boss, the Three, comes by way of what has to be one of the great moments in the history of cinema, the extended peeing scene in the bar's beat-up toilet (a tour de force of rhythm and control in which Takagi, liberated and happy, urinates to the beat of Captain Funk's "I Wanna Get Down"). And it is the name card of the *yakuza* attached to the bottom of Takagi's shoe (and later the discovery of shotgun shells as he unknowingly turns them around in his hand before pulling them out of his jacket pocket) that takes us to the Four, the killing spree and the group laughter scene. *Each transition, therefore, comes by way of the body: signs that fall off of the body, that slip from it, that stick to it, that are discovered on it, and that flow out of it. It is the body that triggers the mind, the remembering.*

Another way to think about *Monday*'s transitions is to think about them in terms of emptiness. The space that separates each number is held open so that the film can be viewed as a series of gags, separate skits edited together only by the laughter (the characters and our own) that jumps the space between the episodes. In this case it is the laughter that holds the film together, that produces a logic of relation based less on meaning and more on bodily intensities.

Here we might want to remember that Japanese film editing was most interestingly theorized in the 1930s by Kamei Fumio, who after studying in the Soviet Union with Sergei Eisenstein returned to Japan to make film inspired not only by his foreign teacher but also by haiku—that for Kamei presented the exemplary model for film editing. In haiku, the listener (or reader) moves back and forth between the abstract and the concrete, through time and space, by way of the emptiness between the stanzas (gaps that function like short circuits, rather than rational pathways). Kamei, who is most famous for his documentaries about colonialism and war, made film in which the space between the shots would be left open so that instead of chasing after the film and only thinking about it after it was finished, the viewer would enter into the film and transform it. This technique is most directly evident in Kamei's 1941 film about the great haiku poet, Kobayashi Issa. Kamei tried to produce what he called the *ma* (or empty space) between two shots—that gap that activates critical thinking. Sabu does something similar, but less on the level of the space between the shots and more on the space between the scenes.

Or we could move to another cultural tradition, that of the Japanese theater, and think about *kyogen* (the comedic theatrical form that is performed in between the longer and more solemn acts of Noh). *Kyogen*, in contrast to Noh, is less symbolic and formal; its main goal is to produce laughter. In this case we can understand the *kyogen* as an edit between two Noh episodes—an edit that functions by way of laughter. The autonomy of the play or poem is broken the moment there is room for the audience to maneuver.

But this room is established precisely by breaking down the reason that sutures the plot together and ultimately pacifies the audience.

But if we want to read *Monday* in terms of rational pathways and linear progression (and not in terms of laughter), all we need to do is stress the heavy-handed and tired forays into alcoholism and gun control—those social issues, stoked by an effete Japanese media, that seem to drive the film. On his hotel television, Takagi flips from channel to channel, watching a recognizable crew of critics analyze his behavior. But to focus on the moral issues at stake, as these critics do, leads us down a dead-end—one populated not just by the megalomaniacal Japanese celebrities themselves (so wonderfully parodied by Sabu) but also by paralyzing narratives of meaning (ideologies) that return us right to the most dystopian aspects of the four numbers established earlier, a futile cartoon about how evil, desperation, violence, and chaos prevail over the good and the harmonious (or the equally futile cartoon of how good prevails over evil). Even Takagi himself seems to be struggling with his desire to understand things in such narrow terms. "If only I didn't drink too much," "If only I didn't have that gun," and then, "That couldn't have happened," "It wasn't me."

But we must resist this temptation to moralize, for when we do *Monday* ends up as tedious and conservative as the media blowhards themselves. Rather, a return to Zero (and to laugher) is in order. But this time, to the time of Zero, the time of laughter. *Monday* is already a temporal category, one that straddles the week before and the week to come. Takagi wakes up Monday morning with not so much a hangover as an amnesic spell. The first part of the film is told in flashback (triggers that take us to the funeral, the café, and the bar) while the middle of the film catches up with itself by way of the media—the newspaper and TV indicate the exact time and day of the week (by the time we get to this point in the film the triggers work in reverse, so the shotgun shells take us back to the hotel room). Unlike most films in which the real-time moment comes at the end, *Monday* saves the last third of the film for the future. Now we have flash-forwards that do not signal what is to come but our desire and fear of what can come—presenting simultaneous (if not contradictory) endings leaving us truly stumped as to whether or not Takagi makes it out alive. But this last section also presents a different temporality (a different logic of time)—after the film catches up with itself it proceeds to move ahead of itself. *Monday* rushes ahead of history. This different temporality does not understand past, present, and future as discrete moments, one leading to the other like so many days on a calendar. Rather, this is the time of Zero.

Zero is not real time, but unreal time. It is like the moment after the electrical surge when the digital clocks blink "00:00:00." Not a specific instant in time or a specific mode of time, but Time, capital T. In this sense, Zero is not outside of time, it is time. But if Zero is also our laughter (as argued earlier), then by extension our laughter is not outside of the film; it is film. For *Monday*'s math to add up to something we must make this case for how our laughter is film before delineating what type of social relations our laughter represents and speculating on what this might teach us about the present state of Japan and the world.

Monday positions the audience to laugh at the characters' laughing. We are laughing at laughing. Laughter makes us laugh. Of course, there are films in which we cry at character's crying or get scared at characters that are scared, but there is something unique about our laughter in *Monday*. And this is because when we cry or get scared in the theater, we usually do so because we are invested in and tied to the plot. But in the case of *Monday*, we are laughing at the characters' laughter precisely because this laughter is severed from the plot of the film. We are not laughing at the story (or the acting in the story) as much as at the singular act of laughter.

There is a looking-into-the-sun quality about laughing at laughter. It is a closed circuit. An identity of equal terms that calls into question the way value is produced. Modern value systems (from cinema to economics to politics) work by way of difference—one term is represented (granted value) by way of its differential relation to another term. A bowl of noodles equals that of a pack of cigarettes. Each costs the same amount of money. A bowl of noodles cannot be equal to the same bowl of noodles. It cannot be equal to itself. The same goes for film. Films attain value by way of their relation to different films within a larger system of film. Genres, actors, and directors are understood in terms of other genres, actors, and directors. And the same goes for politics. A national politician stands in for (or represents) a citizen. The political value of the citizen is mediated by way of his or her political representative. And the value of the representative is mediated by way of the support she garners from her constituency. This is the fundamental logic of representative democracy, however much the history of this logic is overwhelmed by failure.

But this breaks down today on the global level as representative democracy itself breaks down; global representatives do not adequately represent the majority of citizens because transnational corporate executives and decision makers are not elected. Even though there is something called globalization (a transformed geopolitical system in which nations are not the primary units of analysis), there is still not an available way by which global social relations can form that is not defined and contained by the nation. Even though the economy of the world is thoroughly integrated in ways that exceed individual nations (as we have come to experience with a vengeance in the latest financial meltdown), the social relations are not integrated. Japan is still understood in terms of its difference to other nation and "the Japanese" are still understood in terms of their difference from non-Japanese (the great ideological mantra that prefaces and modifies most sentences in present-day Japan continues to be *ware ware no nihonjin* ["we Japanese are"…like this, or embarrassed about that]).

How to break open the nation and build new global collectives is the great challenge of our time. But for this to occur new identities are required for which we have no available social models. We do, however, have cinematic models. And one of these is *Monday*: a film that produces a new identity organized around the laugh, in which our laugh (or Zero) comes back to mark itself as missing—as the lack inherent in the One, the Two, the Three, and the Four. But this "something's missing" quality also indicates "something that can become." And this is how I choose to view and experience *Monday,* as the insurgent laughter coming from a radically different future: think time machine

slapstick or Chris Marker comedy. This is somewhat of a stretch, to read revolutionary political possibilities into the formal intricacies of a marginally popular Japanese film. Not to mention pinning to this film everything from a mathematical theory of number to Buddhist philosophy, from Lacanian psychoanalysis and the phenomenology of film experience to Marxist political economy and a dialectical theory of history. Put this way, of course, this argument is laughable. And I have not even begun to delve into some of the great philosophies of laughter (from Bergson to Baudelaire, from Soseki to Karatani). What I have quite intentionally excluded from this argument are the various cultural anthropologies of laughter. For example, the essentialisms that explain Japanese laughter as so many unique traits of "the Japanese" (Ruth Benedict). Not that these are wholly wrong or even uninteresting, but like Sabu's portrayal of alcoholism, if we go down that road we will only find what we expect to find. To get to the unexpected, if not to the future, rather, requires a cracking up—the beginnings of which we can sense in *Monday* and its visionary brand of revolutionary comedy.

Forgetting Japan

We can develop this argument about the relation between globalization and film by moving from the formal details of *Monday* to the more general qualities of the cinematic subgenre to which it belongs, that of the amnesia film. In Kurosawa Kiyoshi's film *Cure*, for instance, a rash of murders has occurred in which the unlikely murderers have killed in the same way and have no memory of the recent past. We learn that there is a hypnotic spell circulated by a young psychology student who cannot remember his past or his name. He spreads the killing suggestion by way of a form of questioning. When someone asks him who he is, he responds by asking the question back to his interlocutor. When they answer, he insists on asking again. "Who are you?" is his maddening mantra. Anyone who takes the question seriously is susceptible to a radical identity transformation. The detective who is assigned to the case must risk his own self if he wants to solve the crime. By the end of the film, the detective kills the young amnesiac, but this act changes nothing, for the worm of forgetting is spreading and cannot be stopped.

This film, and others like them in Japan, cannot but be read in terms of the national postwar project of forgetting the Japanese colonial project. And, more important, these films can be read in terms of the Aum Shinrikyo event that occurred in 1995 (Aum Shinrikyo was the quasi-Buddhist cult that released poison gas in the Tokyo subway system). Many were stunned to learn that several of the cult members were just your average next-door neighbors—well-intentioned, bright people who seemed to forget themselves and their pasts. These films are trying to come to terms with these events and the dystopia of Aum and *Cure* is random, inexplicable murder. But there is also a utopian dimension, a suggestion that we can radically transform ourselves and build collectives that are organized neither on the nation nor on exclusive group formations. The cure of *Cure* is not a remembering but a sustained forgetting of the fear and guilt

that keeps us in line, as well as a refusal to return to moralizing arguments about right and wrong that effectively lock us into a capitalist box. If morality is the site of a desire for a clean conscience, then these times seem to require a nonmoralizing account of global capitalism and a rejection of the desire to "be good." This conclusion is not a call for amorality or a lack of ethics but for an analysis of global capitalism that centers on a more objective questioning of its logic and effects—one in which we begin by questioning our very incredulity over so much inequality and corruption.

Today, some of the most compelling Japanese films perfectly coordinate with this conclusion by seeming more interested—in the most banal and immanent ways—in the present condition itself and, more specifically, in the present *body* itself. At a moment when so many people use the Internet to stare at naked bodies (not necessarily for the fantasy of the pornographic professional, but for the banal realism of the amateur), some of the most interesting Japanese filmmakers are asking us to stare at the body (and the world) in similarly clinical ways.

In Tsukamoto Shinya's film *Vital* (2004), for example, there is neither a cyborg in sight nor any of the postapocalyptic landscapes we might usually associate with Tsukamoto. Rather, there is an amnesic, Hiroshi, who goes to medical school and ends up dissecting the body of his lover, who recently died in the same car crash that stole Hiroshi's memory. The long takes of the dissection scenes are in stark contrast to the frenetic camera movement and quick editing that mark Tsukamoto's earlier films, most notably his first *Tetsuo* film from 1989. *Vital*'s protagonist studies medical drawings by Leonardo da Vinci. He probes the meaning of his past and the world at the same time he probes the dead body of the woman he was to marry.

This new "clinicalness" is also the hallmark of Kurosawa Kiyoshi and Miike Takashi. Kurosawa, as we saw in *Cure*, is famous for bending the horror and detective genres into a cold, detached meditation on human relations and alienation. Without a single close-up and using a signature slow-moving camera reminiscent of Tarkovsky, Kurosawa upends the usual plot lines of gruesome murders, mutilated bodies, and impending danger, leading both his film's characters and viewers into calm intensity, rather than agitated panic. Less a formalist play with a genre than an opening up of new ways of responding to the visible, Kurosawa's films reveal different (and what might be politically radical) ways of responding to crisis. In *Cure*, for example, no one is too terrified, and no one responds to the fear by yelling, screaming, or retreating into the nearest closet. Rather, there is a flat acceptance, a leading-with-the-chin caution, followed by measured interest and matter-of-fact plans. And this goes for the criminals as well as the detectives, for the victims as well as the victimizers, for the director as well as the viewer.

Indeed, this might be one reason why the Hollywood remakes of contemporary Japanese horror and amnesia films rarely deliver the same intensity. This is not because the narratives do not translate to the West or that the production values are lower or that the acting is not as compelling, but that the "clinicalness" of the Japanese directors is lost on Hollywood's spectacular mode of shooting the genre. All of Hollywood's close-ups and nondiegetic music and special effects betray the banality and everydayness of horror that the Japanese films so perfectly express. This is less an argument about cultural

difference than about generic difference. Since D. W. Griffith on, Hollywood is better understood as an address-less mode than as a symptom of national identity. It only takes a quick glance at the majority of Japanese films produced in the late 1920s and 1930s to see the dominance of the classical Hollywood cinematic conventions, conventions that persist to this day throughout Japanese mainstream cinema. It is for this reason that we can argue that Tsukamoto and Kurosawa should not be contrasted with their Hollywood counterparts but compared to the global emergence of filmmakers who, despite national differences, pursue a similar affect in the face of the current world system (from Claire Denis to Tsai Ming-Liang, from Apichatpong Weerasethakul to Gus Van Sant).

Counterintuitively, we might also want to include Miike into this supranational group of clinical filmmakers. Miike, the reigning bad boy of Japanese cinema, is probably most famous for stuffing his films full of more violence and death than any director working today. If you can think it, Miike has filmed it. But the enormous popularity of Miike's films the world over is not necessarily due to the prurient desires of his young audience. If that success were attributable only to such schoolboy voyeurism, then any number of contemporary directors would easily fill the bill. Rather, Miike shoots all the gore, all the decapitations, all the sadistic shredding and stretching and spraying of the body, with a desire not to shock or disgust, I think, but simply to see all of this on film.

This approach might account for Miike's phenomenal productivity, his making nearly sixty-five films over the past fifteen years. Miike makes each film without the micro-management of an Ozu Yasujiro or the emperor-like control of a Kurosawa Akira (not to mention without the artistic seriousness of many of Miike's peers). Rather, each film seems to be made on the fly, with the next one in mind. And this is also the model for his viewers and fans; they watch a Miike film and before they can canonize and fetishize it, they have already moved to the next one. This disposable culture does not provoke what usually goes by the name "critical thinking" and fits ever too neatly into a consumerist ethos. The point is, however, that the films do not immediately point to anything outside themselves. In other words, representation is not as central as the thing itself. The existence of the film and one's engagement with it (as producer and consumer) are more important than what the film means.

Most significant in the current work of these three directors is how their films, and in particular the portrayal of the body in their films, do not primarily function as a metaphor, an allegory, or something through which one understands the world. Rather, the film and the body are the world; they are the past, present, and future. The body of the films (and the filming of the body) provokes an experience in which one looks and responds first and foremost to the film itself, rather than to something outside the film, something that transcends the film. One cannot help but think, in contrast, about the student movement and the New Left in Japan when watching Oshima Nagisa's films of the 1960s. Likewise, one cannot help but think about the corporatization of Japan when watching Imamura Shohei's films of the 1960s and 1970s. But the political import of these younger filmmakers is that the films are not that precious—before you know it, the next one has come along.

Today, the body not only produces capital through its labor, but it is capital itself through its very commodification (the commodification of its diseased state through pharmaceuticals or the commodification of its genetic information or its parts through transplantation). Therefore, bodies today become not representations of capital as a system—they are already the system, and the system can be observed when we simply observe the body, as Tsukamoto, Kurosawa, and Miike ask us to do. As it does for wheat, rice, or any other capitalist commodity, the logic of the market requires a withholding— or even a destruction—of any surplus goods (in the case of the body, life-saving medications, which can be as basic as antidiarrheal drugs) so as not to push prices so low that they jeopardize the integrity of the system itself. Bodies are not excepted from this logic. How else can we explain the economic eugenics occurring in southern Africa and other parts of the global south?

People the world over are forming a similar understanding of global capitalism—one in which all ideals are at the mercy of the larger economic logic. Such recognition has existed since capitalism's inception. It is only after the Cold War and after the well-nigh total dominance of neoliberal economics, however, that such a global understanding can flourish. My temptation is to understand this more candid, objective, and clinical assessment of how things work—this *real economic*—in relation to cultural and ideological shifts that themselves are more candid, objective, and clinical.

These ideologies will necessarily express themselves differently in different locations. Culturally, I have focused on new trends in Japanese cinema. It is not a coincidence that the most interesting Japanese films today move away from a science fiction body, with its fantastic posthumanness and its merging with machines, a depiction in which the liberation is other, to focus on *the thing itself*, on the everyday, banal body. This move is centrally engaged with the main political questions that many are facing today: How does one imagine a radically different form of power, a new constitution, a new state structure emerging out of the present structure? These filmmakers present a way into these questions, a way of posing them cinematically before they can be adequately articulated in everyday political life. From environmental to anticapitalist, new political movements are facing the same challenge: even though they have a better understanding of how the world works (no longer surprised when economic bubbles burst, environmental damage occurs, or learning that a handful of billionaires controls more wealth than most of humanity combined), this understanding does not bring them any closer to knowing how to change the world itself.

More specifically, it is not an end in itself to understand that the perpetual crises and disasters that shake up the political-economic structures, physical infrastructures, and individual subjectivities are not exceptional signs that capitalism is failing and needs to be fixed but normal signs that the system is functioning precisely as it is designed to function and cannot be fixed. This understanding, rather, produces a special kind of political, intellectual, aesthetic, and psychological challenge, one that must accept the hard fact that just knowing about how something works (the world, the university, art, the self) does not necessarily bring us any closer to changing it—in fact, this very knowledge can sometimes be the key element that keeps us trapped.

Indeed, this does challenge the central principle of the university, that knowledge and truth will set us free. Knowledge and truth are indispensable and must be rigorously pursued, but their limits must also be respected and factored into our ways of acting in the world. The ultimate challenge is to accept these limits while not giving ourselves over to the inevitability of the present system itself and, thus, losing an awareness of its contingency and the possibility of a radically different system coming into being.

This challenge brings us back to the films and to *Monday*, in which there is a calm and sustained fixation on the body (the body coming undone either by laughter or by the most brutal and ridiculous instruments of torture), without the need of long-distance allegories, redemption, or the smuggling in of a heavy-handed position about what is being portrayed. This is precisely the point at which the clinical seer becomes one with the laughing actor. The clinical seer (represented by the characters in Kurosawa's, Tsukamoto's, and Miike's films as well as by our own now more lucid and candid subjectivities) coincides with the laughing actor (Sabu's innocent *and* guilty salaryman as well as our own postcynical cheerfulness). And this new assemblage, devoid of the reactionary dimensions of both the wishful thinking of the liberal and the sad militancy of the fundamentalist, faces the current brutal and absurd capitalist logic with a new vigor, something on the order of a scientific artist or artistic scientist or even one of those spiritual automatons that Gilles Deleuze so admired. We might assume that clinicalness is wholly opposed to laughter, just as we might assume that the objective is opposed to the subjective, the mind to the body, or theory to practice. But this is when a rethinking of these cold binaries is required, a rethinking that most productively begins by foregrounding the problem of praxis itself.

In today's intellectual culture the use and the misuse of the concept of praxis is conspicuous. Praxis is repeatedly employed as a synonym for practice, for action-oriented work, and therefore as opposed to theory. Fair enough; there are different traditions of this term, and Aristotle put it in relation to poesis and theoria. But in a more generative mode we might want to understand praxis as meaning something else: the problem of the relation between theory and practice. When theory hits its limit only world-changing practice can make it through the brick wall of history; likewise, when practice hits its limit only theoretical rigor can open up the situation. Most important, there is no solution to the theory/practice problem—not even the clever recognition that theory is a practice just as practice is a theoretical event. Praxis is the name for the desire to unite theory and practice, however utopian such a project is fated to be. Praxis is the name for the ceaseless movement between thinking, understanding, experimenting, acting, and changing. None of these categories exists autonomously, but each is always supplemented by the other.

This fascinating knot of theory and practice, however, has been regrettably undervalued. When theory and practice are discretely configured it is impossible to understand practice as a theoretical act, or theory as a practice; indeed, it is impossible to mobilize the full force of praxis as requiring the perpetual reconfiguration of body and mind, the artist and the scientist, the activist and the theorist, the clinician and the laugher.

Instead of understanding clinicalness as theoretical, cerebral, and distant and by extension laughter as practical, bodily, and immediate, much more is enabled when combining clinicalness and laughter so as to flash the utopian (im)possibility of overcoming the problem of praxis itself.

In this sense, this engagement with the problem of praxis and with the impossible stimulates creativity and provokes newness into our world, a world that must be liberated from the double fantasy that radical change cannot happen or that radical change can only happen by some asocial force from the outside, like a meteor or a madman. Moreover, this engagement with praxis is opposed to the "revelation" of the hidden crisis or conspiracy, the moment of extrinsic rescue or redemption, the moral lesson, etc. Such ideological conventions belong to a previous moment of capitalism and to a previous moment of analyzing capitalism. These conventions also belong to a previous moment of the university and to a mode of analyzing film that seems wholly exhausted and in need of some nondisciplined rigor or rigorous nondiscipline to energize a fatiguing moment of scholarship and criticism. Those interested in Japan are now inspired to consider Japanese film without the dominant discourses of Japan or Japanese studies, while those interested in film are now inspired to consider Japanese film without the dominant discourses of film or film studies. Impossible? Yes. But sometimes the confrontation with the impossible (both the intellectual and the political impossible) transforms the very realm of the possible and, therefore, the limits of the impossible itself.

....

TRIANGULATING JAPANESE FILM STYLE

....

BEN SINGER

It would be ludicrous to hold up just one brief sequence in a film as somehow capable of encapsulating the aesthetic essence of an entire national cinema. There obviously are too many different types of scene, in too many different films, made in too many different directorial styles, period styles, and genre styles, for any one instance to somehow illustrate or stand in for the unimaginably vast array of cinematic materializations constituting any national tradition—let alone an unusually prolific and sustained major tradition like Japan's. And yet, there are certain moments in Japanese films that strike one as stylistically so distinctive, so seemingly emblematic, and so hard to imagine having been created elsewhere, that one finds oneself drawn toward an expository position that comes dangerously close to the one just discounted. At least, to rephrase with slight hedging, one is prompted to insist that any viable encapsulation of the aesthetics of Japanese film would need to encompass or account for the cinematic specimen in question.

A case in point is a remarkable two-and-a-half minute sequence in Teruo Ishii's 1969 film *Orgies of Edo* (Zankoku ijo gyakuai monogatari: Genroku onna keizu). From an aerial perspective, we see an ingénue and her suitor walking alone through what ostensibly represents some sort of enormous Tokugawa-era outdoor factory showroom displaying newly dyed kimono fabrics. Dozens of yard-wide bolts of fabric, in vibrant and intricate patterns as well as some solids, lie unspooled in contiguous rows on the ground, running the entire length of the widescreen frame and continuing offscreen. Other bolts run above their heads perpendicular to the ground-level swaths, suspended across the space at regular intervals to create a kind of textile lattice that intermittently occludes and reveals the protagonists. The entire surface of the screen is covered by a dazzling array of conflicting lines, colors, and spots that form an all-over field that is at once both geometrically composed and riotously busy. This visual paradox of orderly anarchy is created by a macro pattern of parallel and crisscrossing bands that is energized not only

by the multiplicity of those elements but also by the crazy uncoordination of their hues and decorative details. Myriad shades of red, purple, green, blue, and gray-black offset disparate floral and geometric designs, and each design presents repeated rows of medallions and accents that constitute a kind of particulate, micro level of highly complex yet highly regular patterning that echoes and interacts with the image's macro configuration.

The first shot presents a diagonal crisscross composition that reads like an abstract painting or patchwork, with an uncanny two-dimensional quality. [Fig. 2.1] There are no depth cues in this pictorial field, aside from the bodily foreshortening of the distant characters, which is vitiated as their kimonos seem to merge with the kimono explosion surrounding them. A sense of flatness is amplified by the use of a long lens, giving the impression that the perpendicular bolts of fabric are not suspended overhead but rather lying on the ground directly on top of the others. After this stunning establishing shot, we cut to a laterally tracking medium-long two shot of the protagonists strolling under the canopy. [Fig. 2.2] The exterior background is purely abstract—just a hazy spectrum
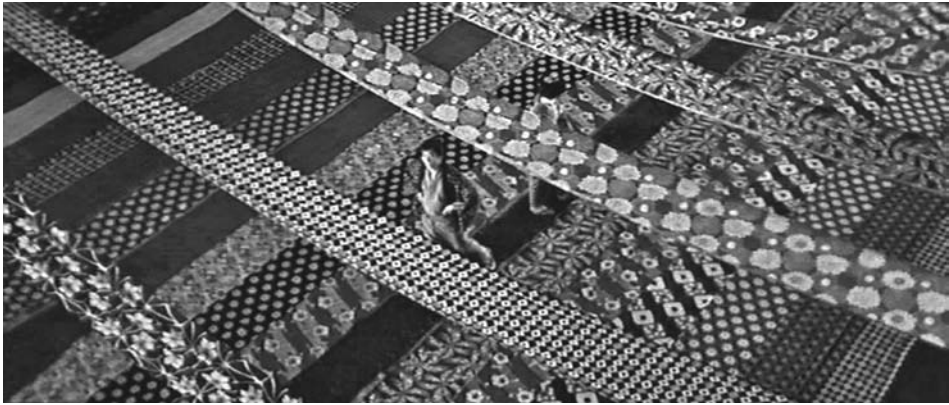
FIGURE 2.1

FIGURE 2.2

FIGURE 2.3

FIGURE 2.4

of pastel color from deep orange-red to medium blue on a theatrical flat intimating a sunset. As a delicate, possibly incidental, visual nuance, the pastel tones of the nominal sky echo the softer, milky hues of the fabric's underside, which we see in the kimono bolts hanging overhead and draping down in vertical columns, while at the same time the suspended fabric sags enough to afford a glimpse of its bolder, more saturated, printed face. A series of shot-reverse-shots that follows highlights the striking compositional payoffs granted by this mise-en-scène of forceful skeletal verticals and horizontals on the wide screen. [Figs. 2.3 and 2.4]

The suitor, we learn in the last shot of the series, turns out to be a rake. When he tries to force himself on the young woman, she tears free and runs away, and a chase ensues. The camera returns to an aerial crane shot, this time straight on rather than diagonal, and rapidly tracks right to left to follow as the two run across the screen. [Fig. 2.5] The divided space once again activates a game of intermittent visibility and occlusion. The game of vision is intensified, and rendered radically more challenging, in a twenty-five-second flurry of shots that presents the chase. Its sixteen shots, averaging 1.5 seconds each, alternate

between the two characters, using a rapidly panning telephoto lens that blurs the fabric and figures into a turbulent stream of bright, boxy, sometimes beautifully abstract compositions. [Figs. 2.6–2.10] Perceptual complexity and arousal results not only from the kinetic distortion, the staccato brevity of the shots, and the inherent graphic discontinuity of rapid alternating editing, but also from random sudden changes in shot scale (ranging from medium long shot to close-up); framing (as the figures are truncated in unpredictable ways due to the compositional imprecision of the agitated telephoto lens); and focus (as fabric and figures randomly and fleetingly move into and out of the lens's minuscule depth of field). Over and above all these challenges, the mobilized overhead kimono bolts, which in medium close-ups occlude over half the frame, function like a giant shutter, intermittently hiding and revealing the figures, and in effect creating a secondary form of disjunctive editing that interacts in complex and confounding ways with the primary montage.
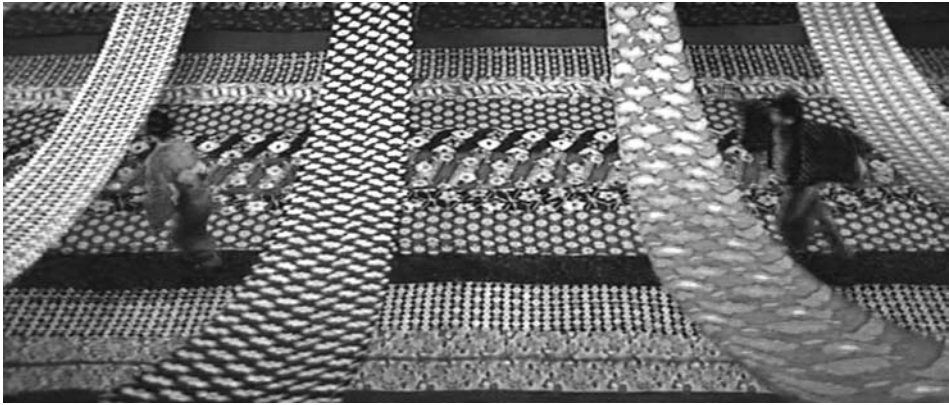
FIGURE 2.5
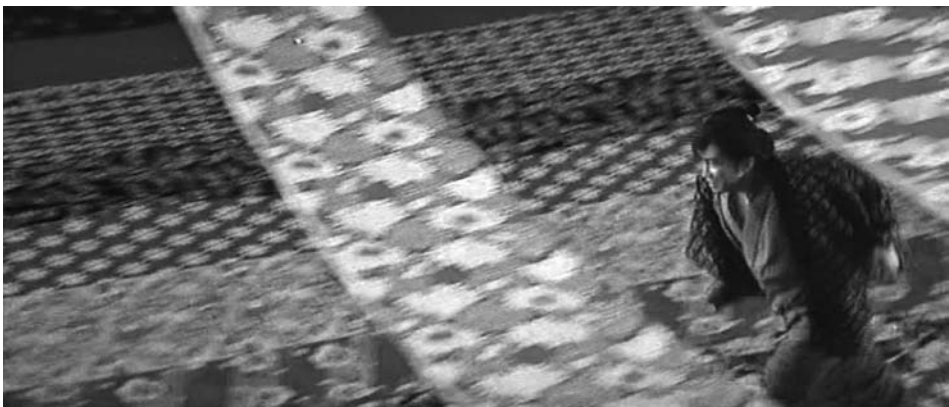
FIGURE 2.6

FIGURE 2.7

FIGURE 2.8
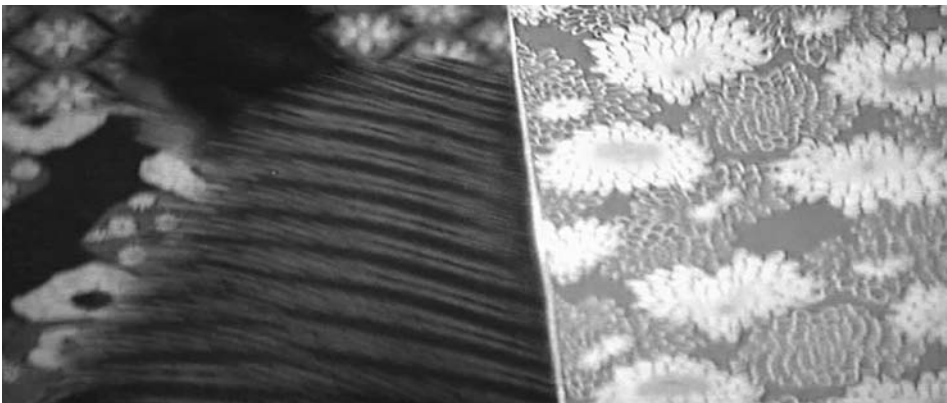
FIGURE 2.9
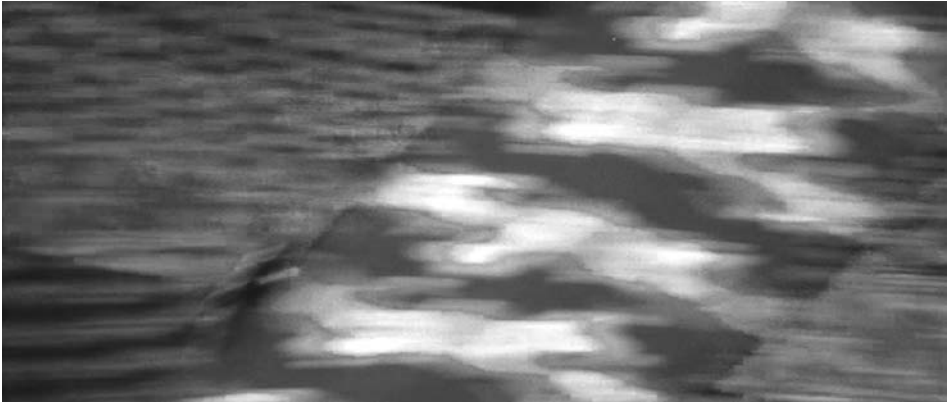
FIGURE 2.10

The ingénue's capture and erotic acquiescence are shown in a third distant aerial shot from an angle midway between those of the first two, yielding elegant swoops of fabric that parallel the lovers' bodies as they recline on the quilted ground. [Fig. 2.11] The camera gradually zooms in, cuts to a closer view of the lovemaking, and then, as if granting privacy or affirming the fait accompli, zooms back out to the distant aerial perspective as the shot fades to black.

It is difficult to think of any scene in a Hollywood or mainstream European film that is remotely comparable in the sheer exuberance, self-consciousness, and unabashedness of its stylization. Even throwing European art cinema into the comparison set, the scene strikes one as extraordinary in its stylistic excess. The narrative objectives are relatively straightforward: to convey the man's rakishness; show the chase and capture; and display the transition from shame to ecstasy expressed in the woman's face—all easy enough to accomplish with basic decoupage in a stock setting. Instead, Ishii exploited
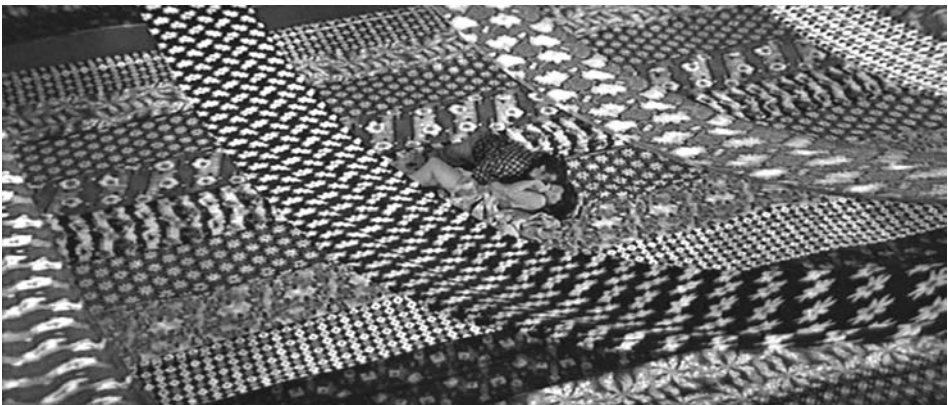
FIGURE 2.11

the scene as an opportunity to generate a dazzling exercise in sensory stimulation, perceptual challenge, and formal-pictorial novelty of a baroque modernist sort. If ever a scene illustrated what David Bordwell, borrowing from the art historian's lexicon, has referred to as a decorative "flourish"—a perceptually arresting and engaging flashy interlude surpassing denotational, expressive, or thematic directorial objectives—it would be this one.

What makes the sequence all the more remarkable is not only that *Orgies of Edo* was produced by a major studio (Toei), but that it was also an unsavory genre film—an offering in the "*ero-guro*" genre combining sexploitation and Grand Guignol (and, true to form, the film's grotesquerie, not to mention sexual politics, is disturbing indeed). It is fair to say that no American sexploitation film would ever expend so much effort on such a lavish flourish utterly incidental to the genre's pertinent business of purveying sex and violence. Something about the Japanese filmmaking tradition, however, appears to encourage such effort. In this case, given the genre's dubious prestige potential, it seems unlikely that the work's overheated artistry was motivated by a bid for highbrow acclaim or international festival awards. We will need to look elsewhere to comprehend the causes.

I have introduced this sequence, which I offer as a random (albeit especially vivid) example, as being emblematic of Japanese film style in general. My reference to heightened stylization and "the flourish" gives some indication of what I will underscore as the essence of that style. However, in order to advance, and properly qualify, the idea that Japanese film style is best characterized in terms of assertive stylization, it will be useful to map out the scholarly story so far. My aim will be to clarify three competing arguments about the nature of Japanese style that have largely structured scholarly criticism of Japanese film aesthetics, namely, those articulated by Donald Richie, Noël Burch, and David Bordwell. Although the gists of their arguments may be more or less familiar to area specialists, it will be helpful to triangulate their positions in order to bring into relief a number of contrasts, commonalities, and paradoxes that tend to be overlooked, and that warrant fuller recognition and evaluation.

The debate about Japanese film style is often thought of as if it were a microcosm of the larger *nihonjinron* debate of which it forms a part, with both boiling down to opposing assertions of Japanese difference and cultural exceptionalism, on the one hand, versus Japanese similarity and cosmopolitan assimilationism, on the other. In fact, I will emphasize, the film debate is intriguingly more complex, even as that basic dichotomy remains operative on a rhetorical level. For example, not one but two platforms of Japanese exceptionalism emerged—those of Richie and Burch—and, while united in posing Japanese cinema as an outgrowth of deep-rooted Japanese traditions spawning films that are fundamentally different from those of the West, they are basically at odds with each other, strikingly incompatible regarding just what makes Japanese films so different. In a similar paradox, one finds that the most vocal adversary of Japanese exceptionalism—Bordwell— is also the most persuasive expositor calling for recognition of Japanese films as stylistically eccentric and inventive to a degree that is, if one may use the term, exceptional. The punchy point/counterpoint of the primary *nihonjinron* debate has deflected attention away from a number of important nodes of agreement and disagreement crisscrossing the

literature. My aim will be to highlight some of them and see if it might be possible to glean something like a consensus position. I will argue that, for all their many very significant differences in emphasis and interpretation, Burch and Bordwell, and possibly even Richie, ultimately converge on a similar commonsense understanding of the synthetic basis of Japanese film style as a hybrid of nativist and cosmopolitan influences.

*   *   *

In a 1968 symposium address endeavoring to encapsulate the core features of Japanese aesthetics, Donald Keene commenced by expressing reservations about the viability of such an undertaking:

> Almost any general statement made about Japanese aesthetics can easily be disputed and even disproved by citing well-known contrary examples. *Shibui,* the one term of Japanese aesthetics that seems to have found its way into the English language, evokes the understatement and refinement typical of much Japanese artistic expression; but how should this ideal be reconciled with the flamboyance of a performance of Kabuki or with the garish, polychromed temples at Nikkō, long considered by the Japanese themselves as a summit of beauty? It goes without saying that Japanese taste did not stay frozen throughout the centuries, nor were aesthetic preferences unaffected by social class and education, and in making general remarks about Japanese aesthetics these cautions must be remembered.[1]

The caveat in place, Keene proceeds to propose four ideals—suggestion; irregularity; simplicity; and perishability—as the most typical and fundamental in Japanese aesthetic expression. While still open to contestation (are these four qualities *really* the most typical?) and prone to dubious extrapolations (he suggests, for example, there is a prevailing preference in Japanese aesthetics for monochrome over bright colors), Keene's approach effectively, and prudently, allowed for the recognition of multiple different aesthetic traditions.

For our purposes, the interesting point is that Keene, in noting separate traditions of *shibui* and flamboyant stylization, accentuated the basic division that would play out within the exceptionalist approach to Japanese film studies in the work of Richie and Burch. Richie adopted a model of Japanese aesthetics predicated on the premise that, as Keene put it, "much of what is considered most typical in Japanese aesthetics stems from Zen." In Richie's 1961 book *Japanese Movies* (commissioned by the Japan Travel Bureau as part of its Tourist Library series), and in a somewhat revised and expanded, and much more prominent, edition published in 1971 as *Japanese Cinema: Film Style and National Character,* the issue of flamboyant stylization does not really surface.[2] In fact, Richie went out of his way to deny that kabuki (Keene's epitome of flamboyant stylization) had any influence on Japanese filmmaking. Contrariwise, in his 1979 book *To the Distant Observer* and related essays, Burch more or less downplayed the aesthetic consequentiality of Zen Buddhism and stressed a direct genealogical link between Japanese cinema and kabuki, along with other traditional arts demonstrating overt artifice and

heightened stylization.[3] The operative binary in this dichotomy is not easy to label with a succinct couplet. Perhaps "restraint vs. flamboyance" will suffice—but in any case, one can apprehend two quite different registers of aestheticism, one involving subtlety and a quasi-mystical sense of intimacy and repose, and the other emphasizing spectacle, dynamism, and self-conscious artistry.

In the 1961 book, Richie invoked the concept of *shibui* explicitly, promoting it as a key aesthetic descriptor for identifying what is unique about Japanese film:

> Th[is] quality of the traditional, palpable in the films of Ozu and Naruse, noticeable even in the ordinary *haha-mono* is, eventually, the creation of that faintly elegiac serenity which the Japanese himself creates with but a hanging scroll and a few flowers, and which the Japanese motion picture likewise creates, using only the simplest of means. This quality has a name. It is called *shibui,* the austerity which becomes elegance simply through its honesty and hence its supreme assurance. . . . The elliptical quality of so many Japanese films, their unwillingness to define, their extreme genius for the allusive, is attributable to the *shibui* principle.[4]

Richie found *shibui* in the "extreme restraint," "elegant economy," and refreshingly "astringent" qualities of various pictorial, performative, and thematic elements in films by Mizoguchi, Ozu, Naruse, Toyada, Kinugasa, and others. Interestingly, however, for some reason Richie omitted specific usage of the term "*shibui*" in the 1971 edition, although much of the relevant prose remained, and Zen-derived aesthetic qualities continued to be at the heart of his conception of Japanese film style.

For Richie, Japanese cinema expressed a religious-cultural-aesthetic tradition of contemplative quietude; simplicity; closeness to nature; acceptance of life in all its irregularity and imperfection; austerity; *mono no aware,* and other such expressions of Japaneseness. I think it is fair to characterize this general heuristic as an outgrowth of what one might call "mainstream *nihonjinron,*" greatly indebted to prevailing ideas about the spiritual and socio-psychological peculiarities of the Japanese mind expounded by Ruth Benedict, Daisetz T. Suzuki, Hajime Nakamura, and many others during the postwar heyday of *nihonjinron* punditry.[5]

Arguably the most daring and innovative, if rather attenuated, critical maneuver that Richie attempted in *Japanese Movies* and *Japanese Cinema* was to align these religious-cultural-aesthetic traits with a Bazinian ethic of realism. Doing so enabled Richie to make the work doubly au courant and rich in cultural capital. In a *nihonjinron* vein, it purveyed specialized understanding of the cultural and aesthetic mysteries of the East, while at the same time it positioned Japanese cinema as pertinent to the reigning movement in serious film criticism. For critics at *Cahiers du Cinema, Movie,* and other hubs of intellectual cinephilia, as Bordwell notes, "*mise-en-scène* became the almost mystical precondition for cinematic art."[6] Richie argued that Japanese filmmakers were already in the know, sensitized to the revelation of mise-en-scène thanks to their unique cultural inheritance.

Realism, Richie argued, was "the principal ingredient of the national film style," yielding films displaying "an intimacy and a concern for detail which [makes] them unusual."

Implying more than just verisimilitude in settings, props, and actions per se, realism in the sense that Richie had in mind involved a certain phenomenological ethos. It issued from, and fostered, a heightened sensitivity to the surface of the world, to nature, and to all the nuanced details making up the environments and activities of ordinary, quotidian existence. Conveying and enhancing an appreciation of "life as it is," Japanese films, Richie suggested, were uniquely invested in fleshing out the milieux of human existence, or what he called "atmosphere." Focusing on films "about the everyday lives of people," Ozu and others "accomplished…the formation of a national cinematic style; it was a style based upon the ability of the camera to reflect perfectly things as they are." Directors like Murata and Mizoguchi "excelled in the creation of atmosphere, the almost palpable feeling of reality." Those filmmakers, "like all the major Japanese directors to follow them, insisted upon the physical environment, upon people in their own context, characters in their own surroundings; and that insistence has become the salient and distinguishing quality of the Japanese film." This predisposition derived, Richie maintained, from the cultural absorption of Buddhist patterns of thought, and especially from a specifically Japanese "oneness with nature." In its sensitivity to naturalistic mise-en-scène, Japanese cinema "reflects that feeling for nature, so utterly Japanese, which sees the natural world as an extension of man himself." "The Japanese regards his surroundings as an extension of himself, and it is this attitude that creates the atmosphere of the Japanese film at its best." In a particularly unchary articulation of Japanese exceptionalism, Richie asserted that "the Japanese, having a high opinion of reality, are literally much better able to appreciate a realistic rendering of their lives." [7]

Hollywood is the foil. American films, Richie griped, are essentially anti-contemplative, eclipsing sensitive realist rumination with fast-paced causal action advancing toward definitive closure. Infused with the Western ideology of individualism, they showcase heroes who, far from comprehending a oneness with nature, see nature as an adversary that must be conquered and controlled. Just as its characters lack the complexity and ambiguity of reality, its mise-en-scène is similarly false to life, either idealized via Hollywood glamour (not "things as they are" but "things are as they should be") or impoverished as mere utilitarian backdrop for the action. Unlike Japanese films, American films discourage sustained intimate observation of reality as such.[8]

As already noted, conspicuous stylization was not part of Richie's early conception of Japanese film style. Although he framed Japanese cinema as an outgrowth of traditional Japanese culture, he cordoned off traditional Japanese theatrical arts like noh, kabuki, and bunraku. A punchy 1958 essay in *Film Quarterly* titled "Traditional Theater and the Film in Japan" lures the reader in with a titular subheading, "The Influence of the *Kabuki, Noh,* and Other Forms on Film Content and Style," and then immediately delivers a startling riposte: "Well, to be brief, there isn't any." The early books reiterate the pronouncement.[9] Richie also disparaged Japanese films of the 1910s and 1920s—in which *benshi* exposition dominated the moviegoing experience, *oyama* (female impersonaters) were employed, and the camera was typically static, frontal, and distant—as a cinematic dark age blighted by an "early and total influence of the stage."[10] Richie did not appear mindful of the contradiction (how could traditional Japanese theatrical forms

have had "no influence" if the films were burdened by a "total influence of the stage"? Presumably, he meant influence on films made in the sound era). In any case, the logic of his stance is apparent: associating cinema with intrinsically stylized, anti-mimetic art forms like kabuki and noh clearly would not have jibed with his core proposition about Japanese cinema's deep-rooted realist sensibility.

*   *   *

The stunning intervention executed by Burch in *To the Distant Observer* turned Richie's model on its head. Japanese cinema represented not the ne plus ultra of realism, but on the contrary, the acme of *anti*-realism (or anti-illusionism, to be more precise).[11] Correspondingly, the problem with Hollywood was not that it was an anti-realist wasteland, tone deaf to the Bazinian-Buddhistic virtues of naturalistic mise-en-scène and atmospheric absorption, but on the contrary, that it was the headquarters of diegetic absorption at its most powerful and pernicious. And whereas Richie rejected the relevance of traditional theatrical forms, and repudiated early anti-mimetic and putatively uncinematic fixtures like the *benshi, oyama,* and "theatrical" static frontality, Burch celebrated them all as major factors contributing to the stylistic derivation, aesthetic richness, and theoretical import of Japanese film at its peak.

Burch drove the discussion in a direction 180 degrees opposite from the one Richie took. And yet, on a more basic level, it must be underscored that the two scholars were fellow travelers along the same exegetic avenue, both pursuing versions of Japanese exceptionalism informed by the premise that the nation's cinema is best understood as a unique outgrowth of long-preserved, deep-rooted aspects of traditional culture and identity. Like Richie, Burch stressed "the profound uniqueness, the profound *otherness*" of Japanese cinema. "It is beyond doubt," he argued, "that Japan's singular history, informed by a unique combination of forces and circumstances, has produced a cinema which is *in essence* unlike that of any other nation."[12] Both also embraced a partisan rhetoric of opposition, prizing Japanese film style as a felicitous alternative to a putatively pernicious Hollywood prototype. In a similar vein, both marveled at the prescience with which Japanese films appeared to anticipate vanguard trends in European art cinema emerging in opposition to dominant narrative and stylistic norms. Their encapsulations of Japanese otherness, classical Hollywood, and counter-cinema may have been totally at odds, but their expositions were built on the same heuristic chassis.

That said, the design and implementation of Burch's argument represented an entirely different order of elaboration. It was structured around the juxtaposition of three well-integrated strands of evidence and exposition: textual (i.e., observing particular films and directorial techniques illustrating deviation from Western norms); intertextual (evincing analogous techniques in Japanese art, drama, and literature in order to demonstrate that Japanese film style reflected and carried on a deep-rooted cultural-aesthetic tradition); and contextual (proffering historical-materialist explanations for

why that cultural-aesthetic tradition should have prevailed over the competing stylistic codes disseminated by Hollywood).

The sound-bite version of Burch's argument is familiar: prewar Japanese cinema "kept alive…systems of representation and an aesthetics which had remained remarkably unified and remarkably unchanged for over a thousand years."[13] Until directors capitulated to the dominant Western model during postwar reconstruction, Japanese films instantiated and perpetuated the same "presentational" aesthetic that for centuries had been characteristic of traditional Japanese artistic practices in general. The culture's fundamental conception of artistry emphasized overt stylization, frank artifice, medium-awareness, and "inscription of the signifying process in the 'text,'" in contrast to the essentially Western "representational" mode that aimed to efface the process of signification and achieve mimetic transparency. Burch ventured that the unique nature of the Japanese language—distinct by virtue of the coexistence of both ideographic and phonetic writing systems and four different scripts (kanji, hiragana, katakana, and romaji)—may have attuned the Japanese to the relativity and materiality of signification per se and predisposed artists to "expose the work of the signifier."[14] Heian poetry favored polysemic constructions, homonymic wordplay, and methods of formalist patterning that accentuated "the signifier at work." Noh and kabuki presented highly stylized and codified conventions of costume, makeup, gesture, and pose (*kata*) having little to do with natural movement or verisimilar personification. Their narratives and stagecraft were skeletal and abstract; performers and spectators occupied the same theatrical ambience; and musicians, chanters, and stagehands remained visible, all militating against diegetic absorption and making for a "decentered" art of disjoined attractions. Bunraku, with its four performance tracks (marionettes; manipulators; vocalizers; and musicians) similarly entailed a "radical disjunction between signifiers." As for the graphic arts, *emakimono* employed an eccentric non-naturalistic perspectival system, and *ukiyo-e,* while adhering to linear perspective, nevertheless vitiated illusionism through an "acknowledgement of surface" and through truncation that accentuated "the frame-line as disruptive edge." Traditional architectural interiors, dominated by rectilinear modules of various size and dimension created by the frames and ribbing of *shoji* partitions, posts and lintels, balustrades, and lattice-work, yielded flat-looking visual fields resembling compositions by Mondrian.[15] In short, an amalgam of traditional Japanese arts, all tending to "focus awareness on graphic and textual surface," formed the intertextual matrix molding Japanese films of the late twenties and thirties. Once the basic traits of the Japanese aesthetic congealed, "almost entirely between the ninth and twelfth centuries," they carried forward as a steady and unbroken continuum, like a chain or "frozen stream," across the centuries.[16] Japanese cinema was but the latest iteration.

Lest the millennial scope of this claim be dismissed as simply too much of a stretch, Burch marshaled a wide array of historical rationales for the longevity and coherence of the Japanese aesthetic tradition. In most rudimentary terms, the tradition persisted across centuries because of the momentum of cultural inertia—that is, owing to a historically distinctive absence of countervailing forces attributable to the exceptional social

integration and insularity of Japanese society. Three hundred years of seclusion and sta-
bility during the Tokugawa Shogunate; freedom from colonial subjugation; the absence
of massive revolutionary disruption; and the putatively gradual and controlled social
transition during the Meiji Restoration all fostered an exceptional "uniformity of habits,
beliefs, and tastes among all classes."[17] Venturing socio-psychological rationales, Burch
also pointed to the culture's tendency to "keep things" (a retentiveness for which Burch
hypothesized a geographical explanation) and to the relative insignificance of individual
originality and novelty as preconditions for artistic accomplishment.[18] Modern institu-
tional and political factors also helped buffer Japanese artists and audiences against the
spread of Western norms. The Japanese film industry's vertical integration and putative
technical self-sufficiency staved off foreign control; while the reactionary political and
social climate engendered by the militarist regime during the Fifteen Years War pro-
moted indigenous artistic principles and forms.[19]

Ultimately, this juggernaut of intertextual antecedents and contextual factors could
only serve as supporting evidence. Burch had to put flesh on the bones by elucidating
cinematic manifestations or analogues of aesthetic traditionalism. He cast a wide net,
hauling in anything that could be identified as an instance of presentationalism, conven-
tionalized artifice, eschewal of immersive illusionism, or eccentric stylization effecting
some sort of rejection or transmutation of classical Western codes. As for a coherent
narrative of stylistic development, Burch never really summarized one in a nutshell, but
the reader discerns a scenario involving two main phases before the occupation and
supposed total contamination by Hollywood: A period spanning the 1910s and 1920s in
which a "primitive" tableau style lingered well beyond its disappearance in the West; and
then a period of creative efflorescence, evident in the work of Mizoguchi, Ozu, Ishida,
Naruse, Shimizu, Yamanaka, and many unsung others, beginning in the early 1930s
and flourishing for most of the decade, perhaps even reverberating into the 1940s (in a
somewhat different mode of stylistic austerity) up until surrender to the Allied powers.

In Japan, Burch suggested, the classical system never really took root, and the
tableau-based primitive "system was to remain dominant through the 1920s, and impor-
tant traces of it were to subsist until at least the end of the Second World War."[20] Whereas
Richie (like virtually all period critics, as Aaron Gerow's research has shown) regarded
the lag behind Hollywood as a developmental delay, a sign of backwardness, Burch pro-
claimed that, on the contrary, Japanese filmmakers did not neglect Western codes out of
ignorance or ineptitude.[21] They were "perfectly familiar with the development of editing
in the films of the West," but on the whole they "were simply not interested in making
use of it."[22] Hollywood decoupage also failed to take root, Burch claimed (in passages
conspicuously bereft of documentary substantiation) because moviegoers "overwhelm-
ingly preferred" the primitive style, since it matched their culturally ingrained predis-
position toward aesthetic non-transparency. [23] The lag was also partly attributable,
Burch conceded, to the fact that Japanese directors were not impelled to deploy Western
decoupage, since they could rely on *benshi,* rather than the film itself, to convey basic
spatio-temporal and narrative information. But for Burch, the extended presence of the

benshi did not explain away the persistence of the primitive mode; on the contrary, it further proved that Japanese audiences preferred the presentational aesthetic.

If audiences and filmmakers were content, then what drove the burst of stylistic innovation in the early 1930s, assuming there was indeed such a qualitative shift at that time?[24] Burch's answer fluctuated in emphasis, vacillating among nativist and international-interactionist explanations. With respect to the former, Burch offered a rather imprecise organic rationale suggesting that the creative ferment of the 1930s emerged naturally, in due course, out of the long cultural tradition from which it descended. More proximately within that tradition, the primitive phase that immediately preceded it provided fertile ground that made the new phase possible. Burch asserted:

> It was [a] stubborn refusal to "grow up" [that] provided the conditions for the remarkable preservation through the 1920s of several of the basic elements of the "primitive" attitude, which ultimately made possible the remarkable developments of the 1930s.... I do not consider the [pre-1930] period as a desert at all, but rather as a time of incubation.... The supreme achievements... [of] the nineteen thirties were to a large extent the direct consequence of this period of "conservational" incubation.... [The] "primitivism" of the twenties and before may be seen to have served as an incubator for a specifically Japanese mode of representation that burgeoned forth in so many films of the thirties.[25]

With this organic metaphor of incubation, Burch connoted that the 1930s phenomenon was like an efflorescence of native flora that grew from plant embryos whose ability to break through and bloom depended on a bed of soil (1920s primitive-traditionalism) that had not yet been overrun by invasive weeds (Hollywood).

The question remains, however: What triggered the efflorescence just then? The notion of conservational incubation may point to a necessary precondition (that the dilatory 1920s style had protected the field), but it does not explain the nature or timing of the phenomenon itself. One answer has already been mentioned: the shift reflected the increasingly insular sociopolitical environment associated with Japan's transition toward aggressive ultranationalism. "Japan's 'withdrawal into herself' after her annexation of Manchuria," Burch contended, "was a determining factor in the maturation of a specifically Japanese cinema."[26] Ostensibly, directors became more self-consciously aware of the desirability of rejecting Western influences and accentuating markers of cultural exceptionalism.

But if that was their aim, then why not just maintain the existing "primitive" style, with its affinity to kabuki and requisite presentationalism? Burch sidestepped that problem, but he did augment his nativist explanations (conservational incubation and the political climate) with explanations acknowledging external forces. The global industrial shift to sound cinema (experienced considerably later in Japan than anywhere else) may have had something to do with the burgeoning of aesthetic innovation, Burch hypothesized in a vague way. In Europe, he noted, the transition had created a brief phase of creative

ferment before classical conventions re-entrenched themselves. Perhaps the technical upheaval had a similar stimulatory effect in Japan, as well.[27]

Burch's final explanation comes as something of a surprise. It underscores the decisive effect of contact and cross-fertilization with cinemas of the West.

> Neo-traditionalism bore…spectacular fruit, especially when it was fertilized…by experience of the Western system.…By around 1928, a number of directors…acquired a credible mastery of the Western system. And it was soon afterward that there took place the decisive encounter between the frozen Japanese tradition and a Western model of representation.…The encounter was to produce, in Japan, a creative revolution.…True, a few directors active after 1930…immediately opted in favor of a thoroughly Western approach to film "language."…Others, however—often the same men who had precociously introduced the Western approach into Japan (Ozu, Shimizu, Naruse, Mizoguchi)—began to take increasingly crucial liberties with the Western norms. And these would ultimately come to constitute at once a carry-over and a renewal of Japanese "primitivism" rather than a mere stylistic variant on the Western system.[28]

At first glance, this causal narrative strikes one as curiously out of synch with Burch's overarching rhetoric about "the deep gulf that separated the cinema of Japan from that of the West."[29] After such emphatic stress on the "profound *otherness*" of Japanese cinema, one does not expect the thesis that "complex filiation with the Western mode" played a crucial role in shaping Japanese cinema.[30]

Burch immediately reins in the irony, however, by insisting that the filiation actually served to prove his point that Japanese filmmakers think different. They may have incorporated Western devices, but most did so in a random, superficial, or piecemeal way, without reading the manual, so to speak, or perhaps reading it but then deliberately disregarding the instructions. In their hands, Hollywood codes were "transformed, displaced, [and] truncated" in ways that drew attention to and "deconstructed" the processes of narration, signification, and illusionism.[31] In doing so, they perpetuated the medium self-consciousness and presentationalist artifice at the heart of Japanese aesthetics.

*   *   *

David Bordwell has been the most vigorous critic of claims about the alterity of Japanese cinema.[32] His dissatisfaction with cultural generalizations about the Zen-infused nature of the Japanese character has been informed not only by anti-essentialist challenges to *nihonjinron* emerging from within the field of Japanese studies, but also by an earlier repudiation of "historical holism" issuing from the field of art history, especially in E. H. Gombrich's critique of neo-Hegelian *Geistesgeschichte* (i.e., the postulate that art expresses a unified cultural mentality, "the spirit of the race" or "the spirit of the age"). "In no area of film studies," Bordwell complained in a 1979 essay, "do generalizations about national temperament circulate so blithely as in this one. We constantly encounter

claims about what the Japanese are…and what they like." A mild concession sets up a stinging zinger: "Although the intent—to embed cinema within society—is laudable, national types as an explanatory model went out of historical research with the bustle and the straw boater."[33]

Bordwell repeatedly has disputed the validity of boiling down Japanese film style, let alone Japanese art as a whole, to a single cultural-aesthetic current or mentality encapsulated under the label "Japanese tradition." The invocation of Japanese tradition is problematic not only because it implicitly denotes a homogeneous single entity coterminous with the label, but also because it overlooks the degree to which it represents a social construction of more or less contemporary provenance. Far from embodying a straightforward cultural inheritance passed down over the centuries, much of what is conjured up by notions of Japanese tradition has been strategically reinvented and redeployed in the modern era. Customs, ideas, and motifs fostering a sense of cultural coherence and national identity often have been rarefied to serve political objectives—most pertinently, the promotion of nationalism, cultural pride, and social compliance. What's more, artists working in traditional modes do not simply replicate traditional motifs and techniques unreflectively as if they were a kind of genetic inheritance. Rather, they utilize them self-consciously as ready-at-hand thematic and iconographic raw materials out of which to craft artworks calculated to have contemporary cultural salience, nostalgic appeal, foreign marketability, emotive force, or formal rightness. Artworks evoking traditional aesthetic idioms represent deliberate citations and reworkings of past forms rather than naive expressions of an essential and perennial psychic and/or aesthetic condition of Japaneseness.

The corollary of Bordwell's critique of traditionalism has been his stress on Japanese cosmopolitanism. Traditionalist discourses portraying Japan as an exotic and insular culture underestimate Japan's intense engagement with Western culture and industry. In film studies, Bordwell was decidedly ahead of the curve regarding the currently ascendant historical paradigm of "Nippon modern" in discussions of Japanese mass culture before the Pacific War.[34] Bordwell has been particularly concerned with refuting Burch's characterization of prewar Japanese film as constituting a "uniquely non-Western" mode of narration based on "the absence of an imposed Western model." "By 1925 at the latest," he has argued, "the norms of staging and cutting in Japanese cinema were very close to those of mainstream Western filmmaking."[35] Burch never denied that Japanese directors were generally familiar with the classical continuity system and that some ("a few") directors adopted it wholesale, but he did claim that most directors either chose to disregard it or, in the 1930s, transfigured it to such an extent that it could no longer aptly be called classical, nor even a classical variant. Bordwell's refutation is directly oppositional: No, most Japanese directors did not disregard classical methods, and the innovations of the 1930s are indeed most accurately classified as variants of the classical system.

The disagreement stems largely from differences in classificatory criteria. For Burch, any divergence from representational transparency or diegetic illusionism automatically yields a fundamental qualitative shift, a quantum switch from classical cinema to

a quasi-Brechtian mode of presentational counter-cinema. For example, even though, Burch acknowledged, "it is patent that Ozu, when he developed his system...absorbed elements of Western editing, in particular shot-reverse-shot," Ozu putatively short-circuited classical diegetic immersion because "at the same time, [he] began systematically to use the 'incorrect' eyeline match, denaturalizing that standard procedure which, in the classical system, ensured the biological and imaginary centering of the spectator-as-individual."[36] Stymieing a sense of presence within an enveloping diegetic space, Ozu, Burch asserted, favored a "*topological*" perception of space "which we may call 'typically Japanese.'"[37] Bordwell counters that the classical system is much more elastic and tolerant of idiosyncratic technical approaches and departures from transparency (as one sees, for example, in Hollywood montage sequences). Deviations from some prototypical classical norm do not automatically derail or incapacitate the classical system; it is too broad, redundant, and flexible to be so easily scuttled. For Bordwell, the relevant criterion for classifying a director's decoupage as classical has to do with whether the director employs some combination (among myriad different possible combinations) of a dozen or so conventional decoupage techniques (which themselves typically allow varied approaches).[38] More generally, a film is classical insofar as its primary aim is to relay the narrative in a more or less comprehensible way—a criterion that sets a decidedly low bar for inclusion. All but the most stagnant primitivism or most aggressive avant-garde mayhem would seem to qualify as classical by that criterion.[39]

While this debate about whether the classical system is easily foiled or virtually impregnable is substantive, there does not seem to be much at stake currently, since the flawed Althusserian-Brechtian critique of mystificatory illusionism that motivated Burch to uphold Japanese cinema as a blueprint for radical counter-cinema has fallen by the wayside.[40] I am inclined to think that the most interesting aspect of the debate is the fact that Bordwell and Burch are basically in agreement about the idiosyncratic nature of Japanese film style, and surprisingly also, for the most part, about what accounts for it. Bordwell's argument is *not* that Japanese films are no different from those of Hollywood. He concurs with Burch that 1930s Japanese cinema exhibited a particular penchant for conspicuous stylization. Filmmakers were considerably more prone than Hollywood directors to incorporate "flashy" shots and sequences displaying unusual devices such as concealment and revelation of key figures; fastidious internal framing; eccentric angles; fast-motion handheld camera work; whip pans; lenticular perspectival distortions; graphic-match dissolves; poetic cutaways; animated and superimposed intertitles; idiosyncratic selective focus; rack focus; canted framing; punctuative cutting; pixilation; conspicuously patterned camera movements and montage; and so on. Figures 2.12–2.28 provide a characteristic example of a stylistic flourish. Ozu's parametric systemics and Mizoguchi's distant de-dramatization, as well as the geometric "compositionality" of both those directors, further illustrate a Japanese tendency toward a higher degree of stylistic-narrational self-consciousness than typically found in Western mainstream cinemas. Kurosawa is another touchstone. Bordwell cites him as one of the few directors to exemplify the decorative tendency throughout the stylistically more refrained 1940s. (Burch concurred, using language that echoed Bordwell's conception of classical
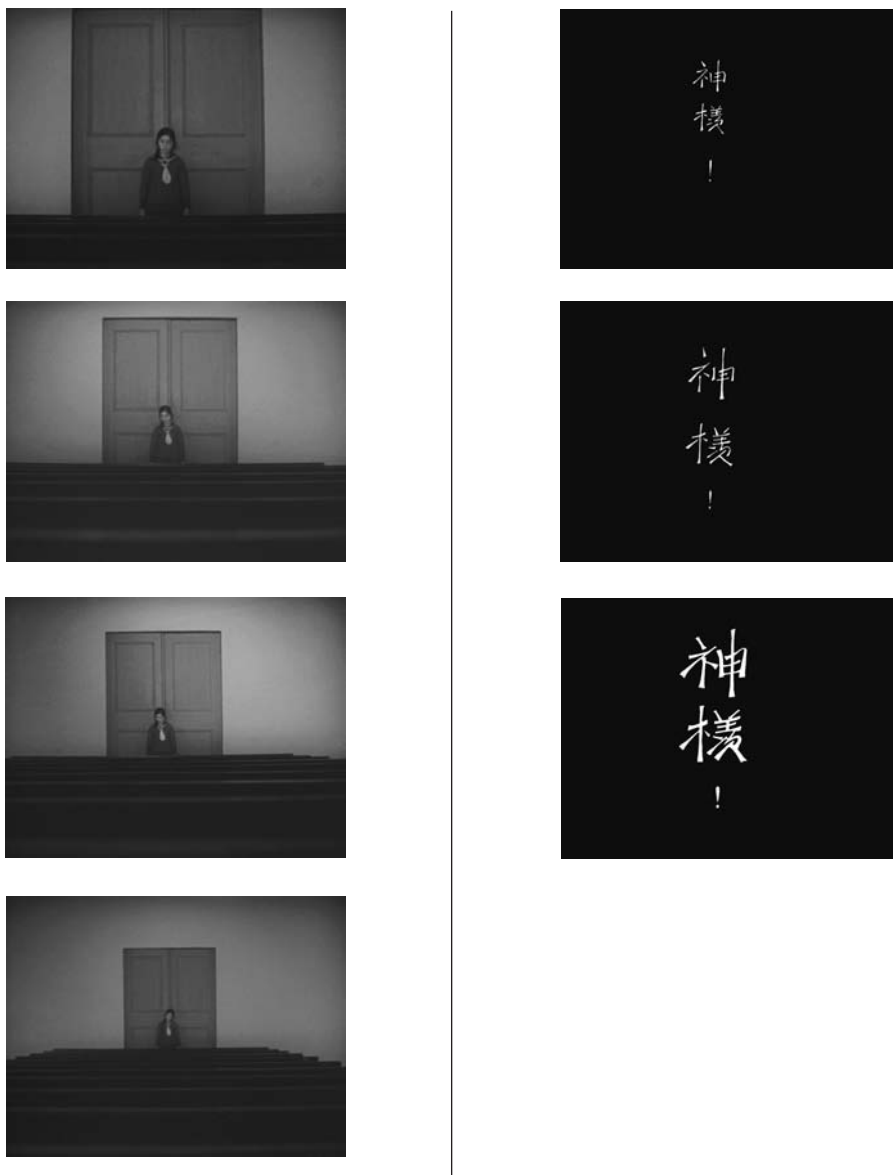
FIGURES 2.12–2.28 *Japanese Girls at the Harbor,* dir. Hiroshi Shimizu, 1933. An arresting flourish serving to punctuate a scene in which the protagonist discovers her best friend's romantic treachery and shoots her dead in a church. In a series of fourteen jump cuts, the camera approaches and then withdraws from the shocking act using a metric montage of "stepped" or "accordion" shot scales. Each image shows a different shot. Three intertitles reading "Dear God!" also escalate in size using jump cuts, expressively amplifying a sense of alarm.

variance.)[41] The emergence of widescreen cinema further highlighted the prominence of stylization as an earmark of the Japanese aesthetic. Bordwell describes the prototypical Japanese use of anamorphic widescreen as "tend[ing] to be more varied and flashy than that elsewhere in Asia, or indeed in Western countries."[42] In the 1960s, the Japanese New Wave and adjacent genre-based pop modernism also stand out as evidence of unsurpassed stylistic vivacity.

The pressing question obviously is, what explains Japanese cinema's propensity toward pumped-up stylization? Burch's explanation is tantamount to his core thesis: medium self-consciousness and stylization were woven into the very fabric of Japanese tradition; a symbiosis of artistic practice and popular taste perpetuated an aesthetic preference for "a certain *mode of presentation* which was the central artistic ideology" of the nation.[43] In short, the stylization of Japanese cinema reflected a cultural conception, putatively shared by artists and audiences alike, about the nature of artistry per se. Bordwell does not discuss the issue of popular taste in this regard, but he does point to traditional conceptions of artistry as a significant factor. Japanese poetry, theater, music, and the visual arts all placed a premium on demonstrations of technical skill and innovative flair in "submitting [formal] rules to fresh and virtuoso treatment." Bordwell underscores that "decorative emphases are encouraged by many Japanese aesthetic traditions," and assents to the conclusion that "the decorative impulse in Japanese [art] would be a plausible forerunner of this attitude toward cinema."[44] This position is basically in agreement with Burch's effort to trace 1930s Japanese cinema back to cultural antecedents (as Bordwell acknowledges explicitly in the first iteration of the essay "A Cinema of Flourishes"). Quick on the heels of that acknowledgment, however, come several provisos reiterating the disagreements sketched above. Most important, Bordwell insists that Japanese cinema, like all Japanese arts in the post-Meiji era, must be recognized as a *synthesis* of traditional and Western inputs.

As for Burch, despite the thrust of his core thesis, he also embraced, if only rather furtively, a synthetic model of Japanese film style, specifically in his discussion of 1930s cross-fertilization and "complex filiation." To be sure, Burch persistently minimized the extent of Hollywood's impact on Japanese filmmakers and audiences, and was all too quick to invoke a conceit of qualitative conversion or metamorphosis, whereby assimilation of Western conventions invariably transformed them into something altogether different, something peculiarly Japanese. Nevertheless, if one can overlook how he sought to contain the idea, it is clear that Burch did comprehend Japanese cinema as a hybrid of nativist and cosmopolitan influences.

Although a somewhat bland, uncontroversial-sounding compromise, the synthetic model of Japanese cinema is undoubtedly the most reasonable and commonsense formulation, especially given Japan's distinctive cultural history of isolationism and hyper-modernization. One might sum up the dialectic along the lines of "Japanese film style is what results when (contemporized) Japanese aesthetic traditions meet Hollywood norms." However, while such a formulation seems generally apt, one must be careful not to default to an oversimplified gloss that in this synthesis, Japanese filmmakers drew upon Hollywood to hang the prosaic backdrop of classical decoupage,

while they drew upon indigenous aesthetic traditions to add moments of decorative flair. That assumption is not altogether off-target, and in fact is reinforced by Bordwell's observation that "in accepting Hollywood norms, Japanese filmmakers largely relegated decorative treatments to inserted or hyperstylized moments—themselves marked as 'Japanese' touches."[45] But such a gloss continues to binarize Hollywood and Japan too starkly, perpetuating the misconception that stylization is normally alien to the classical system and so must necessarily derive from the Japanese contribution to the synthesis, while also neglecting ways in which the decorative stylization may be built out of formal raw materials provided by classical decoupage (for example, as in the flourish illustrated from *Japanese Girls at the Harbor*—a crystallization of the practice of analytic editing fundamental to the classical system).

That gloss also risks oversimplifying the sources of the impetus toward stylization by assuming that it derives solely from Japanese traditionalism, ignoring ways in which the competitive dynamics of Japanese modernity also motivated heightened emphasis on style. A context of competition and "one-upmanship" is basic to the artistic situation in general (in the modern era, at least), as artists vie for attention, recognition, and status through formal ingenuity and stylistic panache. Gombrich dubbed this situational logic "Vanity Fair," positing it as the prime engine of stylistic change.[46] Over and above this base level of ego-driven competition, the Japanese situation undoubtedly added a layer of cultural competition as filmmakers measured their creations against those of the preeminent American film industry. Japanese filmmakers encountering the overwhelming dominance of Hollywood could be expected to harbor a drive to surpass or outdo "the master." That drive may well have been nourished by a broader social consciousness that, according to virtually every cultural history of modern Japan (penned by Japanese and Western scholars alike), typified cultural elites throughout the Meiji era and most of the twentieth century. Commonly described as an inferiority complex vis-à-vis the West (oscillating with overcompensatory self-assurances of superiority), that consciousness impelled an anxious drive to secure cultural self-esteem and geopolitical status by emulating and, ultimately, surpassing the Western powers.[47] Hence, the challenge for Japanese filmmakers was not just assimilate the Hollywood mode, but to differentiate themselves from it and ultimately best it.[48] Stylistic verve represented a clear "value added" feature instrumental in achieving that end. While the penchant for stylization in Japanese cinema was encouraged by a long cultural tradition of aestheticism, it was also reinforced by the competitive intercultural dynamics of Japanese modernity.

*   *   *

At the beginning of this chapter, I suggested that it might be possible to find something approaching a consensus about the nature of Japanese film style. I have argued that Burch and Bordwell, for all their differences, both regard heightened stylization as the national cinema's distinguishing feature, and both recognize its foundation in cultural-aesthetic precedents. But how would Richie fit in? After all, as discussed

earlier, his realist paradigm appears to be incompatible with a critical stress on stylistic artifice. For the most part, the problem is made moot by the fact that in his later books, Richie more or less abandoned his original formulation and adopted Burch's presentational-representational heuristic wholesale. He ultimately affirmed that, "'realism'…is not…traditionally privileged in the East," and highlighted the "presentational ethos" as "a basic assumption governing the shape of the Japanese film."[49] Discussing the influence of expressionism in early Japanese cinema, Richie attributed its salience to the fact that it "meshed so satisfyingly with the Japanese assumption of presentation as a dominant mode.…Expressionism did not pretend to be representation, it was not 'realistic'—it was pure presentation, and this was something the Japanese knew all about."[50] In a discussion of manga and anime, Richie succinctly reversed his original trope regarding Japanese cinema's attunement to "things as they are," in contrast to Hollywood's fancy for "things as they should be." Manga and anime convey Japan's "general apathy to realism as a style" and indicate a "concern for the way things should be rather than the way they are, [which] is in itself a tradition—and not only in Japan, though perhaps, as so often, it is more visibly so there."[51]

All the same, Richie continued to appreciate that realism remains a salient critical category for certain directors, and in places he aimed toward a hybrid formulation allowing realism and stylization to coexist. "The postwar films of Ozu and Naruse," he wrote, "are examples of the ways in which influences both traditional and modern were blended and the means by which 'realism' retained its Japanese accent."[52] This compromise is actually something that Burch, ironically, had also attempted, although only tenuously, owing to the difficulties it posed in relation to his main argument. Burch suggested that the *shomin-geki* genre focusing on the everyday lives of common people, while "undoubtedly informed by a Western ideology of realism," was also in some respect distinctly Japanese in its extraordinary "quotidian banality and radical under-dramatization." The *shomin-geki* of Ozu, Naruse, Shimazu, Gosho, and others often involved a degree of "quotidian naturalism that would have thoroughly bored the vast majority of Western audiences." Their "naturalistic intimism spurn[ed] Western narrative models." Burch went so far as to proclaim that "even the most run-of-the-mill *shômin-geki* [would] appear avant-garde in the West."[53] This attempt to bring a significant strain of Japanese realism into the exceptionalist fold remains sketchy at best. It is perhaps most interesting to the degree that it suggests that Richie's original intuition about what made Japanese films special was not entirely off the mark, after all, for at least some films. Bordwell also has used language reminiscent of Richie's initial emphasis, noting that 1930s Japanese cinema could be "subtle in its atmospheres…[and convey a] blend of humor, melancholy, and a vivid sense of lived reality in ways that we associate with Jean Renoir or the neorealists."[54]

The issue of whether or not this mode of realism frustrates the primary thesis that heightened stylization lies at the heart of Japanese film style could be handled in two ways. First, one could argue that realism and stylization are not necessarily incompatible and can coexist happily within the same works, or perhaps even become inextricably

interfused. Ozu would be the prime example, and, indeed, this is how he is sometimes discussed. Jonathan Rosenbaum, for example, writes:

> A debate has persisted about Ozu for years: is he a realist or a formalist? What seems lamentable about this debate is that it fails to perceive that cinematic forms and social forms are not alternatives in the world of Ozu but opposite sides of the same coin, so that it should be impossible to speak about one without speaking about the other.[55]

Exactly how such a fusion of realism and formalism operates in Ozu remains to be fleshed out, however, and Ozu is such a special case that it is questionable how much one could extrapolate to Japanese filmmaking in general. A second approach to the issue is much more pragmatic. It is simply to underscore (as Keene did regarding the *shibui*/flamboyance opposition) that arguments about the nature of a national style can do no more than to point to tendencies, not universals. No statement about Japanese film style will apply to all works. The proposition that Japanese films gravitate toward heightened stylization is not invalidated by the fact that a great many films do not behave that way, either because of their investment in contemplative realism of the sort Richie originally identified, or, more likely, because of an utterly prosaic implementation of classical conventions.

By the same token, few if any films will exhibit full-throttle stylization throughout. As Bordwell points out, moments of stylistic flourish normally stand out against a backdrop of classical business-as-usual. This is certainly the case with the set-piece from *Orgies of Edo* with which I began this inquiry. Let me close by returning to that sequence in light of concepts I have discussed. My argument is that the sequence is emblematic of Japanese cinema's tendency toward conspicuous stylization. In no sense, even with the fanciest of footwork, could one describe it as realist (beyond the rudimentary fact of photographic registration). Although produced in the postwar period that Burch wrote off as hopelessly contaminated by Hollywood codes, it unquestionably accords with his conception of an aesthetic of artifice animating Japan's prewar cinema. Were he willing to accept the affinity, Burch no doubt would contextualize it as a manifestation of dyed-in-the-wool Japanese presentationalism. The sequence also provides a textbook example of a decorative flourish, and thus accords with Bordwell's conception of Japanese cinema's bent toward stylization. Bordwell, like Burch, would be amenable to seeing such stylization as an instantiation of aesthetic tendencies evident in and encouraged by other Japanese arts, but (unlike Burch) only with the proviso that the stylization did not issue forth naturally, unreflectively, or ineluctably from a cultural wellspring or "frozen stream" of aesthetic expression. Rather, it involved a high degree of deliberate agency whereby the director, Ishii, drew upon elements of aesthetic tradition as a form of quotation or allusion. Most directly, the use of high-angle perspectives and strong diagonals evokes *emakimono* picture scrolls. More generally, the fact that the image is constituted almost entirely out of kimono fabric, a quintessential emblem of Japan's unique aesthetic heritage, marks the sequence as a self-conscious effort to symbolize

Japaneseness. It is a savvy and strategic work of semiotic engineering, not a natural cultural expression of an aesthetic that exists "in the blood."

With respect to the question of whether or not the sequence conforms to classical norms, one's answer will depend upon what classificatory criteria one employs. Despite the fact that *Orgies of Edo* generally follows mainstream decoupage conventions, Burch undoubtedly would view the film's idiosyncratic moments as torpedoes sinking the whole classical battleship. Bordwell, on the other hand, sees the classical system as much more resilient and accommodating of such ornamental embellishment. As for the inclination or motivation to execute such showy artistry, I have suggested that, in addition to the overall tendency attributable to Japanese aesthetic tradition in general, the competitive logic of "Vanity Fair" pertains, both on an interpersonal level (the director seeking recognition, affirmation, and status as a virtuoso) and, perhaps more nebulously, on an intercultural level. It is probably too attenuated to suggest that a drive to beat Hollywood played much of a role in motivating the kimono-market set piece, but it is not too much of a stretch to argue that Ishii's consciousness of European modernist art cinema (along with the Japanese New Wave) likely fueled a competitive impetus to create such a bravura experiment in visual arousal.

Finally, it is important to inflect the question slightly and ask not what motivated such stylization (aesthetic traditions, strategic allusion, egocentric competition, etc.), but what *permitted* it in the first place. Did Toei management allow the bonfire of stylization to rage because it didn't care what directors did, just as long as they delivered the requisite *ero-guro* sex and violence? Alternately, did the studio actively facilitate stylization—providing ample budgeting and resources for lavish, arty set pieces—as a means to disavow or compensate for its descent into smut? Or, despite the unsavory genre, did studio management continue to bank on colorful exoticism as an asset for export marketability? This level of analysis, dealing with particularities of production and exhibition rather than the broad sweep of cultural aesthetics, must be a central part of any attempt to understand the configuration of Japanese, or any national, film style.

Notes

1. Donald Keene, "Japanese Aesthetics," *Philosophy East and West* 19, no. 3 (July 1969): 293–306, quotation on 293.
2. Donald Richie, *Japanese Movies* (Tokyo: Japan Travel Bureau, 1961); Richie, *Japanese Cinema: Film Style and National Character* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1971). Unless otherwise indicated, I will cite page numbers from the latter book.
3. Noël Burch, *To the Distant Observer: Form and Meaning in the Japanese Cinema* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979). Citations below will abbreviate the title as *TDO*. Three essays digest the book's argument. The third is a retrospective synopsis written in 1987. The essays sometimes provide pithier quotations. I treat them on an equal footing with the book as articulations of Burch's positions. Burch, "To the Distant

Observer: Towards a Theory of Japanese Film," *October* 1 (Spring 1976): 32–46; Burch, "Approaching Japanese Film," in *Cinema and Language*, ed. Stephen Heath and Patricia Mellencamp (Frederick, MD: University Publications of America, 1993), 79–95; Burch, "A Dissentient Cinema?" in his collections of essays *In and Out of Synch: The Awakening of a Cine-Dreamer* (Aldershot, UK: Scolar Press, 1991), 187–202.

4. Richie, *Japanese Movies*, 99.

5. Ruth Benedict, *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword: Patterns of Japanese Culture* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1946); Daisetz T. Suzuki, *Zen Buddhism, Selected Writings* (New York: Doubleday, 1956); Suzuki, *Zen and Japanese Buddhism* (Tokyo: Japan Travel Bureau, 1958) [a book in the same series as *Japanese Movies*]; and Suzuki, *Zen and Japanese Culture* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1959). Hajime Nakamura, *Ways of Thinking of Eastern Peoples* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1964). This book was first published in 1947 in Japanese and first came out in an English translation in 1960, published by the Tokyo office of UNESCO. Sections of the book had already been translated in the early 1950s under the auspices of the Rockefeller Foundation, and Nakamura digested key ideas in English-language journals that Richie likely followed, such as *Monumenta Nipponica* and *Philosophy East and West*.

6. David Bordwell, *On the History of Film Style* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), 78.

7. Quotations in this paragraph are from Richie, *Japanese Cinema,* except one quotation from *Japanese Movies* indicated below by asterisk. In order of quotation: pp. 58; 13; 20; 36; 37; 13; 37–38*; xxiv (cf. p. 14); xxiii–xxiv; xx; 22.

8. Richie, *Japanese Cinema*, xxii–xxiii and 15. This paragraph also draws heavily from Richie, "Notes for a Definition of the Japanese Film," *Performance* 1, no. 2 (April 1972): 21–30; reprinted as "A Definition of the Japanese Film" in Richie, *A Lateral View: Essays on Culture and Style in Contemporary Japan* (Berkeley, CA: Stone Bridge Press, 1987), 170–184, wherein a writing date of 1970 is indicated. The trope polarizing things as they are vs. should be is on pp. 170–171 of the reprint.

9. Donald Richie and Joseph L. Anderson, "Traditional Theater and the Film in Japan," *Film Quarterly* 12, no. 1 (Autumn 1958): 2–9, quotation on p. 2. Similar passages are in Anderson and Richie, *The Japanese Film: Art and Industry*, expanded ed. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1982), 327 [as well as in the original 1965 ed.] and in Richie, *Japanese Cinema*, xxi and 7.

10. Richie, *Japanese Cinema*, 7.

11. The distinction underlines the fact that a given mise-en-scène, for example in a fantasy film, might be illusionistic without necessarily being realistic. Diegetic immersion, whether or not realistic, was Burch's target of attack. He touches on the distinction in *TDO,* 19.

12. Burch, "Approaching," 80, and *TDO,* 11.

13. Burch, "Dissentient," 188. There are a number of helpful synopses of Burch's book in the literature. See, for example, Bordwell, *On the History of Film Style*, 108–111; and Abé Mark Nornes, "Notes for Nöel Burch's *To the Distant Observer,*" http://pears.lib.ohio-state.edu/Markus/1995/Burch.notes.html.

14. This hypothesis, unsatisfyingly abstruse and sketchy in Burch's articulation, is the focus of chapter 2 of *TDO*.

15. On poetry, see Burch, *TDO* chap. 3, pp. 42–54 and p. 72; on dramatic arts, chap. 6, pp. 67–74; on graphic arts, p. 71, pp. 91–92, and p. 99; on architecture, chap. 18.

16. Burch, *TDO,* 72, 117, and 25.

17. Ibid., 25–26; Burch, "Approaching," 84; Burch, "Dissentient," 188; Burch, *TDO,* 126; ibid., 26–27 and 29.

18. On colonialism, insularity, etc., see Burch, *TDO,* chap. 1; Burch, "Approaching," 81; Burch, "Dissentient," 188. On cultural fixity and unconcern for originality, Burch, *TDO,* 31–33 and 53, and "Approaching," 89.

19. Burch, "Approaching," 81–82; *TDO,* 27–28, and Dissentient, 198–199.

20. Burch, "Dissentient," 189; cf. *TDO,* 76.

21. Richie, *Japanese Cinema,* 5–7. Aaron Gerow, *Visions of Japanese Modernity: Articulations of Cinema, Nation, and Spectatorship, 1895–1925* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010).

22. Burch, "Approaching," 87; cf. *TDO,* 81.

23. Burch, *TDO,* 96; cf. "Dissentient," 191.

24. It is difficult to know for sure how significant a shift actually occurred. Due to the tragically small number of surviving films, Burch had precious little filmic evidence with which to make generalizations about film style in the 1920s—only about fifteen films (plus sundry fragments) from that period, several of which represented counter-exemplary experiments in Western decoupage. Burch, *TDO,* appendix 2.

25. Ibid., 76 (to first ellipses); Burch, "Approaching," 85–86, and (for last sentence) 89.

26. Burch, *TDO,* 262; see also 143–144.

27. Ibid., 147.

28. Burch, "Dissentient," 193–195. I have rearranged the text: the first sentence appears on p. 195; cf. "Approaching," 91.

29. Burch, *TDO,* 148.

30. Burch, "Approaching," 91.

31. Burch, *TDO,* 90.

32. My discussion of Bordwell's critique draws primarily from two important essays: David Bordwell, "A Cinema of Flourishes: Decorative Style in 1920s and 1930s Japanese Film," in *Poetics of Cinema*, 375–393—a slightly revised version of an essay originally published (with the subtitle, "Japanese Decorative Classicism in the Prewar Era") in Arthur Nolletti Jr. and David Desser, eds., *Reframing Japanese Cinema: Authorship—Genre—History* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992), 328–346; and Bordwell, "Visual Style in Japanese Cinema," in *Poetics of Cinema*, 337–475—a revised and expanded version of an essay originally published in *Film History* 7, no. 1 (Spring 1995): 5–31.

33. David Bordwell, "Our Dream Cinema: Western Historiography and the Japanese Film," *Film Reader* 4 (1979): 45–62, quotations on 58.

34. Gerow, *Visions of Japanese Modernity*; Mitsuyo Wada-Marciano, *Nippon Modern: Japanese Cinema of the 1920s and 1930s* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2008); Catherine Russell, *The Cinema of Naruse Mikio: Women and Japanese Modernity* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008); Miriam Silverberg, *Erotic Grotesque Nonsense: The Mass Culture of Japanese Modern Times* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006); Isolde Standish, *A New History of Japanese Cinema: A Century of Narrative Film* (New York: Continuum, 2006), chap. titled "Reflections"; Hideaki Fujiki, *Making Personas: Transnational Film Stardom in Modern Japan* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2012).

35. Burch quotations from "Approaching," 82; Bordwell, "Visual Style," 339.

36. Burch, "Dissentient," 195.

37. Burch, "Approaching," 93.

38. Analytic editing to guide attention; establishing shots to clarify spatial positions and interrelationships; 180-degree rule to maintain consistent screen directions from shot to shot; eyeline matching to reinforce spatial coherence; shot-reverse-shot structures of various sorts (straight, over-the-shoulder, or point-of-view) to maximize concentration in dialogue sequences and "envelope" the spectator within narrative space; avoidance of jarring jump cuts by adequately differentiating perspectival angles and shot scales from shot to shot; spatio-temporal matching of action from one shot to the next in order to maximize fluidity and render cuts less obtrusive; contiguity matching of screen directions from shot to shot when a figure moves from one locale to another; various other conventions to facilitate easy perception of figures and actions, such as ample lighting; minimization of occlusion or figural overlapping; centered compositions; forward-facing positioning of figures, and so on.

39. This broader sense is intimated in Bordwell, "Flourishes," 380.

40. Bordwell provides a pithy encapsulation of the theoretical flaw that led to its demise. "Burch's couplet 'full sign' (= realism, transparency, ideological mystification) / 'empty sign' (= transgression, critique, ideological subversion) is questionable, committed as it is to a static, acontextual notion of meaning. . . . It underwrites a criticism that mutely points at how the empty sign, with monotonous regularity, sends this or that ideologically complicit code crashing to earth." Bordwell, *Ozu and the Poetics of Cinema* (Princeton, NJ, and London: Princeton University Press and British Film Institute, 1988), 139.

41. Burch stated, "Within the framework of the 'classical language,' [Kurosawa] developed a system which was extraordinarily Japanese in its 'artificiality,' in the way in which it took on board, unabashed, a certain *stylistic visibility.*" Burch, "Dissentient," 200. One is surprised how well this description, especially the first clause, sits with Bordwell's characterization of Japanese cinema as a classical variant. Burch does not explain why Kurosawa should be subsumed within the classical system but not pre-war Ozu and others, beyond the dubious assertion that everything changed as a result of the occupation and the postwar cultural dynamics of Japanese acquiescence and American imperialism.

42. David Bordwell, "Another Shaw Production: Anamorphic Adventures in Hong Kong," in *Widescreen Worldwide*, ed. John Belton, Sheldon Hall, and Steve Neale (John Libbey, 2010), 198–224, quotation on 205.

43. Burch, *TDO,* 77.

44. Bordwell, "Flourishes," 389–390.

45. Ibid., 390.

46. E. H. Gombrich, "The Logic of Vanity Fair: Alternatives to Historicism in the Study of Fashions, Style, and Taste," in *The Logic of Karl Popper*, vol. 2, ed. Paul Schilpp (La Salle, IL: Open Court, 1974), 925–957; reprinted in Gombrich, *Ideals and Idols: Essays on Value in History and Art* (Oxford: Phaidon, 1979), 60–92.

47. This theme is so pervasive in scholarship on Japan that citing particular examples would be arbitrary. An example from the domain of film studies serves as a representative instance. "When Japan opened its doors to the outside world, breaking the shackles of isolation in the mid-nineteenth century, it was shocked to find that most of Asia had been colonized by the West and Japan lagged far behind in terms of scientific achievement. This gave birth to a deep sense of inferiority." Tadao Sato, "Akira Kurosawa: Tradition in a Time of Transition," in *Asian Film Journeys: Selections from Cinemaya,* ed. Latika Padgaonkar and Rashmi Doraiswamy (New Delhi: Wisdom Tree, 2010), 242.

48. Cf. Bordwell, "Visual Style," 355. The rebuilding and modernization of the Japanese industry following the 1923 Kanto earthquake "posed a problem: How to avoid becoming simply a copy of the West? How to infuse a modern cinema with a sense of Japaneseness?"

49. Donald Richie, *A Hundred Years of Japanese Film*, rev. ed. (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 2005), 11–12.

50. Ibid, 84.

51. Ibid, 258.

52. Ibid, 119.

53. Burch, *TDO,* 258, and "Dissentient," 196 and 199.

54. Bordwell, "Visual Style" 338.

55. Jonathan Rosenbaum, "Is Ozu Slow?" in *Essential Cinema: On the Necessity of Film Canons* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press), 146.

CRITICAL RECEPTION: HISTORICAL CONCEPTIONS OF JAPANESE FILM CRITICISM

AARON GEROW

CRITICISM AS RECEPTION

JAPANESE film criticism has sometimes provided an important opportunity for foreign scholars of Japanese cinema.[1] Worried that their own readings of a work may impose an external perspective on a film, or miss signs that Japanese spectators would easily catch, they have occasionally cited Japanese critics, ranging from Sato Tadao to Hasumi Shigehiko, to bolster their perceptions or provide a Japanese perspective. Especially as film studies has increasingly focused on reception, particularly the processes by which audiences do not just receive but actively create meaning as they watch a film, criticism can provide one of the few written accounts for how some Japanese spectators understood a historical text. Film critics themselves have indeed sometimes offered themselves as the exemplary instance of film reception, as if their reaction to a work is the standard one. Claims equating critical evaluation to reception, however, have often been made without understanding either the history of Japanese film criticism or conceptualizations of its relationships to spectatorship. How does the critic compare to other viewers, or criticism to other forms of reception? Is the critical mode in fact a model for other forms of reception? And have these relationships changed over time?

Japan has enjoyed a long and vibrant history of film criticism, one so rich Japanese critics themselves could proclaim their work as some of the best film criticism in the world.[2] Yet in contrast to this proliferation of writing, there has been little written about the history or theory of this critical tradition.[3] This, unfortunately, reflects the lack of

theorization in criticism itself,[4] as well as the absence of critical self-examination by students and scholars who use film criticism. An understanding of the historical trends in film criticism and how critics have conceived their own roles not only can help us frame the conceptual basis for the evaluations critics have offered but also can offer a window onto how spectatorship and film production have been framed and debated within Japan. Through this, criticism can tell us about cinematic reception not just by offering examples of what individuals thought of a film but also by showing us a history of expectations about how viewers should react to a film—what they can or cannot do when viewing—as well as of the ideologies involved in such assumptions about cinema and spectatorship, all of which are also part of the reception of any movie. The ultimately ambivalent place of film criticism in the motion picture industry can also reveal its complex role mediating studio and spectator. That these histories, as I will show, are fraught with conflicts and contradictions regarding both criticism and reception can tell us much about cinematic culture in Japan as well as, perhaps, the problems film criticism has been encountering entering the twenty-first century. In this article I will review this history, less by offering a comprehensive chronology of important names, trends, and magazines than by outlining the conceptual issues that have been central to criticism in Japan over time.

THE PURE FILM MOVEMENT AND THE
IMPRESSIONIST PARADIGM

Many accounts of Japanese film criticism tie its commencement with the beginnings of Japanese cinema in the reforms of the 1910s and 1920s, loosely called the Pure Film Movement. Given that some of the reformers began as critics before becoming filmmakers themselves, one can see here the first of many occasions in Japanese film history where writing on cinema intimately intersected with filmmaking. Arguments about what cinema should be, which were applied to criticisms of individual films, would eventually be manifested in film practice. The connection between film reform and criticism also existed on the conceptual level. Togawa Naoki, himself a prominent critic from the 1930s, could begin his historical survey of Japanese criticism with Yoshiyama Kyokko, whom Iwamoto Kenji terms Japan's "first professional film journalist,"[5] but Togawa declares that "there is no record of him [Yoshiyama] writing film criticism."[6] Yoshiyama penned film introductions for magazines such as *Kabuki* and newspapers like *Miyako shinbun* around 1910, but Togawa considered these mere journalistic accounts, ones insufficiently aware of the essence of film. Kaeriyama Norimasa, who began submitting criticism to *Katsudo shashinkai* (Moving Picture World) in the early 1910s, becomes the "pioneer of Japanese film critics" to Togawa because "he contributed to the spread of film knowledge" by "introducing and critiquing films on the basis of thorough readings of foreign sources and clear knowledge of the scientific conditions of

cinema."[7] Film criticism then begins in this narrative, not just with a critical perspective but also with a knowledge of film. This definition underlines the long-standing, yet not always acknowledged, links between film criticism and film theory.

The question is how this conception of cinema—this theory—is formulated in Japan. Writing under one of his pseudonyms, Kaeriyama defined "a good film" as "the value when looked at from the pure standpoint of the moving pictures."[8] The pillar of the new criticism was to judge a film as a film and emphasize whatever cinematic modes of signification were used to transmit that narrative. This was the critical position of the Pure Film Movement, the effort by young critics in the 1910s and early 1920s to reform Japanese cinema by eliminating what were seen as its noncinematic elements. Perhaps thinking of the kabuki-influenced Yoshiyama, Tachibana Takahiro, who was both a critic and a censorship official, urged critics "to cut all relationships with the stage and see photoplays as photoplays."[9] This opposition between cinema and theater informed the Pure Film Movement's call for reforming Japanese cinema. They urged the elimination of *onnagata* (male actors specializing in female roles), the introduction of analytical editing, and the restriction of the benshi. Asserting the rights of film critics necessitated usurping the benshi not only in order to present criticism as the rightful authority to speak about cinema but also to prevent the text from changing each time it was shown, which could happen depending on the skill of the benshi. Criticism demanded a text, universal and unchanging, that critics could lay judgment on. To many who envisioned film criticism as an engine of change, the problem of who made the film was central. The space of production, not exhibition, should define the text, and thus criticism foregrounded an authorial subjectivity, one first centered in the screenplay, that would be responsible for the film.[10] A version of auteurism was thus prevalent in film criticism from its first decades. One goal of criticism was then to change not the text but those who made it. "The function of film criticism," said one critic, "lies in both judging the value of produced films as well as in correcting and aiding filmmakers, offering the driving force for reconstruction."[11]

In this sense, criticism here was more about film production than about reception, aiming to alter the future course of filmmaking rather than how spectators constructed the given text. Film viewing was certainly important to the young film reformers: theirs, in a sense, was a movement of amateur spectators who started their own magazines such as *Kinema Record* and *Kinema junpo* (Movie Times) in the 1910s, the latter of which continues to this day as Japan's most important film magazine. One crucial aspect of the history of film criticism in Japan are the coterie magazines (*dojinshi*) and the amateur film review sections in major magazines that offered a training ground and an entry point for budding critics well into the 1980s, as well as lending a democratic air to Japanese film culture. Yet the writings of pioneering film critics were not meant to change the existing, completed films themselves; the text produced by an author was sacrosanct. The potential for films to be altered in reception was instead part of the problem. Rather than championing the powers of spectatorship, they endeavored to regulate it through criticism. *Kinema junpo* declared that one of the "most important missions" of film critics was to "explain the impressions given to them by the film and

prompt self-examination on the part of all those involved in that film: the producers, exhibitors, and spectators."[12] Critics were also spectators, but, as Tachibana Takahiro asserted, they were "people who lead; they cannot be led."[13] Their mode of viewing was by definition elevated and their writing pedagogical. *Kinema junpo* declared that one of the primary tasks of film critics was to direct modes of viewing: "They should improve their own position and teach audiences approaching the film for the first time what to look at."[14] The first critics thus took an antagonistic stance toward the industry, attacking its vulgar practices on the behalf of cinema and its proper spectators. One saw few figures like the American pioneer critic Frank E. Woods, who praised the cinema in part out of self-interest, hoping to sell his own scripts to the industry.[15] Yet the young reformers still conceived of themselves as engaged with the industry, as both *Kinema Record* and *Kinema junpo* termed themselves trade journals. Their stance was pedagogical, however, standing above both producers and spectators and teaching them how to properly work with cinema. When Kaeriyama went on to direct films, or the critic Midorigawa Harunosuke joined a studio and became Noda Kogo, Ozu Yasujiro's primary scriptwriter, it was less to join forces with those they had been ingratiating than to ostensibly put into practice cinematic ideas that transcended the economic.

This elevated stance set the pattern for what would be the dominant form of film criticism in twentieth-century Japan: impressionist criticism. Narrating the impressions received during viewing became the centerpiece for evaluating the quality of a film. The experience was individual: as the poet and film critic Kitagawa Fuyuhiko wrote in the 1940s, "Film criticism must be a self-confession born of the confrontation with cinema."[16] Despite its democratic origins, the assumption of impressionist criticism was always that the critic's impressions were superior to those of the average viewer because they were more attuned and knowledgeable about cinema; it was such a hierarchy of culture (*kyoyo*), one authorized by a universal cinematic standard, that presumably prevented criticism from descending into mere relativism.

Three issues intersect here with the history of impressionist film criticism. The first is that this hierarchy of sensibility often overlapped with the class dynamics endemic to the Pure Film Movement. As I have argued elsewhere, film reform in the 1910s and 1920s was not simply an effort to render Japanese film more cinematic; it was also a cultural politics deeply concerned with the rise of the urban masses, one that sought out novel modes of cinema in order to control the social production of meaning and shape new forms of subjectivity in line with the creation of the modern nation.[17] Not only was film criticism aligned with the effort to corral the potentially chaotic production of meaning in reception, but it also embodied new subjectivities wherein modern discernment ruled over crass pleasure, an order Hatano Tetsuro has called in his historical analysis of Japanese film criticism "the aristocracy of sensibility."[18] Impressionist critics long maintained a sense of their elite status, often looking down on popular modes of film criticism such as newspaper film reviews (which came to prominence from the late 1920s) and establishing a hierarchical distinction between professional film criticism and outsider film criticism (*kyokugai hihyo*), the latter of which could include film criticism by novelists or literary critics. These distinctions were not always clear—one

of the great critics from the 1930s on, Tsumura Hideo was initially the reviewer for the *Asahi* newspaper—but in general by the postwar, "specialist critics" were the select few in the "eiga rondan" (the film critical equivalent of literature's *bundan* coterie) centered on *Kinema junpo*, and they made their superiority known by criticizing the cinematic ignorance of "outsider" critics.

This elite status in part derived from the reformist critic's special relationship to the foreign. *Kinema Record*'s Shigeno Yukiyoshi rejected Yoshiyama Kyokko's claim that Japanese films should be evaluated separately as Japanese films:

> Judging "Japanese pictures as Japanese pictures," as Yoshiyama urges, may be appropriate for discussing drama, but when speaking of moving pictures, only comparing them to good foreign works is profitable.[19]

There are several reasons pure film reformers like Shigeno could not allow for a separate standard of criticism. It could, for instance, allow for the existence of Japanese films that embodied the cultural and class values that disturbed reformers. Film reform, bolstered by critical standards of good and bad, was a winner-take-all engagement. More importantly, there was no conception of a Japanese difference to cinema; cinema was universal, but as the quote shows, the benchmark resided in the foreign. Criticism was dependent upon European and American standards, a fact that underlines how much cinema itself was defined positively from the 1910s on as a product of the West.

This placed the impressionist critic in a complex position. On the one hand, the "aristocracy of sensibility" was bolstered by its association with a dominant global power, at least culturally. If Japanese films were in fact to be judged by Western standards, the critic in effect assumed the eye, if not the sensibility, of the supposedly culturally advanced foreigner.[20] This is one reason the majority of Japanese film critics praised foreign films over the domestic fare up until at least the 1950s, and why some of the more famous critics in the popular press or on television, such as Yodogawa Nagaharu (who edited *Eiga no tomo*, the major foreign film magazine), Futaba Juzaburo, or Ogi Masahiro, rarely wrote about Japanese movies. There was an inherent problem in the Japanese critic playing the foreign spectator, however. The West defined its own centrality and superiority, if not its modernity, through marginalizing the non-West. Even someone as sympathetic to Japanese cinema as Noël Burch, in one of his more orientalist moments, denied the possibility of theory in Japan, asserting that "the very notion of theory is alien to Japan; it is considered a property of Europe and the West," in a move that, while intended as a critique of Eurocentrism, ironically reasserted the dominance of Western theorists over those from the non-West.[21]

Unable to completely assume the Western gaze, some Japanese perhaps used criticism as an imperfect response to this dominance. It was a practice less defined by theory and thus freer of monopolization by the West; talking about individual films, it did not assert as much command of the universal "capacity" of film, which the West always seemed to claim. When Kitagawa Fuyuhiko celebrated in the early 1950s the world-class level of Japanese film criticism, he interestingly did so by relating that to "Japan's cultural

position in the world." His declared reasoning was that, unlike the biased criticism found in other countries, Japan's critics could collate the best of world criticism and offer a "fair appreciation of cinematic art."[22] Kitagawa thus saw Japan as being able to assume through criticism what could be called a nonaligned position, one that becomes significant against the backdrop of the Cold War's division between East and West.[23] It seemingly could not assume that position in film theory, however. Kitagawa never spells it out, but the implication is that it is because theory to him cannot be unaligned. He claims that an established, programmatic film theory is necessary for good cinema practice and for a Japanese film that makes the best of tradition. Yet this is not a cinema backed by a unique Japanese film theory grounded in a long-standing aesthetics but rather a cinema that "draws on the particularities of traditional art from the standpoint of the modern spirit."[24] Theory in Kitagawa's worldview is this spirit on the side of the modern, standing over and above Japan in judgment, seemingly universal yet also analogous to the position of the West in the world system. Both adopting and distancing himself from theory, Kitagawa here embodies many of the contradictions of the Japanese film intellectual, one who is conscious of theory's place in the West yet feels its necessity in local practice, desiring the foreign gaze while seeking alternative forms of theory in film criticism or in modes of creative practice.

Film criticism may have been to some in Japan a different kind of theorizing resisting the West's seeming monopoly over theory, but it was one that was often achieved, in the case of impressionist criticism, at the cost of refusing to theorize itself. When the leftist critic Iwasaki Akira attacked impressionist critics for their lack of self-introspection concerning their role during the war, Kitagawa simply declared that "in the postwar I prepared myself by establishing an unmovable self that cannot be moved by left or right. I earnestly tried to investigate humanity in the arts—a position of humanism."[25] This may have been Kitagawa's attempt at establishing his nonaligned subjectivity (at a time when many were debating how to establish the individual subjectivity/*shutaisei* needed in postwar democratic Japan), but this was an "unmovable self" only because it refused any form of self-examination that may threaten the self as given. Hatano sees this as a fundamental problem in impressionist criticism. There, "the film experience may have been the basis for uttering words, but the critical objectification of that foundation was avoided." Such criticism "did not allow for the intervention of any sort of social scientific logic in terms of the self's sensibility or intellect; it instead finished things off without conflict."[26] The effect was to naturalize and authorize the critic's impressions: they were to be the reasonable result of the privileged encounter between the text and a cultured eye, not the contingent product of sociopolitical conditions. The nature of reception, as well as the politics of criticism, was never theorized. The dominant form of criticism in Japan, then, essentially denied the power of reception for anyone except the elite critic. Theory in most cases became an absence necessary to legitimize the impressionistic subject in terms of its authority. The more criticism became a central mode of thinking about cinema, the more theory was forgotten within the history of such thinking, and criticism distanced itself from the larger question of film reception.

Ideological Criticism

One could consider the long history of orthodox leftist film criticism as one counter to this structuring of film, critic, and theory. Beginning with the proletarian film movement in the late 1920s, suffering repression from the militarizing state from the mid-1930s, but reviving after the war, criticism by Marxist influenced critics such as Iwasaki Akira, Uryu Tadao, and Yamada Kazuo was an effort to question the ideological and sociopolitical underpinnings of film production and criticism. While it eventually suffered censure by New Left critics in the 1960s, at the beginning it asked some of the questions impressionist critics did not. If impressionist criticism treated the encounter with the text as an almost intimate affair, with little to mediate the relationship between the given film and critic (the social could at best only appear afterward, as part of the associations the reviewer imagined from the text), ideological critics focused on the social conditions of that encounter. Not only could the film be criticized for reflecting bourgeois ideology or furthering capitalist interests, but the critic could also be blamed for hiding this ideology through valorizing art over all. Ideological critics consciously foregrounded theory as a means of understanding these relationships between cinema, criticism, and socioeconomic conditions, with Iwasaki in particular acting as the conceptual watchdog of the film critical world for many years.

Ideological criticism was thus an effort to deal with one of the primary facets of film: the fact that it was a commercial and mass medium. Literary criticism could avoid the problem of mass culture by focusing on *junbungaku* or "pure literature," but film criticism could not. Some impressionist critics attempted that through ignoring Japanese or Hollywood films and specializing in European cinema. But even then, film was an industry. The question of economics always reared its ugly head, if only as the villain in a narrative in which the individual artist battled against the studio. Ideological criticism attempted to turn these issues on their head: cinema's mass quality was now its political strength, its industrial nature a sign of its modernity.

Leftist critics were not always successful in conceptualizing these issues, however. In fact, ideological criticism shared more with impressionist criticism than it may have preferred. Especially in the late 1920s and early 1930s, journals were full of debates over the standards for Marxist film criticism, at a time when leftist "tendency" (keiko) films were in vogue. Were bourgeois films completely worthless or could aspects be recuperated? Should criticism focus on story and content (i.e., accurate descriptions of social conditions), or was there an appropriate proletarian film form? Iwasaki again often served as the adjudicator of these discussions, warning, for instance, of the simplistic dualism of art and industry that some leftist critics proposed in an effort to criticize capitalist filmmaking; the real challenge, he stressed, was confronting their unity.[27] But leftists still had a hard time determining what this art should be. The critic Ikeda Toshio confessed in a guide to Marxist film criticism written in 1930 that "we have still not seen the establishment of a clear proletarian film aesthetics. As a result, it is inevitable that the proletarian standards for film beauty are somewhat abstract."[28] Montage was supposed

to be one such aesthetic, as was socialist realism, but if the former became subject to charges of formalism, the latter ironically underlined that, at least in terms of sensibility, communist critics were generally products of the Pure Film Movement tradition and its valorization of a transparent Hollywood style. The main difference was if the "absolute other" (to borrow Karatani Kojin's term) of pure film critics was America, for leftists it was Marxism; both were functionally foreign.[29] It was in part this aesthetic conservatism that put orthodox leftists in opposition with the New Wave and its avant-garde aesthetic politics in the 1960s.

Ironically, Marxist film critics also failed to escape the hierarchies of criticism. Ideological criticism was supposed to be transformative. To Ikeda, "The duty of criticism is in fact to determine the sociological value of a given film. To determine that value is to correct art, making it a means of transforming human society."[30] Yet impressionist criticism, born of a reform movement, was also transformative. Leftist criticism supposedly differed in its aims and class character, but it was the same in its pedagogical approach: teaching less knowledgeable spectators what film should be. The problem is that Marxist critics were unsure of how to treat the object of its pedagogy: the masses and popular cinema.[31] In a 1933 debate, some, like Ueno Kozo, declared that if a film was a commercial success, it was because it must have connected with the reality of the masses. Iwasaki argued the situation was more complex than that, since multiple historical conditions determine the popularity of cultural products. At the same time, however, he expressed little confidence in the masses' current ability to understand art. Present conditions, he argued, differed little from those of aristocratic cultures like ancient Greece, where "the masses could never posses the desire or sensibility for art." In modern society, "the majority of them do not understand art. Or rather, they are trained not to understand art by the cultural policies of the ruling classes."[32] In the end, Iwasaki's discussion not only pictures the masses as helpless victims—a trope that would be repeated by the postwar left—but also conceives of art as a given object that is either understood or not. Art was an issue of "correct critical power and sensibility," of whether the masses "could distinguish between pearls and pebbles."[33] Unlike earlier leftist theorists such as Gonda Yasunosuke,[34] ideological critics from the 1930s on mostly did not envision lower class spectators producing culture through their reception or use of cinema, or proletarian masses fundamentally changing—not just understanding—what art is.

Ideological criticism's efforts to conceptualize the ideological aspects of film art were thus severely hampered. The left also suffered through bouts of orthodoxy that marginalized such important leftist theorists as Imamura Taihei, who suffered through blistering debates with Iwasaki and other communist critics over the issue of realism, just when the independent leftist film movement was gathering steam in the 1950s. Like impressionist critics, leftists had a difficult time relinquishing their power of understanding over the cinema: film was mostly what they understood it to be, not what they learned from working-class viewers. It was a top-down conception of culture with the critic (the vanguard intellectual) at the top, one that mirrored the pedagogical stance of many 1950s leftist films. Ideological critics were skilled at analyzing political problems

in dominant cinema, but like their opponents, they rarely turned their gaze upon themselves. This was painfully apparent after the war, as Marxist writers criticized the reigning film critics for their wartime actions without doing the same to themselves, despite their own collaborations. The theorization of the critical subject was as absent as it was before.

Another New Wave

This system, in which two broad modes of film criticism ostensibly opposed each other but at their base shared unreflective assumptions about cinema, criticism, and the critic, continued well into the mid-1950s, despite the suppression of the left in the 1930s, the mobilization of the film world during the war, and postwar recriminations. The postwar institution of film criticism mirrored the film world during the Golden Age of the 1950s. Just as the major studios had established an oligarchic structure that largely squeezed out or absorbed the independents, *Kinema junpo* forged "a salon-like circle of film critics," in the words of Shirai Yoshio, who later edited the magazine,[35] that excluded other forms of criticism while including established leftists like Iwasaki. Dominant and alternative were not that different at this stage.

It was also at this time when criticism had its closest relationship with the industry. The early era of critical yet still paternal opposition to the industry lingered on in the occasional high-cultured lambasting of popular Japanese cinema, but after the 1920s critics were more often than not employed by film companies, especially in the publicity sections of those specializing in foreign film. Yodogawa Nagaharu worked for United Artists and Toho; Hazumi Tsuneo and Shimizu Akira for Towa; Nanbu Keinosuke for Paramount; and Mizuno Haruo for 20th Century Fox. Mori Iwao even rose to become vice-president of Toho. The institutional relation between criticism and publicity solidified in theater pamphlets and advertisements, which could underline the degree criticism was important to the film world. While some of the first high-class theater pamphlets in the 1910s were edited by aspiring critics who were given considerable leeway by the theaters that published them, pamphlets after the 1950s increasingly originated from the distributor's publicity arm and could feature a commentary requested of the critic by the company, one that was rarely critical.[36] As in the United States, published advertisements for more artistic films could feature quotations from critics, ones either requested by the company or taken from published reviews.[37] Advertising flyers (*chirashi*) could also sport quotations that were made on demand. Finally, with the spread of television, the most prominent critics became those like Yodogawa and Ogi Masahiro, who introduced film broadcasts during primetime and who found a way to say something positive about even the low-budget American films that sometimes were the only movies networks could afford. While not all critics were in effect bought by the industry, and even those who did work for companies could often remain outstanding writers, the relationship between critics and industry mirrored that between impressionist and

ideological criticism: an ostensible opposition that was often embedded in a larger set of institutional unities.

Several factors were central in prompting transformations in this critical system. One, as Shinada Yukichi and others argue, is the 1955 dismissal of Shimizu Chiyota as editor of *Kinema junpo*, an incident that helped break up the "eiga rondan" when many writers left the magazine in protest.[38] It became easier for other figures to enter the scene. Important was the work of Tsurumi Shunsuke and the Shiso no kagaku (Science of Thought) study group, which was influential in reconceiving the popular—and thus the notion of the masses—by seeking out the thought (shiso) emerging bottom-up from popular phenomena. This helped reconceptualize another hierarchy, that between Japan and the West. The victory of Kurosawa Akira's *Rashomon* at Venice in 1951, along with the propagandistic rejection of foreign cinema during the war, had already prompted a reconsideration of the long-standing critical privileging of foreign over Japanese film. The elite status of the former would not end, but critics such as Sato Tadao, who came out of Shiso no kagaku and later became editor of *Eiga hyoron* (Film Criticism), moved away from a perpetual reliance on the "universal" standard of cinema and attempted to see how Japanese cinema may have emerged from more local conditions. Evidence that had been hitherto ignored in impressionist criticism's almost myopic focus on the text was also increasingly available for the critic's use. This new mode of argumentation was accelerated by Tsurumi's championing of "the right to misunderstand."[39] Elitist standards of proper discernment and correct understanding were relaxed in a strategy that prompted bold new attempts to garner meaning from films.

One who possibly best manifested this trend was Ogawa Toru. As editor of *Eiga geijutsu* (Film Art), he took advantage of the breakup of the *eiga rondan* to promote "outsider film criticism" in the 1960s and publish the critiques of those before and behind the camera and of cultural figures from many fields, ranging from novelists and playwrights to screenwriters and cinematographers.[40] The result was an eclectic mixture of perceptions and "misunderstandings" that, because they often strayed from the text, might have disappointed some looking for close analysis yet excited others desiring release from the strictures of established film criticism. Ogawa's own criticism, often called "urameyomi" or "reverse reading" criticism, might seem to resonate with ideological criticism in its citation of political conditions, but his audacious exposure of various aspects "behind" the text avoided the political and hermeneutic orthodoxy of the old left. His writing was seen as fresh because it took the "reverse" view of the film, boldly arguing the opposite of what was taken as the common sense interpretation.

Ogawa warned about the "will for power" endemic to criticism and attempted to counter it by emphasizing the "incompleteness" of cinema.

> I do not think that the first duty of critics is to judge whether a film is good or bad. I neither believe that you can fully determine a single standard of value for cinema, which is a more "incomplete art" than literature in particular, nor tolerate that kind of political or pseudoauthoritative position in criticism.[41]

Cinema's incompleteness facilitated multiple approaches to film, but a political and economic society that Ogawa saw as increasingly "brainwashing" the populace made it such that criticism had to resist at the most basic psychic levels, fighting even criticism's own will for power. One of the "battles" of criticism is thus to "beat back the attempts by political forces to target the subconscious of critics and authors."[42] Using metaphors of violence, Ogawa argued that "critics must stab the hearts of their opponents through their writings"[43] and that such direct action was necessary if society was to change.

This spirit of opposition to not just the institutional but also the conceptual status quo is not difficult to connect to the Japanese New Wave, and it underlines how much the New Wave, if not 1960s Japanese film culture in general, was defined by such a multiplication of perspectives and a resistance to restrictive categories. Of course the New Wave itself was initially part of a critical movement, as artists such as Oshima Nagisa, Yoshida Kiju, and Matsumoto Toshio attacked the established Japanese cinema first in writing. Matsumoto in particular, in part under the influence of the culture critic Hanada Kiyoteru, can be seen as pursuing the project orthodox leftist film thinkers had left incomplete in the prewar: conceptualizing not just what should be shown but also the aesthetics of how it should be shown (his model being a form of avant-garde documentary).[44] Much of their writing focused on the issue of subjectivity (*shutai*, *shutaisei*), particularly the conception that postwar Japanese cinema failed not only to depict modern subjects—ones who did not just passively resign themselves to misfortune but acted in history—but also to enable creative subjects who could express themselves beyond the policy of the studio or a political party. Indebted to Jean-Paul Sartre and others,[45] their focus on establishing the self through self-negation (negating the selves given by external institutions, if not narrative itself) reflects their consciousness of how difficult the problem of the subject was.

Abé Mark Nornes has complained of the absence of theory in these debates:

> The fact that various writers and artists did not share a common language and conceptual framework meant the *shutaiseiron* would inevitably splinter into many directions at once. . . . Without the substantial buttressing from an external body of theory, there was no need or pressure to engage in pointed arguments to advance a common line of thought.[46]

Nornes's argument should be qualified with a recognition that the seeming lack of a conceptual framework could itself be a theoretical stance, one that stemmed from resistance to certain kinds of categorical thinking. Matsuda Masao was one radical critic, for instance, who brought up the problem of intellectualization when he pursued the relationship between criticism and the masses. He argued, "The problem comes down to whether or not, when making the non-literate consciousness (*mojinaki ishiki*) of the lower classes the object of academic thought, one can maintain, in one's academic subjectivity, an 'introspection' that can correspond with the object, one that cannot be called anything other than non-literate consciousness."[47] The question for not

a few radicals in the 1960s was how to theorize without abandoning nontheoretical thought and thus to keep theory in the everyday world. Few, however, were able to meet Matsuda's challenge.

The problem with 1960s film criticism is that it rarely went that far, primarily because it seldom theorized its own subjectivity. As Hatano argues, those inspired by Tsurumi to write on popular cinema rarely conceptualized their relationship to the masses: "They possessed less the perspective of the masses than what should be called their own mass consciousness. At times, this even became the axis for critically approaching a film."[48] While Tsurumi also wrote about his own impressions, it was always as an individual distinct from the masses; the relationship with the masses was always self-conscious. Many others, however, simply treated themselves as the representative of the masses, without theorizing their own status. One can argue that while Tsurumi's "right to misunderstand" opened up the doors to creative and individual forms of criticism, it also served as an excuse for criticism with little responsibility to the text, the audience, or even the project of criticism. Sometimes this was due to a willful belligerence toward intellectual criticism, but there was often little "self-negation" in this proliferation of displays of "misunderstanding."

At the beginning of the 1970s, writing in the "kaisetsu" for the important anthology of postwar film writing, *Systems of Contemporary Japanese Film Thought* (Gendai Nihon eigaron taikei), Yamane Sadao pondered whether "there was a 'Nouvelle Vague' for film directors, but not one for film critics." Although the New Wave directors quite forcefully put their subjectivity to the fore, "There was no logical grounding of a criticism that could itself correspond to the assertions of the director." Criticism paled in comparison to the authority of the filmmaker. Yamane blamed this on a lack of theorization of reception: "When the issue of the director and the viewer was being debated, people never expounded a theory of spectatorship, one that covered the problem of the reception of cinematic expression and the act of watching cinema. Rather, the subjectivity making the film work came to so monopolize the debate that it could practically be called one-sided."[49] The subjectivities of the critic and the audience, as well as the complex relationship between them and the text, were never fully conceptualized. This is one reason the culture around New Wave cinema was so auteur focused, but it also provides a key for understanding the problematic relationships between artist, movement, and reception in the politically charged 1960s and early 1970s.

Surface Criticism and a Return to Viewing

One gets a sense, reading the introductions written by Hatano and Yamane in *Systems of Contemporary Japanese Film Thought,* that they were attempting to confront the problem of reception in their own actuality and seek out what to them would constitute a real

New Wave in criticism. The commentaries can seem to serve as arguments for what they were actually pursuing at that moment in *Shinema 69* (later *Shinema 70* and *Shinema 71*), one of three influential, but short-lived critical journals that appeared at the end of the 1960s. One can discern in the founding of these magazines both a renewed detachment from the industry and a common dissatisfaction with the state of film criticism, one that may be summarized by Hatano's feeling that there was no "thought" embodied in the criticism of the time.[50] The projects of these magazines were different, however. *Kikan firumu* (Quarterly of Film), centered on Matsumoto Toshio and featuring avant-garde artists and new critics like Yamada Kōichi, concentrated on experimental cinema; *Eiga hihyo* (Film Criticism), edited by Matsuda Masao, pursued a committed radical politics that Matsuda himself willingly called "partisan criticism" (*goyo hyoron*)[51]; and the *Shinema* magazines, featuring new critics such as Hasumi Shigehiko, argued for a criticism that focused on discussing film as film. Each were influential in its own way, as *Kikan firumu* stimulated the experimental film movement and *Eiga hihyo* promoted the work of Wakamatsu Koji and Adachi Masao. But it was *Shinema*'s influence that lasted longest, as especially Hasumi's criticism came to dominate the film critical world well into the 1990s.

The focus on film as film can be seen as upholding "la politique des auteurs" of the 1950s *Cahiers du Cinéma* in France,[52] and certainly these critics' predilection for studio directors like Howard Hawks and Makino Masahiro was a strategy to foreground cinematic technique and avoid the narrative content—which was often supplied by the studio—that consumed ideological criticism. It was also an attempt to correct the excess "misunderstandings" of contemporary critics who sometimes seemed to be discoursing about everything but the film. As Yamane Sadao has stressed, *Shinema* was also an effort to see cinema from the viewer's eye; what was outside that perspective, such as the auteur's biography, was irrelevant.[53] In a sense this was a return to impressionist criticism, especially as embodied by such text-centered critics as Iijima Tadashi.[54] At times, Hasumi's thematic criticism does read like a series of impressions, as he notes elements across the text seemingly unrelated to the narrative and comments how we spectators receive such moments.

Where he differs from impressionist criticism is in his conceptualization of the film experience, one that especially stresses the difficulty of writing.

> Words should, before anything else, not take the existence of cinema as a given, but must be released towards the path where cinema might exist, and at the moment they manage to illuminate to a certain degree the shell of that point, they must be prepared for their own death.[55]

Criticism, to Hasumi, was a tragic impossibility; he even went so far as to say that "criticism does not exist, because criticism is an experience that can only live as an incident."[56] It only subsists in the ever-changing (revolutionary) present, as a singular "incident/event" (*jiken*) that cannot be repeated, one that even exists before the categories of subject and object. The critic, as Ryan Cook summarizes Hasumi's radical

use of the Deleuzian concept of "stupidity," "abandons subjectivity and knowledge and submits to cruel stupidity in order to encounter cinema as change and movement."[57] The problem is that the critic writing about this present cinematic event can only bring it into the past. Hasumi conceived of his criticism as a form of film viewing, a special one distinct from both regular film viewing and most forms of film criticism, both of which focused on narrative. Narrative, however, could not be totally avoided: "Criticism is a labor that bears a fated burden: that its victory against narrative is complete only through its defeat at the hands of narrative."[58] The best it can do is perpetually battle that "movement of thought" that "robs the quality of transformation from 'culture,' eliminates incident, and expels movement, all the while ultimately building a flat horizon without those moments that expose the present. In other words, it installs before thought a universal and abstract space that will never disturb 'knowledge.' "[59] It was not uncommon to criticize Hasumi's "surface criticism" (*hyoso hihyo*) as a retreat from, if not exclusion of politics in textual reading, but strictly, it was actually a different politics, one that, stemming in part from a disillusionment with orthodoxies of 1960s radical politics and their claims of authority, struggled against universal abstractions, metanarratives, and other forms of categorical meaning that restricted the inherent creativity of criticism and film viewing. In that sense, it shared in Ogawa's fear of the oppression of politics and Matsuda's search for a nontheoretical theory.

In other ways, however, "surface criticism" was a return to impressionist criticism. While being written from the perspective of film viewing, it rarely exhibited a conception of the historical spectator. The viewer was often ideal, one who was pictured (through Hasumi's use of such imperatives as "must" [*nakereba naranu*]) as compelled to react to cinema in a certain fashion and seemingly not free to react otherwise. Spectators were not divided by different historical circumstances, so Hasumi's frequent use of the pronoun "we" (*wareware*) ended up creating a unitary, exclusive group privileged in its access to the ineffable qualities of cinema. If impressionist criticism formulated a hierarchy of critic over audience as a reaction to the rise of mass society, surface criticism fashioned a cinephilic hierarchy that defended the citadel cinema against the onslaught of postindustrial media capitalism. It was more astute than impressionist criticism in theorizing the film experience and the moment of criticism, but it, like its predecessor, did not theorize its own historicity or its own politics. Hasumi could combat the strictures of meaning and narrative by imagining a space "freed of the control of intellectual reflection,"[60] but that, perhaps unintentionally, bred a band of followers in the 1980s and 1990s who fetishized cinema and their own approach to it freed of the control of intellectual reflection. The exclusivity of his followers, feeding off a hierarchy of cinephilic knowledge (a history of cultured viewing), progressively rendered them as figures as closed off as the cinematic text they were idealizing and made them and their criticism ill prepared for a different media world that, with the rise of television, video, and then the digital in a more globalized mediascape, increasingly seemed to need neither cinema nor criticism.

Conclusion

Film criticism in Japan has enjoyed a rich and varied history, featuring a pantheon of astute eyes and sharp minds who have not simply provided evaluations of what is good or bad about a myriad of films but also ventured into the realms of analysis (especially in auteurist terms), political critique, film theory, and even introspection on the nature of criticism. As such, it offers a wealth of knowledge and information about the discursive context of Japanese cinema and how films were received, if not also insight into how they functioned. Yet criticism has historically less reflected film reception than functioned as a site of struggle over the role of reception in film culture, serving as both a force in regulating spectatorship and a vanguard in advancing new modes of viewing that evade or resist existing systems that corral meaning. The problems Japanese film critics have had in conceptualizing their own relationship to reception and other forms of spectatorship actually tell us as much about film culture in Japan as the actual impressions they have registered about certain films or directors.

It is these difficulties that can in fact help us consider not just how much criticism reflects reception but also the historical fate and role of criticism itself. Film criticism has since the 1970s progressively disappeared from public discourse in Japan. Critical magazines such as *Eiga hyoron* and *Cahiers du cinema Japon* have gone under, while new magazines such as *Nihon eiga magazine*, which appeared with the box office boom for Japanese films in the 2000s, completely shun criticism. The number of newspaper reviews has declined while advertisements for movies quote not film critics but television personalities to convince consumers what the representative reception of a film is. The critics who lingered longer in the public mind were those, like Osugi or Komori Kazuko, who themselves became media "talent" (*tarento*), whose value, as Mitsuhiro Yoshimoto has argued in discussing television, lay largely in serving as the currency of television, to be recognized and exchanged, not in their inherent critical skills.[61] While film criticism has not completely lost its value as publicity, its importance for the industry has clearly declined, and its own status as an industry is in danger. The Internet has broadened opportunities for expressing opinions about films, ones reminiscent of the explosion in coterie magazines in the 1920s, but in Japan it has not yet sufficiently sustained forms other than user ratings and brief comments or provided an economic model to support professional critics.

Reviewing the history of film criticism can help less by providing fodder for nostalgic lamentations about how good criticism used to be than by offering clues as to how criticism has functioned (i.e., why it was necessary), how it established or lost its importance, as well as how transformations in the political economy of Japanese culture and media may have rendered criticism relevant or irrelevant to the question of reception. Perhaps the decline in criticism stems in part from the lack of self-theorization about its cinematic and social valences and its inability to reconceive or resist its situation. By reviewing its own history of success and failure, and rethinking its function and its

relation to moving image reception, criticism may itself be able to reassert its role as a crucial facet in how viewers critically negotiate with cinema and media.

Notes

1. It is difficult to define film criticism, although many have tried. For convenience, I will follow Dudley Andrew's distinction between film theory, whose goal "is to formulate a schematic notion of the capacity of film," and criticism, which is "an appreciation of the value of individual works of cinema, not a comprehension of the cinematic capability" (*The Major Film Theories* [London: Oxford University Press, 1976], 5). This means I will avoid academic film studies. I will also not make a significant distinction between *eiga hihyo* and *eiga hyoron*.

2. See, for instance, Wada Norie, "Nihon eiga ronsōshi," *Kinema junpo* 156 (September 15, 1956): 103; or Kitagawa Fuyuhiko, "Nihon ni okeru eiga riron," *Eiga hyoron* 9.5 (May 1952): 32–36.

3. The best examples are the *kaisetsu* of the *Gendai Nihon eigaron taikei* (Tojusha, 1970–1971); Iwamoto Kenji's "Film Criticism and the Study of Cinema in Japan," *Iconics* 1 (1987): 129–146; and a series of articles published in *Kinema junpo* between May and August 1996.

4. For more on the problematic lack of film theory in Japanese film writing, see my "Nihon/eiga/riron," eds. Yomota Inuhuko et al., *Nihon eiga wa ikite iru 1: Nihon eiga wa ikite iru*, trans. Tsunoda Takuya (Tokyo: Iwanami Shobo, 2010), 159–199; and my "Introduction," *Review of Japanese Culture and Society* 22 (December 2010): 1–13.

5. Iwamoto, "Film Criticism and the Study of Cinema in Japan: A Historical Survey," 129.

6. Togawa Naoki, "Nihon eiga hihyo hattatsushi 1: Dai ikki, sairento eiga jidai," *Kinema junpo* 1191 (May 1, 1996): 127.

7. Ibid.

8. Mizusawa Takehiko, "Yoi shashin to wa ikan?" *Kinema Record* 50 (October 1917): 31.

9. Tachibana Takahiro, "Eiga hyoron no hyoron," *Kage'e no kuni* (Tokyo: Shuhokaku, 1925), 114–115.

10. For more on the Pure Film Movement and the screenplay, see Joanne Bernardi, *Writing in Light: The Silent Scenario and the Japanese Pure Film Movement* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2001).

11. Izumi Haruki, "Eiga hihyo no hyojun: ichi," *Katsudo kurabu* 4.6 (June 1921): 20–21.

12. "Eiga hihyo to iu koto," *Kinema junpo* 5 (August 21, 1919): 1.

13. Tachibana, "Eiga hyoron no hyoron," 119.

14. "Eiga hihyo to iu koto," 1.

15. See Jerry Roberts, *The Complete History of American Film Criticism* (Santa Monica, CA: Santa Monica Press, 2010), 17–20.

16. Kitagawa Fuyuhiko, "Eiga hihyo no hihyo," *Eiga hyoron* (February 1948), reprinted in *Gendai Nihon eigaron taikei* (Tokyo: Tojusha, 1971), 1:242.

17. See Aaron Gerow, *Visions of Japanese Modernity: Articulations of Cinema, Nation, and Spectatorship, 1895–1925* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010).

18. Hatano Tetsuro, "Kaisetsu," eds. Ogawa Toru, et al., *Gendai Nihon eigaron taikei* (Tokyo: Tojusha, 1971), 1:577.

19. Shigeno Yukiyoshi, "Nihon shashin o hyosuru koto," *Kinema Record* 14 (August 1914): 2.

20. I have argued elsewhere that the "myth of export"—the dream of sending Japanese films abroad—helped fuel reform by imagining the standards used by the Western gaze that should be imposed on domestic cinema. See my "Narrating the Nation-ality of a Cinema: The Case of Japanese Prewar Film," in *The Culture of Japanese Fascism*, ed. Alan Tansman (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009), 185–211.

21. Noël Burch, *To the Distant Observer: Form and Meaning in the Japanese Cinema* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), 13.

22. Kitagawa, "Nihon ni okeru eiga riron," 33.

23. Kitagawa, one should note, was a persistent critic of film writers associated with the Japanese Communist Party.

24. Kitagawa, "Nihon ni okeru eiga riron," 36.

25. Kitagawa, "Eiga hihyo no hihyo," 240.

26. Hatano, "Kaisetsu," 576, 577.

27. Iwasaki Akira, "Niritsusei to iu koto," *Kinema junpo* 485 (October 11, 1933): 50.

28. Ikeda Toshio, "Marukusu shugi eiga hihyo no kijun," *Eiga kagaku kenkyu* 6 (October 1930): 239–240.

29. Karatani Kojin, "Kindai Nihon no hihyo: Showa zenki 2," in *Kindai Nihon no hihyo 1*, ed. Karatani Kojin (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1997), 157.

30. Ikeda, "Marukusu shugi eiga hihyo no kijun," 230.

31. Hatano found that even after the war, "the word mass (*taishuteki*) roamed through various meanings in concrete cases of criticism, varying from 'the masses as they should be' to the 'the mass in numbers.' " Hatano, "Kaisetsu," 581.

32. Iwasaki Akira, "Awanai kagi," *Kinema junpo* 488 (November 11, 1933): 51.

33. Iwasaki Akira, "Eiga hihyo wa dare ga suru," *Kinema junpo* 489 (November 21, 1933): 58.

34. Gonda in the 1910s argued that with the cinema, the masses became the true subject of entertainment through their viewing practices. See his "The Principles and Applications of the Motion Pictures (excerpts)," trans. Aaron Gerow, *Review of Japanese Culture and Society* 22 (December 2010): 24–36.

35. Shirai Yoshio, "Nihon eiga hihyo hattatsushi 6: Nuveru Vagu, ATG no taito," *Kinema junpo* 1198 (August 1, 1996): 100. Shirai was editor of the magazine in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

36. For a brief history of the theater pamphlet, see Hidenori Okada, "Kita, mita, kata—eiga panfuretto shoron," *NFC Newsletter* 97 (June–July 2011): 7–9.

37. Shyon Baumann's survey of the use of critical quotations in film advertising discovered that such usage significantly increased at the end of the 1960s in conjunction with the rise of art cinema: "Marketing, Cultural Hierarchy, and the Relevance of Critics: Film in the United States, 1935–1980," *Poetics* 30 (2002): 243–262. My cursory survey of advertisements in the *Asahi shinbun* supports the view that quotations tended to be used for foreign or art films in Japan, but unlike in the United States, the use of quotations from critics declined starting in the 1970s.

38. Shinada Yukichi, "Nihon eiga hihyo hattatsushi 5: Sengo no eiga hihyokai chokan 2," *Kinema junpo* 1197 (July 15, 1996): 89–90.

39. Tsurumi Shunsuke, *Gokaisuru kenri* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shobo, 1959).

40. Even today, *Eiga geijutsu*, which is now a quarterly, continues to publish criticism by nonprofessional critics, especially by personnel behind the camera, such as screenwriters, cinematographers, and editors.

41. Ogawa Toru, "Hihyo no naimen," *Eiga hyoron* 21.20 (October 1964): 22.

42. Ibid., 26.

43. Ibid., 25.

44. See Matsumoto Toshio, "A Theory of Avant-Garde Documentary," *Cinema Journal* 51.4 (Summer 2012):Ibid., 148–154.

45. For an analysis of the resonances between Sartre and Yoshida Kiju, see Isolde Standish, *Politics, Porn and Protest* (New York: Continuum, 2011).

46. Abé Mark Nornes, "The Postwar Documentary Trace," *Positions* 10.1 (2002): 50.

47. Matsuda quotes his own article in the October 5, 1968 *Tosho shinbun*:"Hihyo no fuzai o megutte," *Bara to mumeisha* (Tokyo: Haga Shoten, 1970), 277.

48. Hatano, "Kaisetsu," 590.

49. Yamane Sadao, "Kaisetsu," eds. Ogawa Toru, et al., *Gendai Nihon eigaron taikei* (Tokyo: Tojusha, 1970), 3:550.

50. Interview with Hatano Tetsuro, April 20, 2010.

51. Matsuda Masao, "Hihyo no rikkyakuten wa nanika," *Bara to mumeisha* (Tokyo: Haga Shoten, 1970), 188–196.

52. Iwamoto "Film Criticism and the Study of Cinema in Japan," 141.

53. Interview with Yamane Sadao, April 22, 2010.

54. "It is interesting drawing everything out of the film work, so I rather do not want to know the intentions of the producer or director, or the circumstances of production." Iijima Tadashi, "Boku no hihyoshi," *Eiga hyoron* 15.6 (June 1958): 19.

55. Hasumi Shigehiko, *Eiga no shinwagaku* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1996), 51.

56. Hasumi Shigehiko, "Eiga to hihyo," *Eiga: Yuwaku no ekurichuru* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1990), 353.

57. Ryan Cook, "An Impaired Eye: Hasumi Shigehiko on Cinema as Stupidity," *Review of Japanese Culture and Society* 22 (December 2010): 137.

58. Hasumi, "Eiga to hihyo," 357.

59. Ibid., 358.

60. Hasumi Shigehiko, *Kantoku Ozu Yasujiro* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1992), 138.

61. Mitsuhiro Yoshimoto, "Image, Information, Commodity," in *In Pursuit of Contemporary East Asian Culture,* eds. Xiaobing Tang and Stephen Snyder (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1996): 123–138.

CREATING THE AUDIENCE: CINEMA AS POPULAR RECREATION AND SOCIAL EDUCATION IN MODERN JAPAN

HIDEAKI FUJIKI

IN the 1920s, while Siegfried Kracauer was discussing movie audiences in terms of "*die Masse*" or "the masses," Gonda Yasunosuke was engaged in a similar discussion, in terms of "*minshu*" or "the people." Gonda was a prominent social researcher displaying a broad range of scholarship, including on industrial arts, Marxism, and European institutional practices in the media sphere, while serving as an advisor on social education for Japan's Ministry of Education from 1920 through 1943 (with a gap from May 1923 to September 1927). Both "the masses" for Kracauer and "the people" for Gonda referred to a new class that was being generated by the growth of capitalism. They characterized this class as made up of social subjects who worked in factories and flocked to such modern entertainment as revues or the cinema. Both thinkers also criticized other intellectuals of the time for not properly understanding the "social reality" of the masses or the everyday practices of the people. Kracauer felt that, despite the fact that the reality of mass audiences lay in their inclination to "pure externality," in that they simply enjoyed a series of impressions and attractions provided by theaters, intellectuals ignored or condemned this tendency while sticking to seeking the aesthetic "truth" in "personality, inwardness, and tragedy."[1] Similarly, for Gonda, the creation of popular culture (or the culture of the people) resided in the very process whereby they would take pleasure in appropriating the products supplied by a capitalist industry, but those whom he called "the culturalists" did not appreciate this process and instead wrongly conceptualized popular culture as something better taught by intellectuals.[2] Despite these similarities, however, these two

thinkers of modernity in Germany and Japan differ from one another on two significant points. First, while Kracauer equated the masses going to the theaters with the automated functions of workers in a factory assembly line, Gonda characterized the people's moviegoing as a learning process through which they unintentionally trained themselves as social subjects conforming to the current regime. This leads to the second point. Toward the late 1930s, Kracauer had gradually detected the vulnerability of the masses to totalitarianism—a realization shared by Adorno and Holkheimer.[3] However, Gonda increasingly advocated popular recreation as a vital means for educating the people as national subjects serving imperial Japan, as I shall discuss in more detail.

Gonda was not alone in linking movie audiences with the concept of the people or *minshu*, a fashionable term during the so-called Taisho democracy, which lasted from 1905 to 1931.[4] Bureaucrats from the Ministry of Education (including such figures as Norisugi Kaju, Ehata Kiju, and Nakata Shunzo) and advocates of "popular recreation" or "*minshu goraku ron*" (they included Tachibana Takahiro, Obayashi Soshi, and Gonda himself) shared this conflation of audiences with the people.[5] Obviously, the term is not neutral. Rather, it is historically contingent and has changed, depending on who used it and how it was used. Indeed, their "people" differs from the same term as used in "the people's history" or "*minshu-shi*," a term that experienced a boom in the academic field of modern Japanese history in the 1960s and 1970s. As the historian Carol Gluck argues, what the *minshu-shi* historians (such as Irokawa Daikichi, Kano Masanao, and Yasumaru Yoshio) called *minshu* was usually farmers and peasants living in rural areas. The scholars portrayed the people as the protagonists in their stories of Japanese history—countering the dominant elite-and-ruler-centered history.[6] By contrast, "the people" the bureaucrats and intellectuals of the 1920s discussed usually designated those who conspicuously aligned themselves with rising capitalism, which was fuelled by a series of wars (the Sino-Japanese War of 1894, the Russo-Japanese War of 1904, and World War I from 1914 to 1918). They were also thought of as urban residents. Moreover, the word evoked those who took part in labor disputes, riots, and political movements and partook of such modern amusements as cinema.

Yet, both the 1920s' and 1960s' concepts of "the people," as well as Kracauer's "the masses," share the same ground in that they are defined vis-à-vis dominant or elite classes. However closely the people were examined and described—and even though this research remains unquestionably valuable—they could not evade becoming an imagined concept through which observers referred to an unspecified sector of an anonymous public from a third person's vantage point. Hence, it is little more than a category used by socially privileged persons to make sense of the greater public through the lens of their historical conditions. In the 1920s, the bureaucrats and social researchers conducted fieldwork and statistical research into the conditions of the people's labor and leisure, but their reports cannot precisely reflect what these conditions were. On the contrary, because such statistical data appear reflective of the true conditions investigated, it creates the risk of effacing the fact that "the people" is an unavoidably idealized or abstracted concept. It should also be noted that nowadays movie audiences are no longer referred to as the people or *minshu*, and the word itself is rarely used to refer to

contemporary social subjects. This succinctly indicates the extent to which "the people" is a discursive and historical construction.

In this chapter, I will analyze the discourse surrounding, as well as the policies impacting on, social education and popular recreation as articulated by the bureaucrats and associated intellectuals of the Ministry of Education in the 1920s and afterward. In so doing I will discuss what constituted their imagined concept of the people, in what sense they identified the people with movie audiences, and what social issues this identification involved within its historical context. I will examine the era stretching from the Taisho democracy until the total war regime of the 1930s and early 1940s. The social education and popular recreation of the time have been examined extensively, but, as education scholars have dealt with the former and sociologists and historians with the latter, the themes have tended to be explored only separately.[7] This tendency thus has left unexplored the crucial reality that the Ministry's policy of social education positioned the people, cinema, and audiences on the intersection of education and amusement.[8]

As early as the 1910s and 1920s, when the Japanese policy of social education was established and developed, it reflected attempts to incorporate in education new types of amusements, like cinema, that had become prevalent in the social space that shaped the public's everyday lives. It follows that the Ministry strove to organize the production and distribution of cinema so as to serve education. Bureaucrats and intellectuals regarded as immature the people who typically flocked to such amusement sites as movie theaters. But, at the same time, the intellectuals associated with the Ministry thought that if the people could come to appreciate educationally improved amusements or movies, this would enable them to develop willingly—not forcibly—into the ideal subjects of a harmonious society that would uphold the imperial state. It is at this junction that movie audiences came to be seen as "the people," and this view was retained in the film policy of the total war regime in the 1930s and early 1940s. Yet, we should also keep in mind that the genealogy of the social education policy in the 1920s and later years was neither simply a linear progression nor a reactionary regression, but rather it was a complex process entailing contradictory social and political relations.

As many scholars have explored, movie audiences are configured by their direct interaction with films, screen images, movie theaters or other sites of viewing, technologies, geography, and other physical, sensory, and/or signifying conditions. But it is equally important to acknowledge that they are always being defined and redefined by a variety of discourses that relate to and negotiate with each other in intricate ways. My argument is an attempt to grasp movie audiences as a discursively constructed social category and to examine it in relation to its historical context by investigating Japan's policy of social education in the interwar era as a case study.

Who Are the People?

The Education Ministry identified movie audiences via the concept of *minshu* or "the people" in the 1920s. The bureaucrats sought to educate them into becoming the

subjects of what they were attempting to formulate as *shakai* or "society." In order to explore the issue of the audience, it is crucial to look at how the Ministry's bureaucrats and associated intellectuals were trying to handle the concept of the people in relation to that of society.

The Ministry's policy-related conception of the people dramatically changed when a new generation of bureaucrats such as Norisugi Kaju emerged and began to use the phrase "social education" in their official documents.[9] In June 1919, when the Fourth Department, the department in charge of education outside of schools and universities, was founded inside the Ministry's Bureau of Normal Educational Affairs, Norisugi, at the age of forty-one, was appointed its director. He and other bureaucrats advocated social education, differentiating it from the hitherto used term "education popularized for the general public" or "*tsuzoku kyoiku.*" The Ministry officially launched education popularized for the general public in May 1911, when they established the Board for Research into Education Popularized for the General Public. The Ministry continued to use the phrase even after the foundation of the Fourth Department. The term "social education" gained currency in the 1920s when it replaced the term "education popularized for the general public." This is evident when we look at the Study Group for Social Education, which Norisugi and other staff of the Department launched in October 1920 and their journal *Shakai to kyoka* (Society and Edification), which was first published in January 1921 and renamed *Shakai kyoiku* (Social Education) in January 1924. The bureaucrats also brought out their own books on social education and popular recreations. These include Ehata's *Practical Research on Social Education* (1921), Norisugi's *The Practice of Social Education* (1923), and Nakata's *A Study of Recreation* (1923).[10]

As advocated in this context, social education had two vital aspects. First, while education popularized for the general public signified that the government and intellectuals would intelligibly convey and impart knowledge to the lower classes, social education meant that the people were not being prodded, but had to voluntarily involve themselves in learning, or more precisely that the government and intellectuals should lead them to feel as if they had voluntarily taken up learning. In the second place, education popularized for the general public simply designated the diffusion of morality and knowledge conforming to the Constitution of the Empire of Japan (1889) and the Imperial Rescript on Education (1890); however, with social education the new generation of bureaucrats set as their ultimate goal the "overhaul" or "*kaizo*" of the society as a whole. Notably, *kaizo* was a word in vogue at the time, extensively used by intellectuals with diverse political standpoints ranging from the leftist journal *Kaizo* (launched in April 1919) to the extreme nationalist Kita Ikki's *General Principles of Drastic Change for Japan* (which was launched in the same year). These works argued for structural change affecting the entire society, although in different ways.

It is clear that the bureaucrats' campaign of social education was inextricably linked with their awareness of the geopolitical situation that had unfolded from the Sino-Japanese War through World War I, as well as various social issues generated by the growth of capitalism. On the one hand, adopting an imperialistic standpoint, the bureaucrats insisted that the people nurture their responsibility as the nation so as

to uplift the international status of the state to a level where it would be able to rival America and Europe.[11] On the other hand, they were explicitly or implicitly apprehensive about labor problems (including unemployment, harsh working conditions, and labor disputes), poverty, riots (such as the Hibiya Riot in 1905 and the Rice Riot in 1918), and what they saw as problems relating to thought and ideology (particularly democracy, socialism, and communism), hence their call for the drastic overhaul of the entire society through education.[12]

What, then, was the society they attempted to construct? In his 1923 book, Norisugi defined his view of society: "A society is a group constituted by individuals who have a mutual understanding in mind (*seishin-teki kotsu*)."[13] He also puts it another way: a society "is an organic group constituted by persons of integrity who share a common goal."[14] Here, we can sense a nuance that is not simply reducible to emperor-centered nationalistic thought. In fact, the society Norisugi advocated had mixed implications vis-à-vis such large-scale political, economic, and ideological trends of the time as democracy, socialism, and capitalism. As already noted, there is no doubt that, positioned within an imperialist context dominated by Europe and the United States, the officials felt that society should serve to strengthen the state and its power.[15] This ran parallel to the government's belief that Japan's imperialist expansion and acquisition of colonies was an antidote to the social problems inside the country.[16] In this sense, democracy, or the idea of prioritizing citizens over the state, was not what the officials promoted. They even more clearly rejected socialism. According to Norisugi, the Ministry was at first reluctant to use the term "social" precisely because they were afraid that the word would evoke socialism.[17] The officials (at least outwardly) regarded socialism, together with democracy and communism, as dangerous strains of thought that would destabilize the status quo authorized by the Constitution of the Empire of Japan and the Imperial Rescript on Education.[18] Capitalism was not so openly discussed in the officials' discourse, but it is obvious that they endeavored to incorporate certain of its principles into their measures for social education. Echoing both the Campaign for Lifestyle Improvement the Home Ministry promoted and the "modern life" (*kindai seikatsu*) or "cultural life" (*bunka seikatsu*) trends that became fashionable in the 1920s, the officials often suggested that people make their everyday life "efficient" (*noritsu*) and productive. They cautioned against wasting time while recommending rational scheduling and punctuality.[19]

Despite these efforts, however, it is not difficult to see that the bureaucrats, albeit implicitly, appropriated certain ideas from democracy and socialism while trying to defend the nation against capitalism. They often emphasized "independent will and autonomy" (*jishu jiritsu*), "public-mindedness" (*kokyoshin*), "cooperation" (*kyodoshin*), and "equal opportunities" (*kikai kinto*) as the most important goals for constructing their ideal society. Through independent will and autonomy, Norisugi expected people to willingly work as members of the nation-state without depending on guidance by the state power.[20] Taking on this responsibility as a nation, in turn, would allow them significant freedom even in a monarchy like Japan, he added.[21] But he also implied in his book that independent will and autonomy are crucial for people to become aware

of being members of society and to actively help each other.[22] Here, we see a mixture of somewhat democratic and socialist ideals, tied up with the other stated goals such as the move toward public mindedness and greater cooperation. Those goals, furthermore, were seen as countermeasures against the seeking of self-interest, the desire for pleasure, and an indifference to one's neighbors, all of which were likely consequences of the rise of capitalism as a system.[23] The idea of equal opportunity was also grounded in the view that unlike school-based education, which allowed only a limited number of children to proceed to advanced schooling, social education would offer educational opportunities to people from every class.[24] In short, the society and social education the bureaucrats envisioned were neither completely for nor completely against capitalism, democracy, and socialism. Nor were they completely subjugated by state power.

The subjects of a society characterized in this way were what the Ministry's officials and its associated intellectuals attempted to guide "the people" to become. In this vision, the people were understood on two levels. One level was the recognized current state of the people and the other was an idealized prospective state the people could reach. Both states were presupposed to be inhabited by all social classes except the dominant class the writer-bureaucrats themselves belonged to. Their conception of "the people" centered on urban residents and factory laborers but also included local farmers. The bureaucrats considered the current state of the people to be "*setsunashugi*" (the principle of living only for the present), "individualism" (*kojinshugi*), "hedonism" (*kairakushugi*), and "egotism" (*rikoshugi*). They came to the conclusion that if the people became involved in a riot or a labor dispute, they would turn into a mob similar to the "crowd" Gustave Le Bon described, a group of people readily excited by certain kinds of stimulation, evincing a lack of logical thinking, and easily losing their tempers.[25] In opposition to this state, the envisioned ideal was one where the people would constitute a society that was based on their "organic relationships" under an economic and ethical consensus based on "efficiency," "public mindedness," "mutual support," "solidarity," and "independent will," among others. It is worth noting here that this idealized conception of "the people" significantly differed from Yanagita Kunio's "*jomin*" or "folk," Kracauer's "the masses," and Habermas's "citizens." Unlike Yanagita's "folk," conceptualized as imbued with traditional manners and customs, "the people" were set up as modern subjects. Yet, in presupposing that they existed in an organic relationship, the concept of the people is also marked off from that of the masses, which was seen as an assemblage of individuals functioning as parts of the capitalist system. The people also differed from citizens in that, although they were expected to nurture a "rational" critical mind uninfluenced by "foreign thought," they were not encouraged to engage in free and open-minded discussions among themselves.[26]

Still, the concept of the people was also not exactly synonymous with that of the nation (*kokumin*), the emperor's subjects (*shinmin*), or the imperial subjects (*komin*), all of which officials and intellectuals often used to refer to the constituents of Japan and/or imperial Japan, including its colonies. Certainly, the people were under pressure to be a nation that could sustain the state under the geopolitical conditions of a world dominated by imperialism and they were prohibited from expressing any antinationalist

thoughts. However, the bureaucrats often emphasized the importance of individuals' happiness and mutual support. Norisugi remarked, "We should understand that the group life on which our society and state are based is the foundation for any individual happiness, and thus we should make an effort to vitalize our spirit of social cohesion and public-mindedness."[27] This suggests that the new generation of bureaucrats did not simply insist on fostering a nation allegiant to the state but also saw society as mediating the relationship between the people and the state and aspired to turning the people into its subjects. In short, the people were conceptualized as the potential members of a society that had ambivalent implications vis-à-vis democracy, capitalism, socialism, and nationalism. This notion of the people as the members of a society would be unthinkable without the influence of discourse issuing from the Taisho democracy, for example the work of Yoshino Sakuzo, but because of limited space, I will not be able to discuss this aspect in more detail here.

The idealized concept of the people that this new generation of bureaucrats advocated during the Taisho democracy was, as it were, an eclectic mix of capitalist, democratic, socialist, and nationalist ideas. "The people" was conceptualized as a group of homogenous social subjects and was premised on the seeming dissolution of differences in class, race and ethnicity, gender, generation, and geography. The bureaucrats' primary goal was to overcome the people's current differences through such practices as mutual support. One might say that "the people" in this social education policy were congruent to "the people" targeted by the popular magazine *King* (launched in January 1925). This magazine tried to appeal to a cross-section of readers irrespective of differences in age, gender, and occupation. But, as we have seen, it is not clear whether advocates of social education attempted to promote the people's consumption as *King* did. On the other hand, the bureaucrats' idealization of the people could be seen to echo criticism the leftist philosopher Tosaka Jun voiced in his 1937 essay looking back at the boom of "the people" in literature of the 1920s, insofar as both attempted to evade or even eradicate their possible political skepticism about the imperial state.[28]

Audiences as the People

It is with this notion of the people that movie audiences were identified. More precisely, the officials and intellectuals held that audiences in their current state were seeking pleasure out of their own volition and were hence in danger of turning into a mob, but educationally improved movies could inspire them to grow into the ideal people who served their society.[29]

Yet, in the Education Ministry's policy of social education, cinema was only one of multiple measures. What was labeled popular recreation covered vaudeville (*yose*), the theater, magic lantern shows, and *sumo* wrestling. In addition, the overall policy covered a variety of aspects including libraries, lecture series, the Campaign for Improving Life (*Seikatsu kaizen undo*), exhibitions, social welfare, guidance of nongovernmental groups

such as youth circles, and measures against poverty and unemployment. However, it is certain that the Ministry paid special attention to cinema, and its cinema-related projects gradually increased and were developed in diverse ways. They included the systems of approving and recommending films, research on exhibitions and audiences, film production, lecture series for the *benshi*, exhibitors, or administrators of social education in local governments, expositions on movies, distribution of films, and touring screenings in local districts.

Through these multiple conduits, the Ministry strove to disseminate the films they produced, approved, or recommended as significant sites for social education in the people's everyday lives. But why was cinema considered to present such a powerful educational opportunity? There were three plausible reasons. First, the remarkable popularity of cinema was recognized by the 1910s and it became a form of recreation considered most worth describing with the adjective "popular" or "*minshu-teki.*" The fact that cinema was popular meant that audiences tended to go to the movies not out of obligation but out of their own free will. Officials thought that cinema had an advantage in that it could make up for gaps in school education because movie theaters could function as widespread sites for further educating those who had already graduated from school.[30] Some officials also asserted that because many people enjoyed movies voluntarily, cinema fit into social education, which they thought was more "unintentional" than the "intentional" formal education people underwent in schools.[31]

Another reason cinema was considered a useful tool for social education is that the officials and their intellectual associates assumed that unlike other existing media, cinema commanded the full range of an audience's attention, ranging from intellectual knowledge through the emotions and the body. They repeatedly pointed to both positive and negative influences emanating from cinema. This type of argument began by 1911, when the French movie serial *Zigomar* became controversial for its purported malicious influence over children and the Board for Research into Education Popularized for the General Public was founded. Similar arguments appeared in the May 1917 issue of the journal *Teikoku kyoiku*, which was edited by the Society for Imperial Education (*Teikoku kyoiku kai*, a private association that consisted of professors and schoolteachers). This society was a powerful pressure group, and three months earlier they had sent to both the Home Ministry and the Education Ministry "The Petition for Regulation of Motion Pictures." In the early 1920s, the Ministry ordered each prefectural government to submit reports about both the benign and evil influences cinema wielded over children and the people as a whole.[32]

And yet, the Ministry's officials and associated intellectuals were primarily interested in actively using cinema for education, rather than to censor it. What is intriguing here is that many of them noted movies' emotional appeal as the unique characteristic of the medium. Yamane Mikihito is an excellent example. He was originally a journalist for movie magazines but became a filmmaker and took a directorial role in the Home Ministry's films for their Foster National Strength Campaign (*Minryoku kanyo undō*) in 1921. Meanwhile, he was also associated with the Education Ministry in that he often contributed articles to the journal *Shakai to kyoka*. In his 1923 book *Motion*

Pictures and Edification, Yamane argued that the great advantage of cinema lay in solicit-ing "shared emotion, empathy and instant comprehension [*etoku*]" from audiences by provoking their passion, rather than making them understand a story in an intellectual sense. Thus, cinema, he continued, more powerfully attracted people both in urban and rural areas than "unintelligible" lectures. By tapping into this medium for education, educators could lead a disorderly "crowd" to unwittingly become a socially solidified "group," he concluded.[33] Other officials and intellectuals pointed out that the effects of cinema ranging from knowledge to sensory stimulation and emotion could ultimately be focused on the full development of the people's personality and moral attitudes.[34] Yet, we also should not overlook the fact that although they appeared as if they had com-prehended the complete power of cinema over audiences, many aspects were actually left unexplored; for instance, they never referred to cinema's possible encouragement of thought and debate among audience members.

Lastly, cinema was thought to be an effective means of social education because it was a modern medium par excellence and wonderfully matched modern life. One official wrote that modern life was full of various kinds of stimulations, including the sound of trains, cars, construction, people's voices, and flashy colors on billboards. So cinema, a peculiar characteristic of which was to generate stimulation, pertained to this environ-ment more than the theater.[35] An argument that positioned cinema as part of the mod-ern lifestyle was also common. Nakata began his 1928 article with an acknowledgement that "the reform of industry, the progress of transportation, and the dissemination of education" had dramatically transformed social life during recent years. These condi-tions, he contended, led to pitiless economic competition, fissures in peaceful families, increased poverty, excessive demands for efficiency, mechanical modes of exploitation, overwork, and fatigue. Thus, popular recreations were crucial for contemporary people to recover from work-related exhaustion, and cinema was the most optimal popular recreation for this purpose because the stimulation it provided was easily and cheaply accessible and consumable in a short time without any special preparation for under-standing it.[36] Here we see their intention to incorporate cinema not only into education but also into the pattern of modern life they idealized. These officials and their intel-lectual associates placed importance on the act of moviegoing as part of their vision of modern life in which work and leisure were systematically designed in a balanced way.

It is clear that these ideas of using cinema as social education were influenced by dis-cussions of popular recreation that flourished from the late 1910s through the early 1920s. The discussions were an extension of discourse on the popular arts (*minshu gei-jutsu ron*), which was initiated by Honma Hisao's essay "The Significance and Value of Popular Arts" in the August 1916 issue of *Waseda bungaku*, which triggered contributions by Shimamura Hogetsu, Nakamura Seiko, Osugi Sakae, Tsubouchi Shoyo, Oyama Ikuo, Hasegawa Nyozekan, and other critics. Obayashi Soshi, Tachibana Takahiro, and Gonda Yasunosuke, among other critics and scholars, discussed more "popular" entertainments such as the motion picture and vaudeville. Tachibana and Gonda were closely associated with the Education Ministry's policy of social education, as they both served as members of the Research Board on Popular Recreations (Minshu goraku chosa iinkai, founded in

April 1920) and as lecturers in the lecture series for the *benshi* (Katsudo shashin setsumei-sha koshu kai, February 1921) and the National Lecture Series for Local Administrators and Educators of Film (Zenkoku kyoiku eiga jimu tanto kyouikusha koshukai, October 1927). Gonda resigned from the Board and left the Ministry in May 1923. One might speculate that he did so because he was also a researcher affiliated with the Ohara Institute for Social Issues, which was known to be committed to Marxism; but this seems implausible because Tachibana, a censor at the Metropolitan Police Department, left the Board with him.[37] In any case, Gonda returned to the Ministry by October 1927[38] and was engaged with the Ministry's practices concerning social education until 1943.[39]

It is also obvious that the Ministry's policy of social education had an intellectual debt to discussions on popular recreations. In particular, their ideas overlap with Gonda's in the three areas I noted above: cinema's popularity, its influence, and its relation to modern life. Gonda saw the motion picture as a popular state-of-the-art recreation, and this recognition was the theoretical foundation for what he conceived of as "unintentional education." In his 1922 book *The Base of Popular Recreation*, Gonda discussed the "goal-immanence" of popular recreation as its important characteristic. He argued that, unlike labor, which aims to earn money, popular recreation is important to the people precisely in terms of its process per se rather than because of a particular result. Gonda also insisted that the pleasure and value of popular recreation came from the very process (or "real life") whereby contemporary people, who did not have sufficient free time, used the products provided by the capitalist industry. He pursued this argument while criticizing the "culturalist" conception of the popular arts by pointing out that the elites were attempting to impart culture to the people in a top-down manner.[40] By popular recreation he meant, "it is created not for people, but by people and from people." On the other hand, however, Gonda stressed the educational effect of cinema and the need for the widespread educational use of cinema. In a record of his lecture carried in the February 1922 issue of *Shakai to kyoka*, for instance, he appraised the situation in which the active use of cinema in social education was about to be realized.[41] Gonda's ambivalent conception, albeit not deliberately, served to strengthen both Tachibana's ideas about propaganda and the Ministry's notions about unintentional social education. Tachibana remarked, An ideal piece of propaganda "tacitly and profoundly achieves its objective while veiled under the flower of the art."[42] Similarly, as we have seen, the Ministry's officials assumed that the people would absorb education unawares, as part of the process of taking pleasure in popular recreation.

Gonda also often touched upon the effect of cinema on human beings. Comparing cinema with *kabuki* as "an old type of popular recreation," he identified the essence of the former in the way that it provided powerful, intuitive stimulation and so allowed audiences to enjoy each work without having to know its story beforehand.[43] In addition, he suggested that cinema affected a variety of the audience's faculties, including knowledge, thought, emotion, and "sprit." He also pointed out both educationally beneficial and harmful effects on audiences by Western and Japanese movies.[44]

Gonda was a representative thinker who regarded cinema as a typical modern product and sought to position it in the context of a lifestyle that the rise of capitalism had created.

He explained this in terms of what he characterized as two dimensions in the living conditions of workers. For one thing, the people who had to work long hours did not have sufficient time and money, so they could not help briefly and efficiently making use of ready-made, cheap amusements. Also, because the division of labor made work monotonous, the laborers needed leisure time dedicated to pleasurable stimulation in order to relieve their frustration. Although Gonda did not emphasize this point to the extent that the Ministry's bureaucrats did, he characterized cinema as an integral part of modern life insofar as it could contribute to these two dimensions of workers' lives. Moreover, he saw the differences between school-based and social education as running parallel to the differences between systematic and unsystematic education, conceptual education and practical, commonsensical education, intelligent education and emotional education, and education distant from and closely related to people's lives. Because, in his view, social education possessed these characteristics, he came to the same conclusion as the Ministry's officials: social education was in a symbiotic relationship with cinema, and it had begun to spread throughout the public sphere and into people's everyday lives.[45]

Notably, disparate viewpoints have been expressed regarding Gonda's political position. Some scholars have claimed that Gonda shifted from a progressive standpoint in the 1920s to a more conservative one in the 1930s,[46] as the titles of two of his books published in 1921 and 1941—*The Issue of Popular Recreation* and *The Issue of National Recreation*—indicate. Indeed, in the latter, he differentiated "national recreation" from his past idea of "popular recreation" and insisted that it was high time to regulate recreation for the sake of completing the "full mobilization of the national spirit."[47] Recently, other scholars have increasingly contended that Gonda's work had already contained conservative ideas in the 1910s and 1920s.[48] This is relevant to my own view, as I have suggested. However, this is not to say that Gonda's ideas were completely congruent with those of the Education Ministry's bureaucrats. Whereas "the people," as idealized by the bureaucrats, encompassed a broad range of social strata beyond geographical and class differences, Gonda mostly assumed the people were the "new social class" or laborers thought to reside in urban areas.[49] However, Gonda and the bureaucrats shared the usage of the word "people" as if it referred to a real entity, despite the fact that it was little more than a conceptual category. While Gonda abstracted "the people" in a Marxist manner as social subjects generated by the rise of capitalism, he endeavored to present them as substantial beings on the basis of his empirical research. "The original texts on the issue of popular recreation exist not in the Maruzen Book Store but in Asakusa district," he said. Thus, the people or "*minshu*," he emphasized, significantly differ from what Western terms such as "public," "folk," "people," and "Volk" mean.[50] Still, as we have seen, it is difficult to say that his conceptualization of "the people" was predicated on his pure observation without any abstraction. More fatally, his empirical affirmation drew attention away from the fact that he also thought of popular recreation as a means for social education. The bottom-up cultural creation he advocated was premised upon the same idea as the top-down social education the Education Ministry was promoting.

Given these features of Gonda's work, it is not surprising that it was a vital theoretical resource for the Ministry's policy of social education, all the more because he worked

as an advisor and a lecturer for the Ministry. In the end, however, we must also take a look at whether the discussion of popular recreation and the policy of social education actually had any effect, even though it remains difficult to precisely assess it. We have seen that the Ministry's officials and associated intellectuals' main goal was to educate the people so that they could become members of society—a process that would be bolstered by the development of independent will and autonomy, the public mind, cooperation, and equal opportunities. Yet, their secondary goal was also to guide them to attain the "moral character" (*jinaku*) suitable to the subjects of society. In this scenario, the people so educated would develop an awareness of themselves as a nation or "*kokumin*."

While the films the Ministry recommended in the 1920s may have affected the audiences' moral character, it is doubtful that they had any effect on their national awareness. This is because in this decade most of the recommended films came from Western countries rather than Japan. For instance, on January 1, 1921, when the first recommended films were announced, all of them were American and European.[51] In addition, some critics pointed out that the added "recommended by the Ministry of Education" label in the credits of educational films would have seemed obtrusive and hence would have undermined their popularity.[52] Indeed, as I have discussed elsewhere, the audiences of the time were by no means homogenous but expressed a variety of values and senses, which threatened intellectuals' ideals as well as the government's regime and policy.[53] These points suggest that the policy of promoting cinema as social education and popular recreation never went beyond idealism and that the people targeted by this education were nothing but imaginary. These measures expressed an ideal and an intention that might be summed up as "We must do something" but rarely provided a concrete successful example. But this does not mean that these films had no effect, only that no effect has become historically visible. If we suppose that the ineffectiveness of the 1920s policy was broadly recognized, we would assume that it would not have continued. In fact, its vision, albeit transformed, was taken over by and developed into the film policy of the regime of total mobilization in the 1930s and early 1940s. The belief that the people could be educated through the movies permeating the public space of their everyday lives was never abandoned. In fact, it was increasingly enhanced.

Toward Total Mobilization

Quite a few studies have been undertaken into the historical context of the national film policy under the total war regime. This policy extended from the Law of Edification and Total Mobilization implemented in 1927, the Committee of Film Regulation jointly established by the Home and Education Ministries in 1934, to the Film Law of 1939 and the New Film Regulations of 1942.[54] I do not aim to reconsider these in detail here. But, there are two classic yet unavoidable questions regarding film policy in interwar Japan. One is the issue of the relation between thought and policy in the age of the Taisho

democracy as well as in the age of the total war regime. The other issue is that of the actual educational power of films over audiences.

These questions are not monolithic, but they reveal ambiguities. There are both connections and disconnections between the policy of cinema as social education in the 1920s and the policies of the total war regime. The most crucial disconnection is that bureaucrats in the 1930s no longer assumed that the link between the people and the state was the society Norisugi and other officials had proposed. In a 1939 article, Fuwa Suketoshi, who was the head of the Ministry's Social Education Bureau and a proponent of the Film Law that was enacted in the same year, criticized the 1920s policy: "Influenced by individualistic cultural policies, the previous view of popular recreations was that they should be democratic and pleasurable. This showed a lack of the guiding national spirit, and did not ask for more than pleasure."[55] Because we have examined the 1920s policy of social education, we know Fuwa's criticism was unfair. The new generation of bureaucrats of the time clearly denied individualism. However, it is important here that Fuwa almost completely ignored the concept of society—the very ideal Norisugi and other officials insisted on as the basis of the people's mutual support, public mindedness, and equal opportunity. For Fuwa, the people were not social subjects that should constitute the nation-state via their mutual support but a nation that should dedicate itself to the state. He asserted that cinema was nothing more than a means of edification to facilitate this objective. In this period, the word "*minshu*" was used less and less frequently, while "*kokumin*" or "the nation" and "*taishu*" or "the masses" were more and more often used. At these junctures, film policy under the total war regime largely departed from the ideas of the 1920s.

However, 1930s film policy was grounded on the 1920s version in many more ways than simply the development from the Ministry's system of recommending films to receive the Education Minister's Award. One of the most crucial ideas that continued on from the 1920s was that the education the bureaucrats planned should infiltrate into the consciousness of the people without a sense of coercion. In the aforementioned article, Fuwa stated that for edification, film "must take advantage of the medium's power of compelling through guiding the minds of the masses without them being aware of it."[56] Another belief that retained its power was that film appeals to the audience's emotions and by extension to a person's full personality. This becomes clear when we see that in the 1930s the Ministry set as their goal "the enlightenment of the nation's intelligence and the cultivation of their emotions and will [*joi*]" in order to accomplish the full mobilization of the nation's spirit.[57] Moreover, the idea of employing the popularity and mass appeal of recreation for education, rather than separating the two, was also continuous.[58] On the surface, the figures under the total war regime seemed to have attempted to characterize their thought and policies as radical by differentiating them from those in the 1920s, but under the surface they often continued the previous policies and thought. At this point, it becomes more reasonable to understand the transition in the bureaucrats' views and policies regarding cinema from the 1920s through the late 1930s not as a shift but as an update, with many earlier aspects explicitly or implicitly taken over and

reworked to a greater or lesser extent, even though certain other parts might have been dropped.

The second issue is whether the film policy was as effective as they had intended. Obviously, the film policy as implemented by the national government did not go as they had foreseen. For example, movie theaters had not become ubiquitous across the whole country even by the late 1930s.[59] In addition, in the 1930s and early 1940s, bureaucrats, filmmakers, and critics repeatedly discussed measures for "expanding and enhancing the social range of movie audiences."[60] This suggests that the actual size of audiences did not reach their expectations. In a 1942 roundtable discussion organized by a movie magazine, Fuwa expressed his dissatisfaction with the current size of audiences and demanded an improvement: "We should advertise to the intellectuals incessantly. For films that will attract a new social range of audiences, persons concerned should take sufficient time to come up with advertisements and try different approaches than the conventional methods. Otherwise, there can be no improvement from the current state of the box office."[61] This statement also implies that there were differences in audiences' tastes. It follows that the concept of the people without division the bureaucrats dreamed of in the 1920s, the notion of the masses Gonda advocated, as well as that of a nation transcending differences in geography, occupation, age, and gender that was formulated through abandoning the concept of the people in the 1930s, were all nothing more than ideals and very far from reality.[62] In addition, a recent study defines "national policy films" as those exempted from the censorship fees charged by the Home Ministry and then points out that those films were not popular compared to "entertainment movies" and did not attract audiences.[63] Furthermore, when we look at the dubious effect of the national policy films or of the "Greater East Asia Co-prosperity films" that promoted the assimilation policy (or *kominka*) in East Asia, their effectiveness is all the more uncertain.[64]

However, there is not enough evidence to prove that the Education Ministry's film policy of the 1920s and the later government-wide national film policy had failed. As we have seen, not only was the policy of film as social education targeted at movie theaters, but there were also attempts to diffuse their educational films into the public space of people's everyday lives by conducting a variety of activities such as nontheatrical screenings, touring screenings, public lectures, speeches, and exhibitions. Even when an audience member did not willingly go to a theater and was somehow compelled to do so, he or she might have been interested in and affected by the film while watching it. As the wartime regime gained strength, many bureaucrats and intellectuals, like Fuwa, increasingly criticized the commercial films that centered on romance and instead urged filmmakers to produce national policy films that excluded it. Still, it seems that the 1920s policy aiming to educate people by utilizing entertainment was not completely rejected. For even the commercial films that the bureaucrats disdained did not counter nationalist and imperialist ideology but rather could invoke it to a considerable degree. Moreover, if the regime of imperial Japan was sustained and advanced by the "multifaceted decision makings" and the "competing multiple visions" that consisted of politics, economics, military affairs, culture and media,[65] then some "national policy" films' lack

of popularity does not mean that the attempt to nationalize the film culture as a whole or to turn it into propaganda was ineffective.

Things were not simple.[66] Without doubt, the national film policy did not go as bureaucrats expected in many ways. But most Japanese films produced in the period did not also become a force to undermine the total war regime and its full mobilization of the nation. They neither made the audience doubt the notion that they were a nation nor turned their attention toward the violence of the empire against other Asian countries and regions. As the Education Ministry's bureaucrats and the advocates of popular recreation of the 1920s argued, people probably enjoyed movies as leisure; at the same time, as they did not discuss, entertainment movies and education films seemed not to have encouraged or provoked audiences into free active discussion nor to have prompted political consciousness vis-à-vis the status quo. Accordingly, it cannot conclusively be said whether the government's film policy was effective.

The audience we have looked at is conceptual in nature and is riddled with ambiguities. The audience that we have scrutinized is neither flesh and blood, nor does it match the kind of spectator or mode of spectatorship that we can infer through analyzing a movie on the basis of either a (post)structuralist–psychoanalytic model or a Deleuzean model. Rather, we can read this conception of the audience from the measures taken by the bureaucrats and intellectuals and their discourse within a specific set of historical circumstances, especially the rise of capitalism, from the 1920s through the 1930s and early 1940s. Nevertheless, this makes a significant case that the more visible a certain kind of medium becomes in a society, the more likely it is that the audience will be conceptualized as useful and serviceable to power. While the conditions of media and power have changed together with the social formation as a whole, this tendency as such has continued until the present. In such a top-down conceptualization, audiences are molded into an idealized form of community and its subjects, while various other kinds of potential within the audience become precluded or marginalized. In the interwar period, the bureaucrats and their associated intellectuals never presupposed that the audience was passive. Rather, they sought to incorporate their very activeness into idealized projects labeled society, social education, the state, and the empire and to deploy cinema as an educational tool in the people's everyday lives. This activeness, they further thought, was grounded not simply in the people's intelligence but in their emotional commitment and their entire personalities. But at the same time, this can be seen as an attempt to position and fix the audience within such a homogenous category or identity as "the people" or "the nation." This conception elided the audience's unpredictable responses, their open-form debate occurring throughout and after watching a film, different audiences' diverse perceptions, modes of reception and interpretation, and the incessant fluidity of their identities or the possibility of reception irreducible to their identities and other possible ways of understanding audiences. Their grand ideal probably stopped these options from being explored. The policy of social education in the interwar era shows that understanding the audience itself—not simply understanding spectatorship—is not only a vital goal of film studies but also a crucial social and political issue within its historical context.

Notes

1. Siegfried Kracauer, "Cult of Distraction," in his *The Mass Ornament: Weimar Essays*, trans. Thomas Y. Levin (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), 323–328. Also see his "The Mass Ornament," in this volume, 75–86; Miriam Bratu Hansen, "America, Paris, the Alps: Kracauer (and Benjamin) on Cinema and Modernity," in Lee Charney and Vanessa R. Schwartz, eds. *Cinema and the Invention of Modern Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 362–402.

2. Gonda Yasunosuke, *Minshu goraku no kicho* (Tokyo: Dojin sha, 1922), chapter 2; his "Minshu no bunka ka, minshu no tameno bunka ka: Bunka shugi no ichi kosatsu," *Taikan* (June 1920), reprinted in his *Gonda Yasunosuke chosaku shu*, vol. 4 (Tokyo: Bunwa shobo, 1975), 18–56.

3. Siegfreid Kracauer, "Propaganda and the Nazi War Film," in his *From Caligari to Hitler: A Psychological History of the German Film* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1947), 273–307.

4. Although, named according to the emperor's name, the official period "Taisho" lasted from 1912 to 1925, I followed the historian Narita Ryuichi, who defined Taisho democracy as lasting from 1905 to 1931. See Narita Ryuichi, *Taisho Demokurashi* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 2007).

5. In his chapter on Gonda, Aaron Gerow provides an English translation of *minshu goraku*. While Gonda himself once mentioned "mob amusement" as a good English translation and Miriam Silverberg suggested "popular play," Gerow chooses "popular entertainment" because he places importance on its industrial implication. (See his *Visions of Modernity: Articulations of Cinema, Nation, and Spectatorship, 1895–1925* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010], 254). However, I will use "popular recreation(s)" because this idea is derived from the advocates' interest in the relation between leisure and work in an industrial society, as they responded to such European thinkers as Kirk Patrick, Thomas Carlyle, William Morris, Welner Sombart, and Karl Bücher. See, for instance, Obayashi Soshi, *Minshu goraku no jissai kenkyu* (Tokyo: Dojinsha, 1922), 4–5; Gonda Yasunosuke, *Bijutsu kogei ron* (Tokyo: Uchida rokakuen, 1921).

6. Carol Gluck, "The People in History: Recent Trends in Japanese Historiography," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 38.1 (1978): 25–50. Also see Takashi Fujitani, "Minshushi as Critical of Orientalist Knowledge," *Positions* 6.2 (1998): 303–322.

7. For social education, numerous books and articles have been published in the field of education. Matsuda Takeo's *Kindai nihon shakai kyoiku no kenkyu* (Hakata: Kyushu daigaku shuppankai, 2004) provides a good critical overview on the historiography. There are also quite a few works on popular recreation, including Ishikawa Hiroyoshi, *Goraku no seizenshi: Taishoki to dainijitaisen chu o chushin ni* (Tokyo: Tokyo shoseki, 1981); Yasuda Tsuneo, *Kurashi no shakai shisoshi: Sono hikari to kage* (Tokyo: Keiso shobo, 1987); Yoshimi Shun'ya, *Toshi no doramatorogi* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1987).

8. Film historian Tanaka Jun'ichiro and other scholars have dealt with social education and popular recreation as a combined topic, but they generally have not inquired into their relationship. See Tanaka's *Nihon kyoiku eiga hattatsushi* (Tokyo: Kanyuhsa, 1979).

9. For the emergence of the new generation of bureaucrats, see Fukushima Hiroyuki, "'Shakai kyoiku' kanryo no tojo," *Kyushu shigaku* 129 (September 2001): 19–46.

10. Ehata Kiju, *Shakai kyoiku no jissaiteki kenkyu* (Tokyo: Hakushinkan, 1921); Norisugi Kaju, *Shakai kyoiku no kenkyu* (Tokyo: Dobunkan, 1923); Nakata Shunzo, *Goraku no kenkyu* (Tokyo: Tokyo hobundo, 1924).

11. For instance, Norisugi, *Shakai no kenkyu*, 160–161, 292.

12. For instance, Ehata, Shakai kyoiku no jissaiteki kenkyu, 1–4.

13. Norisugi, *Shakai kyoiku no kenkyu*, 2

14. Ibid.

15. Ibid., 160–161.

16. Louise Yong, *Total Empire: Manchuria and the Culture of Wartime Imperialism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 433–434.

17. Ibid., 173.

18. Ehata, *Shakai kyoiku no jissaiteki kenkyu*, 533–541.

19. Ibid., 244–376; Norisugi, *Shakai kyoiku no kenkyu*, 24–25.

20. Ibid., 12–13.

21. Ibid., 156–157.

22. Ibid., 283.

23. Ibid., 175, 283, 319; Ehata, Shakai kyoiku no jissaiteki kenkyu, 10–11. In some parts, though, Norisugi attributed the problems to Japanese traditional customs rather than to the rise of capitalism.

24. Ibid., 11–16.

25. Gustave le Bon, *The Crowd: A Study of the Popular Mind* (West Valle City, UT: Editorium, 2006). The original French was published in 1895.

26. For "*jomin*," see, for instance, Yanagita Kunio, *Minkan densho* (1934), reprinted in his *Yangagita Kunio zenshu*, vol. 8 (Tokyo: Chikuma shobo, 1998), 16–33; Gluck, "The People in History," 32–35; Harry Harootunian, *Overcome by Modernity: History, Culture, Community in Interwar Japan* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000), 306–328. For "the masses," see Kracauer, *The Mass Ornament*. For "the citizen," Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1991).

27. Norisugi, *Shakai kyoiku*, 319.

28. Tosaka Jun, "Minshuron" (1937), reprinted in his *Tosaka Jun zenshu. Vol. 5: Sekai no ikkan toshiteno nihon* (Tokyo: Keiso shobo, 1976), 56–61.

29. For instance, Norisugi, "Wagakuni ni okeru minshu goraku taikan," *Shakai to kyoiku* (June 1924): 28.

30. Sekiya Ryukichi, "Shakai kyoiku no hanashi," *Seijiron koza*, vol. 5 (1929), reprinted in Ogawa Toshio, ed., *Shakai kyoiku kihon bunken shiryo shusei* 1.4 (Tokyo: Ozorasha, 1991), 2–3.

31. Obi Hanji, "Eiga kyoiku ni kansuru naigai no jokyo," Monbusho futsugakumukyoku shakai kyoiku ka, ed., *Eiga kyoiku* (Tokyo: Monbusho, 1928), 17.

32. Nakata, *Goraku no kenkyu*, 138–142.

33. Yamane Mikihito, *Shakai kyoika to katsudo shashin* (Tokyo: Teikoku chio gyoseigaku kai, 1923), 58–73.

34. For instance, Obi Hanji, "Kogyo eiga no mondai," *Shakai kyoiku* (April 1928): 2.

35. Hanji, "Eiga kyoiku ni kansuru naigai no jokyo," 12.

36. Nakata Shunzo, "Wagakuni ni okeru kyoiku eiga no kinkyo," *Shakai kyoiku* (April 1928): 27–29.

37. Tanaka, *Nihon kyoiku eiga hattatsushi*, 43.

38. This seems to have been triggered by an invitation from the Ministry to Gonda and Tachibana to the Council of Educational Films they sponsored. See "Monbusho, eiga kyoiku shingikai o moku," *Kokusai eiga shinbun*, July 20, 1927, 25.

39. Gonda Yasunosuke, *Goraku kyoiku no kenkyu* (Tokyo: Shogakukan, 1943), reprinted in his *Gonda Yasunosuke chosakushu,* vol. 3 (Tokyo: Bunwa shobo, 1975), 230.

40. Gonda Yasunosuke, *Minshu goraku no kicho* (Tokyo: Dojinsha, 1922), chapter 2.

41. Gonda Yasunosuke, "Minshu goraku kotoni katsudo shashin nit tsuite," *Shakai to kyoka* (February 1922): 37–43.

42. Tachibana Takahiro, *Minshu goraku no kenkyu* (Tokyo: Keigansha, 1920), 79. This pertains to Barak Kushner's argument regarding the Home Ministry's propaganda. See his *The Thought War: Japanese Imperial Propaganda* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2006).

43. Gonda, *Minshu goraku no kicho*, 18–22.

44. Gonda Yasunosuke, *Minshu goraku mondai* (Tokyo: Dojinsha, 1921), reprinted in his *Gonda Yasunosue chosakushu*, vol. 2 (Tokyo: Bunwa shobo, 1975), 67–71.

45. Gonda, *Minshu goraku no kicho*, 13–17, 47–56; Gonda, "Minshu goraku kotoni katsudo shashin nit tsuite," 37–43.

46. For instance, Yoshimi, *Toshi no doramatorogi*; Miriam Silverberg, "Constructing the Japanese Ethnography of Modernity," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 51.1 (1992): 30–54.

47. Gonda Yasunosuke, *Kokumin goraku no kenkyu* (Tokyo: Awata shoten, 1941), reprinted in his *Gonda Yasunosuke chosakushu,* vol. 3 (Tokyo: Bunwa shobo, 1975), 13–55.

48. For instance, Harootunian, *Overcome by Modernity*, 149–177; Aaron Gerow, *Visions of Modernity: Articulations of Cinema, Nation, and Spectatorship, 1985–1925* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), chapter 2.

49. For instance, see Gonda, *Minshu goraku mondai*, 25.

50. Gonda, *Minshu goraku no kicho*, 2–3.

51. "Monbusho suisen eiga," *Shakai to kyoka* (March 1921), 82–83. Twenty films were selected, including *Heren Kera* [Helen Keller], *Koronbus no ichidaiki* [A Biography of Columbus], and *Katei no onna* [A Woman at Home]. Production details about all these films are currently unknown. Throughout the 1920s, only a few Japanese films were recommended through this system.

52. For instance, Takahata Motoyuki, "Kyoiku eiga to monbusho," *Kokusai eiga shinbun* (January 10, 1929): 78.

53. See my *Making Personas: Transnational Film Stardom in Modern Japan* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asian Center, 2013).

54. See, for instance, Peter B. High, *Imperial Screen: Japanese Film Culture in the Fifteen Years' War* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2003); Kato Atsuko, *Sodoin taisei to eiga* (Tokyo: Shinyosha, 2003); Furukawa Takahisa, *Senjika no nihon eiga: Hitobito wa kokusaku eiga o mitaka* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa kobunkan, 2003).

55. Fuwa Suketoshi, "Senjika no eiga narabini ongaku seisaku ni tsuite," *Shakai kyoiku* (August 1939): 15–16.

56. Ibid., 15–19.

57. Monbusho, "Kyoka to eiga seisaku," *Shakai kyoiku* (October 1938): 8–11.

58. For instance, "Monbusho ni manekarete nippon eiga o kataru," *Nippon eiga* (August 1936): 38–43.

59. According to the research conducted by the Home Ministry in February 1938, while 641 municipalities had more than one movie theater in the whole country (except Japanese colonies), 10,909 municipalities did not have any movie theaters. It also reports that whereas in Tokyo movie theaters spread over at the rate of one theater per 23,857 people, in such a rural area as Shimane Prefecture ones only did at the rate of one theater per 106,731. See Naimusho and Monbusho Shakai Kyoikukyoku, *Honpo jigyo gaiyo* (Tokyo: Dainippon eiga kyokai, 1939).

60. For instance, Okada Shinkichi, "Atarashii eiga kankyakuso no doin nit tsuite," *Nippon eiga* (April 1942): 69; Roundtable discussion, "Kankyakuso no kakudai kyoka," *Eiga junpo* (April 1, 1942): 48–56. In the 1930s, the size of the audience steadily increased. For instance, the July 1936 issue of the magazine *Nippon Eiga* (pp. 25–26) reported that the number rose from 150 million in 1926 to 230 million in 1935. But the same article also pointed out that this number was relatively small compared with numbers in America, Italy, and Germany.

61. Ibid., 52.

62. Gonda, *kokumin goraku no mondai*, 44.

63. Furukawa, *Senjika no nihon eiga*.

64. See Aaron Gerow, "Tatakau kankyaku: Daitoa kyoeiken no nihon eiga to juyo no mondai," *Gendai shiso* 30.9 (2007): 136–159. Michael Baskett primarily discusses how the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity films were constructed to appeal to people in colonized and semicolonized areas, but his argument reveals that their actual effect was often ambiguous. See his *The Attractive Empire: Transnational Film Culture in Imperial Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2008), especially 19, 83–84, 102.

65. Yong, *Total War*, chapter 9.

66. Aaron Gerow discusses the similarly ambiguous level of the effectiveness of the governmental policies on cinema, although his argument seems to come down more on the side of their ineffectiveness. See his "Narrating the Nationality of a Cinema: The Case of Japanese Prewar," in Alan Tansman, ed. *The Culture of Japanese Fascism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009), 184–211.

PART II

WHAT IS JAPANESE CINEMA?: JAPANESE CINEMA AND THE TRANSNATIONAL NETWORK

....

ADAPTATION AS "TRANSCULTURAL MIMESIS" IN JAPANESE CINEMA

....

MICHAEL RAINE

INTRODUCTION

....

THROUGHOUT the twentieth century, cinema was a privileged location of the "exotic"—in its production (of utopian spaces), in its reception (of foreign product), and as a mode of signification (the signifying objects are not present on the screen).[1] It was a highly porous medium, one that called on audiences to identify with a position they are not—a character, a narrator, or more generally an instance of cinematic perception—and to grant a certain ontological stability to nonexistent things. Paradoxically, those artificial environments, what Walter Benjamin called "blue flowers in the land of technology," are experienced as close at hand, phenomenologically present-in-their-absence more directly than other representations, or even the everyday world.[2] It is just these characteristics that made cinema the perfect site for working through the geopolitical tensions engendered by economic and political developments of twentieth-century Japan, tensions that emerged before and extended after the war against China and the Western powers. Too often the complexity of the medium and of the responses to it has been lost on film and cultural studies, in which the politics of representing the nonexistent has most often been judged not by its real consequences but too simply, by criticizing its heterotopic or counterfactual nature.[3]

In more recent English-language studies the heroic mode of cinema history, in which directors and producers raised the national standard against foreign domination and domestic indifference, has been absorbed into a more compendious transnationalism.[4] Actual audiences are now granted agency, while culture is polycentric and popular, and

modifies flows instead of roots. It would seem that the suspicion of monolithic nation-alism, the increasing emphasis on reception over production, and the history of deep financial as well as emotional investments in foreign cinema would militate against the linkage of cinema and nation. Instead, even as all that is solid melts into discourse, the stakes have remained surprisingly unchanged. Many authors still defend the local production of collective agency through cinema as an aspect of sovereignty, part of a nation's cultural patrimony.[5] Even within film studies, the desire to champion local cultural production against "Global Hollywood" threatens to obscure an alternative history, one that Yamamoto Kikuo draws out in his groundbreaking *The Influence of Foreign Film on Japanese Films*.[6]

Influence, Citation, Adaptation

In his book Yamamoto highlights the conceptual distinction between Western and Japanese cinema that informed Japanese critical writing, but the reviews and memoirs that he cites evoke not only the awkward and transgressive nature of filling a "Western" form with "Eastern" content but also the sheer absurdist pleasure of doing so. This chap-ter argues that cinema in Japan (as elsewhere in the global periphery) was understood as Janus-faced, as the most immediate mediation of everyday life *and* as a game of citation, an "adaptation" not simply from other media (theater and literature, television drama and popular music, now *manga* and computer games) but from other texts, in particu-lar Hollywood cinema as the "Big Other."[7] Paradoxically, what makes cinema so per-suasive as "second nature" is also what makes it possible to incorporate the exotic into intimate experience (the blue flower effect), corroding existing ways of being and radi-calizing everyday life. That Western intertext, which would have seemed obvious (albeit often deplorable) to many cultural critics from the 1920s to the 1960s, has recently been obscured by academic claims for "regional networks" or for a more "horizontal" form of transnationality, or by arguments from intellectual history and cultural studies that broaden the focus to the "logic of the form" of capitalist accumulation itself.[8] This essay will push back against those arguments not by asking what is theoretically "agreeable to reason" but by stressing the material conditions of Japanese film, delving into the archive to locate Japanese cinema, in theory and in practice, as a form of "adaptation" (*hon'an, wasei*) or "imitation" (a plethora of words: *monomane, moho, mojiri,* etc.) in which Western cinema, especially Hollywood, played a ubiquitous role.[9]

For his book Yamamoto scoured prewar newspapers and magazines to find reviews of films that for the most part no longer exist, documenting how often Japanese film titles echoed the titles of recently imported Western films and how frequently critics noted, often with approval, the similarities between Japanese films and their Western models. For example, Saito Torajiro specialized in "artful nonsense" (*bungei nansensu*), comic films complete with titles that parodied famous Western novels and films. Erich Maria Remarque's novel *All Quiet on the Western Front* was called *Seibu sensen ijo nashi*

I smell something burning.

FIGURE 5.1 Blackface in Japanese Cinema. A frame from *Kid Commotion* (Kodakara sodo, director: Saito Torajiro, 1935)

in Japanese; Saito made *Zenbu seishin ijo ari* (*Everybody's Crazy,* 1929) even before the Lewis Milestone film was released. More directly, *King Kong* became *Wasei Kingu Kongu* (King Kong, made in Japan) only one month after the ape spectacular opened in Tokyo.[10] Japanese films' citations of foreign sources go back at least as far as the knockoff "Zigomar" films of 1912, part of a boom that both established cinema as a popular narrative medium and sparked a "moral panic" over Japanese juvenile delinquency, but Saito's extreme and ironic mode of citation needs no local object: *Kid Commotion* (*Kodakara sodo,* 1935) features a scene with the star, Ogura Shigeru, in blackface, a style that was familiar from contemporary Hollywood films, not from Japanese theatrical tradition. The referent here is pure intertext: film in Japan referred to cinema as well as to the world, something that filmmakers working in "impure" genres exacerbated to comic effect.

There are of course even more literal senses of adaptation. Japanese cinema was always intermedial, taking its earliest narratives from the kabuki canon even before it had settled the distinction between drama and documentary.[11] But kabuki was a relatively "high" art—not aristocratic, but relatively expensive and time consuming—so before finding a new home in the cinema those narratives were mediated in turn through woodblock prints, *utsushi-e* (a Japanese form of magic lantern), *rokyoku* (storytelling with *shamisen* accompaniment), and other vocal arts located in popular entertainment quarters such as Asakusa in Tokyo. Later, a publishing boom in *kodan* stories (military tales, originally narrated in small theaters) and *jidai-mono* (popular stories

set in premodern Japan) expanded those sites of mediation further still.[12] Film histories write of the rise of the "literary film" (*bungei eiga*) from about 1937, but rather than high literature we should look to popular literature for written sources of Japanese film. In addition to the *kodan* and *jidai-mono* sources for the period film, Kido Shiro, head of production at the Shochiku studio, papered over the desertion of Suzuki Denmei, the studio's most popular actor, by lauding his slate of "literary films" for the second half of 1931—by which he meant not adaptations of high literature but of popular, often serialized, even proletarian novels by Kikuchi Kan, Hosoda Tamiki, Kume Masao, and others.[13] Beyond its source texts, cinema was a "media mix" in its mode of presentation, too, drawing not just on vision but on the more embodied senses: audience familiarity with the spatial arrangements typical of low-class entertainment (wooden benches, dirt floors), the performance of the *benshi* as a kind of fairground barker luring in customers and keeping them entertained, and the musical accompaniment borrowed from late nineteenth-century march tunes. Those tunes, and their Western meters, were taught in school and heard in the streets as *chindon* music used to drum up custom at store openings and the like, before being heard, often played by the same performers, in the cinema.

Adaptation, then, is a broad concept of appropriation and modification that does not specify the culture or medium from which it takes its materials. The adaptation of foreign cinema and the adaptation of popular literature are just two "adaptive strategies," part of the cinema's industrial expansion during the twentieth century. In the transition to talkies that I will focus on here, the intermedial field only thickened with the "tie-up" between film and sound. With the spread of SP records of popular music and radio broadcasts from the mid-1920s, studios looked for synergy between film and the new sound culture by copying titles, narratives, and themes from popular songs. The transmedia exploitation of properties in Japan's "media age" accelerated after the Great Kanto Earthquake of 1923, developing into a "culture industry" by the 1930s, when the Toho studio was formed with capital from a retail and railway conglomerate.[14] Film sound depended on the new technology of microphones and amplifiers to electronically register popular music, radio comedy, and even sports announcing on film, drawing on audience familiarity with that new culture of the sound-image.[15] Even before its cultural elevation by high literature in the late 1930s, cinema was already an intermedial practice, adapting popular literature and incorporating popular songs, with lyrics printed in the pamphlets given out freely at screenings—pamphlets that advertised cosmetics, candy, and other consumer goods that also appeared in the films.[16] No filmmaker was more sensitive to that relation—between films and among media—than Ozu Yasujiro.

Ozu Yasujiro

The main reason why American film can cross borders and be accepted by people in every country is because of its "brightness" [*akarusa*]. . . . The person who brought that "brightness" to Japanese cinema is Ozu Yasujiro, a new Kamata filmmaker.[17]

David Bordwell and Noel Burch have emphasized Ozu's apprenticeship in Hollywood cinema.[18] Rather than questioning that claim, I would like to push it further: the project of emulating Hollywood was not specific to Ozu; but the intensity of his imitations—in the modes of homage, parody, and learning—made him stand out among his peers. From Japanese scholars such as Yamamoto Kikuo, Chiba Nobuo, Tanaka Masasumi, and Iwamoto Kenji we have a portrait of Ozu at Shochiku, learning his craft from analyzing mostly Hollywood films under the tutelage of Japanese directors such as Ushihara Kiyohiko.[19] Hollywood decoupage became the basis of Ozu's "piecemeal" style, something Ozu recognized in published interviews as well as in his work. He was constantly testing the "powers of the medium"—what cinema could do in its given conjunction—sometimes on the model of American film and sometimes going beyond it by going *through* it.[20]

> For a long time in the US there have been many films, like Chaplin's and Lloyd's, full of brightness and cheerfulness, gags and nonsense, broad satire and irony. I've never seen anything like that in Japan.[21]

Even in his earliest surviving film, *Days of Youth* (*Wakaki hi,* 1929), we can see Ozu experimenting with the subtlety that he found in the films of Lubitsch, Chaplin, and others. The film takes off from Harold Lloyd's *Speedy* (1928), extending a "wet paint" gag from the formal play of dots and lines into a narratively significant play with objects, shapes, and textures. The comedy of embarrassment that is shrugged off by Lloyd's buoyant "Boy" persona during the young couple's visit to Coney Island is not so easily surmounted in Japan. Chieko (Matsui Junko) is knitting a pair of wool socks for Yamamoto (Saito Tatsuo), but she is coerced into giving them to his best friend, Watanabe. Yamamoto leans against a freshly painted pole while Chieko buys more wool, and is forced to hide his paint-stained hand as he walks with her, a secret that risks exposure when a stranger finds a dropped glove and, spotting Yamamoto's light and dark hands, attempts to "return" it. Hiding his hand and then, when they go to a café, his smudged coffee cup from Chieko, Yamamoto is finally exposed when the intimacy of winding wool with his would-be girlfriend makes him moon over her, and leave a painted hand-shaped impression on his cheek. The scene ends with a humiliation that, unlike the American, Yamamoto cannot laugh off. Taking Lloyd's already abstract running gag, Ozu cycles through a series of formal juxtapositions, linking the repeated texture of wool socks and gloves to the physical act of winding that both entices and betrays Yamamoto. But the goal is not simply formal play: for an audience that knows both Lloyd and Ozu, the sequence parodies the impossible heterosexual romance that Hollywood advertised around the world, leading to an ironic recognition: the buoyancy of the American "Boy" is not possible in the more constrained lives of his Japanese audience.

David Bordwell has noted the play on the Japanese title of Frank Borzage's *Seventh Heaven* in the joke about the pawn shop in *Days of Youth,* but I think the references go further than the *Dai shichi tengoku / shichiya* pun and the imitation by Watanabe (Yuki Ichiro) of Chico's gestures. The poster we see, like all the posters in Ozu's films before

Passing Fancy (*Dekigokoro,* 1933), is a *foreign* poster of a foreign film, and Ozu doesn't just incorporate Borzage's title into his intertitles, but also the most famous lines of dialogue from the film ("I'm a very remarkable fellow" and "keep your chin up" in their Japanese translations). But isn't this more than homage? Ozu has converted one of the most impassioned romances in film history into the "love story" of two college buddies, a bathetic modulation repeated at a formal level by converting Borzage's famous seven-floor crane shot mapping the young lovers' attic "heaven" onto eye-line matches of a rented room just ten feet off the ground. This citation reads at the level of structural principle, not just gesture, as a comic and cinephilic awareness of the "geopolitical incline" between Japanese and US cinema, if not Japan and the United States. The stairway is a place of hesitation between the ground-floor space of the boys' humiliation (the school and the streetcar) and the hetero-social paradise of the upper floor with its absurd dreams of romance (Yuki rents his own room, and has to move out, just for the chance to talk with a girl). Within that structure, skiing is not just a trendy topic (it was that, too) but a sensory image of the sliding from romantic high to low that is the basic emotional tone of the film. This, I think, is what Ozu means by the "subtlety" and "sophistication" that allowed

FIGURE 5.2 All sound version: advertisement for *Story of Floating Weeds* (Ukikusa monogatari, director: Ozu Yasujiro, 1934), printed in Nihon eiga terebi purodyu-sa-kyokai, *Puroguramu eigashi, taisho kara senshu made* (Tokyo: Nihon hoso shuppan kyokai, 1978), p. 252.

the Hollywood films he admired to show without telling, to say more with less, and what led one critic to recognize him as "the film director who is most like an artist."[22]

Even Ozu's late silent films, made during the "crisis time" when artists and intellectuals were encouraged to "return to Japan," continue this play with foreign referents.[23] An advertisement for *Story of Floating Weeds* (*Ukikusa monogatari,* 1934) presents the film as modern and international—one that "won't disappoint fans of foreign films"— and calls Ozu "a talented director who should be compared to Chaplin"! The advertising blurb mentions stereotypical Japanese concepts such as ephemerality (*hakanasa*), but it still positions Ozu as a cosmopolitan filmmaker, and contemporary reviews recognized the film's connection to *The Barker* (director George Fitzmaurice, 1928), which had been a big success in Japan, and its even more recent remake, *Hoop-la* (Frank Lloyd, 1933).[24] *The Barker* was a transitional sound film, a part talkie, though it played silent with a *benshi* in Japan. The advertisement for *Story of Floating Weeds* also labels the film "all sound"—a film with recorded music (including a theme song) but no dialogue, one of the "sound version" films that Shochiku made before the move to the Ofuna studio in 1936 that made it possible to release a full slate of talking pictures.[25] Kido Shiro had seen the Warners Vitaphone system in New York in 1928 or 1929 and realized that American and European sound films would soon be arriving in Japan. On his return he set up the research group that eventually employed the Tsuchihashi brothers to develop the putatively "pure Japanese sound system" that was used to record *The Neighbor's Wife and Mine* (*Madamu to nyobo,* 1931).[26] Even before those domestic sound films could be produced, Kido had wired for sound the major Shochiku cinemas showing Western films, displacing the musicians from some cinemas by replacing them with records chosen by specialists in Western and Japanese music, and responded to the *benshi* strikes against those developments that started in the spring of 1932 by releasing increasing numbers of "sound versions" with recorded music and some sound effects, occasionally a commentary recorded by a *benshi,* or partial dialogue.[27] Whatever the associations of the subject matter, as a text and as a technological object, Ozu's film was positioned as a modern and cosmopolitan alternative to western cinema, like the studio that produced it.

Ozu's adaptation of the "subtlety" of Hollywood film, combined with Kido's incomplete "adaptation" of the new technology of the sound-image, makes *Story of Floating Weeds* not only an adaptation of *The Barker* but a reflection on that process itself. Critics such as Itagaki Takao complained about the "cheapness" of inserting a steam-train sound at the beginning of the film (itself a prominent sound effect in *The Barker*), to justify the transfer of audible dialogue onto the visual track as intertitles.[28] But as with the set design and staging of *Days of Youth,* Ozu's aesthetic sensitivity points toward a different way of reading the film, one that *highlights* the transfer of sound onto the image track in order to register the "geopolitical incline" between Japan and the United States, at the level of sound technology. Given the condition of Japanese cinema and Ozu's sensitivity to technical details of the medium (his first question at a public Q&A when Josef von Sternberg visited Japan: Why are your dissolves so extended?), it seems likely that Ozu, some members of his circle, and some discerning cinephiles also recognized this wry commentary on international cinematic filiations as one of the pleasures of the film.[29]

Materiality Matters

Horizontality is "agreeable to reason" in contemporary film studies. Bilateral models, which privilege the metropoles, are rejected in favor of "horizontal" cultural linkages among peripheral countries in the world system.[30] Some writers claim that those networks are already more significant than the old center-periphery hierarchy. Hollywood, we are told, is in decline. That may be the case, but it is also a reason to establish how different things were when cinema was the dominant, global mass medium. Fortunately, authoritarian states keep good records: internal Japanese censorship publications account for not only every film (feature, documentary, and newsreel) but every *print* of every film released in Japan between 1925 and 1944. Drawing on those records and the data-heavy film yearbooks, we can understand how Japanese cinema continued to incorporate Hollywood long after domestic production had taken over the space of Japanese film exhibition. [31]

Film production in Japan began only a year after the medium was invented, and dramatic films derived from kabuki plays were a regular feature of film programs a decade later. Despite the devastation of the 1923 earthquake, audiences continued to grow rapidly. In Tokyo, attendance in May 1924 exceeded that of the previous year, even if audiences were now watching films in wooden "barracks" thrown up quickly in the ashes of the lower city. Cinema was international before it was national: the *benshi* was a distinctive feature of Japanese films, but one that made foreign films *more familiar* to Japanese audiences. At the beginning of the 1920s only one-third of viewers were watching Japanese films, but by the end of the decade that proportion had more than doubled. Major studios in 1920 (Nikkatsu, Shochiku, Taikatsu, Kokkatsu, Teikine) had offices in New York to buy new films, but in the 1920s Hollywood majors established branches in Japan: instead of selling prints outright, they wanted to rent films and take a cut of the profits.[32] As a result, Japanese studios concentrated their efforts on domestic production, even as the cinephile culture of the pure film movement developed into university coterie magazines, the Society for Praising Good Films (all from Europe or the United States), the Kanto Film Society, and other "film circles" that supported a new kind of experimental cinema from the mid-1920s. The corollary to the desire to produce a cinema that could substitute for imported films is one suitable for export, but despite utopian proclamations from studios that dominated the domestic market, the yearbooks chart a geopolitical incline: exports were less than 1 percent of imports.[33] The resistance to foreign film in Japan was not so much cultural as economic and then, with the rise of militarism, ideological. Kinnea Shuk-Ting Yau has argued for a regional network of East Asian cinema, based on shared cultural values, but the distribution figures show little sign of that horizontal network before Japan attacked China. Although there are newspaper articles about Nikkatsu and other studios becoming involved in co-productions on the mainland,
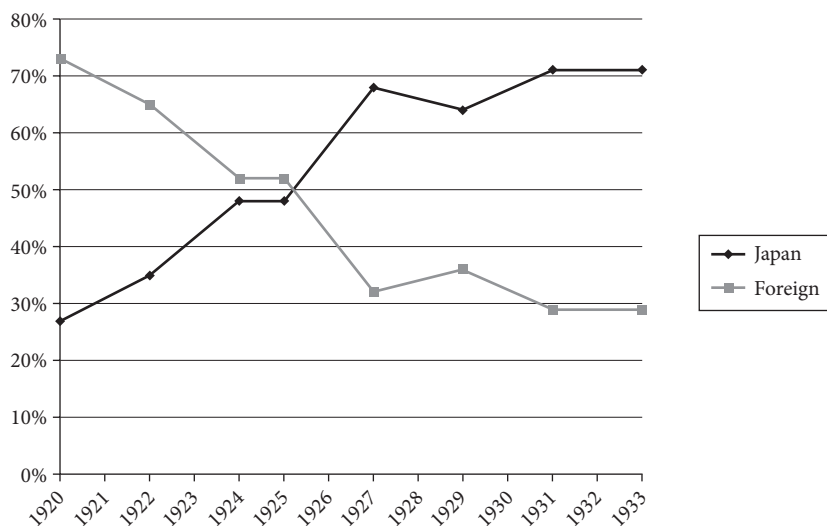
FIGURE 5.3 Market share of Japanese and foreign box office, 1920–1933.

Source: Eiga nenkan [Film Yearbook] (Tokyo: Asahi shinbunsha, 1934), unpaginated front matter

the mix of imported films is *increasingly* American during the 1920s; imports from China are even less than Japanese exports.[34]

As Aaron Gerow has argued, eloquent intellectuals are overrepresented in film history: we also have to recognize more local strands of Japanese cinema. Yet even when we look to that nativist strand, we find contradictory claims for the relation between foreign
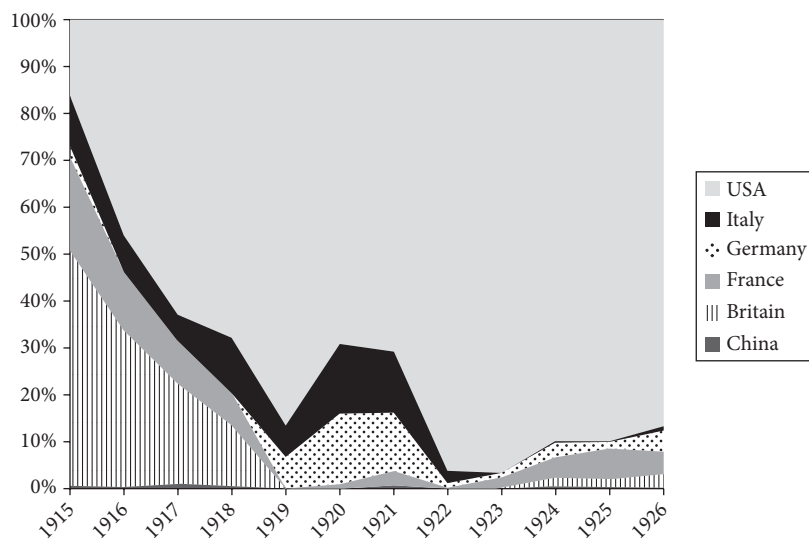
FIGURE 5.4 Japanese film imports by relative value, 1915–1926.

Source: Eiga nenkan [Film Yearbook] (Tokyo: Asahi shinbunsha, 1929), 85

cinema and national life. In a pamphlet aimed at readers of its new studio magazine, *Mukojima,* Nikkatsu's Kozono Suenori implicitly criticized Shochiku for its slavish imitations of American films, and welcomed audiences ready for films made in the "pure Japanese style." But his claim that Nikkatsu's "reformed" (*kakushin*) films would outdo foreign cinema, in part because the studio had imported the latest Western film technology, shows that Hollywood was still the measure of all things cinematic, in both technical and aesthetic senses.[35] Komatsu Hiroshi argues that Japanese cinema was established as a national medium (multiple prints, national distribution, and dominance of domestic market) after 1927.[36] The reasons for this massive institutional shift are complex: the "cultural proximity" of Japanese films to their audience (though why wasn't this decisive earlier?) but also a general exhortation in Japan toward import substitution (*kokusanka*—Japanese versions of film technology were always advertised in those terms); disputes with Hollywood distributors (the shift from sales to rentals); and shifts in policy and enforcement motivated by the 1924 Oriental Exclusion Act in the United States that led to a short-lived boycott of American films.[37] Even as Japanese producers established dominance over the domestic market, the touchstone and target was always the prestige cinema from Europe and the United States.

Shame and Shamelessness

In his authoritative study of early Japanese cinema, *Visions of Japanese Modernity: Articulations of Cinema, Nation, and Spectatorship, 1895–1925,* Aaron Gerow accepts Yamamoto's observations on the "influence" of foreign cinema but makes a "strategic move" to ignore it.[38] Focusing on the early period in which the institutional and narrational structure of Japanese cinema was still in flux, he argues that the transnational intertext is less important than the power-laden operations by which the meaning of cinema itself was discursively defined. Both progressive critics of the "pure film" movement and more conservative Japanese cultural bureaucrats demanded a unitary text that suppressed the hybrid and unpredictable meanings attendant on early Japanese cinema's informal exhibition contexts. In this and in other work, Gerow points out the irony that the progressive and individualist pure film movement critics worked in concert with the Japanese state to undo the "theft" of Japanese cinema, proposing to replace representations of Japan in Western films by exporting a Japanese cinema "reformed" to emulate the international norm.

In earlier work, Gerow saw the paradoxes produced by the pure film movement— a domestic cinema that required foreign approval; a Japanese cinema that rejects "Japaneseness"; an authentic cinema for which "the people are missing"—as resulting in a sense of shame.[39] Mitsuyo Wada-Marciano responded to that work by asserting the presence of an active resistance to Western cultural imperialism in the "middle class" (*shoshimin*) films at Shochiku's Kamata studio, a form that she called "Nippon Modern." Wada-Marciano emphasizes the parodic aspect of the films, arguing that Shochiku

cinema was a cultural nationalist cinema that made modernity safe for Japaneseness, resisting the power of Hollywood and by extension the United States.[40] She gives as an example the insertion of a two-minute sequence from the Betty Boop cartoon *Ha! Ha! Ha!* (*Betti no warae warae* in Japan), produced by the Fleischer Brothers in 1934, into Shimazu Yasujiro's early talkie *My Neighbor, Miss Yae* (*Tonari no Yae-chan,* released June 28, 1934). By incorporating this citation into the subtle comedy of misplaced desire, and preceding an extended montage of "modern" entertainments that ends pointedly with the father at home cooking Japanese food, Wada-Marciano claims that Shimazu has "reasserted a national identity through the domestic image."[41] This reading, however, seems too exclusively oedipal and symbolic: the cartoon *Ha! Ha! Ha!* is one of the finest examples of Fleischer's reflexive sense of humor and almost surreal sensibility. It features live action of Fleischer himself drawing Betty and talking with her, then a laughing gas sequence that ends with an anarchic, modernist vision of the whole city intoxicated, things as well as people. The short passed censorship on May 9, so would have been fresh in audience memories when Shimazu not only incorporated a film within a film, but a film that itself incorporated jokey reflexivity within its own mode of representation. Surely viewers could take more pleasure in this sequence than simply feel shame at the borrowing, or relief that they could eat Japanese-style fish afterward. The film foregrounds an interplay of agency: Shimizu pays homage to Fleischer's awareness of the comic possibilities of the medium at the same time that he asserts a similar consciousness, on behalf of himself and his cinephile audience. It is not simply without shame but actively *shameless,* a citation (of almost half the film!) that is also a commentary. That complex mixture of local and global reference extends to the term *shoshimin* itself. Although the *shoshimin* film became Shochiku's defining genre, as Wada claims (p. 125), that fact still points to Shochiku's program of emulating foreign cinema: the phrase *shoshimin eiga* was first used by Iwasaki Akira to describe the Lloyd-Chaplin-Keaton comic strain of American film.[42]

   In the "strategic move" of Gerow's *Visions of Japanese Modernity,* the problem of national "shame" is displaced in the text by the emphasis on distinctions of class, gender, and social power *within* Japan.[43] Gerow is surely correct that power operates within as well as between polities, and we should be wary of the tendency to reify national cinemas as unitary entities: there is great value in recognizing how the struggle over the definition of cinema mobilizes an internal politics based on class and gender even before we consider the role of cinema in representing the nation. Nonetheless, I think we should recognize the global imbalances of power—what I am calling the "geopolitical incline"—that subtended all film production in Japan even if the forms of agency that result from that imbalance are less predictable than some center-periphery models would imply. For example, the critics quoted by Yamamoto Kikuo were *shameless*: self-conscious humor or appreciation is at least as prominent as a sense of painful inferiority in the criticism published in newspapers and studio magazines. In the December 1932 issue of *Kamata,* a magazine for fans of Shochiku's modern-day films, Shimazu Yasujiro's first talkie, *First Steps Ashore* (*Joriku daiippo,* 1932), is described as a "splendid imitation" (*rippa na mosha*) of Sternberg's silent classic *Docks of New York*

(1928), while Kishi Matsuo praises the "pleasurable Americanism" (*kimochi no ii ameri-kanizumu*) of Naruse Mikio's *Chocolate Girl* (*Chokore-to ga-ru,* 1932), a film sponsored by the Meiji candy company that illustrates the close tie-up between cinema and other aspects of contemporary consumer culture.[44] Yamamoto's book, too, is filled with passing references to *wasei* (made in Japan), *mojiri* (parody), and *moho* (imitation), or *monomane* (mimicry), more often with a sense of humor than of shame.

Yamamoto describes Shimazu Yasujiro's *First Steps Ashore* as an "adaptation" (*hon'an*) of *Docks of New York* into a play and then a film script by Kitamura Komatsu, noting Shimazu's ambition to make an "imitation work" (*moho sakuhin*) that "took the original and made it Japanese." Kishi Matsuo found fault with the imitation (Oka Joji is no George Bancroft; the film is pure melodrama, not a tragic vision of a man and a woman doing their best in an impure world), but he does not criticize the strategy itself.[45] Films with such clear Hollywood intertexts were produced not only at the Shochiku Kamata studio noted for its American-style modernism: "Jack" Abe Yutaka's *Special Guard* (*Hijo Keikai,* 1929) was made at Nikkatsu's Uzumasa studio in Kyoto, which after the 1923 earthquake had become the "Hollywood of Japan." The film was noted for lead actor Asaoka Nobuo's resemblance to Bancroft (again) and for scenes that critic Tanaka Tetsunosuke described as "not so much 'stinking of butter' [i.e., Westernized] as a little American action film in its own right" in which audiences "hallucinate" scenes from famous American films such as *Underworld* (1927) and *The Dragnet* (1928) *as* a Japanese film.[46] Murata Minoru's *Skyscraper* (*Matenro,* 1930) was also made at Nikkatsu Uzumasa, and particularly highly praised for its "skillful translation" of the tempo of *Docks of New York*.[47] Critics even saw the influence of *Docks of New York* on period films such as *Kingire's Banishment* (*Kingire tsuiho,* 1930), made at Shochiku's Kamata studio: Tomoda Jun'ichiro praised the acting but wrote, "I wish they had imitated Bancroft and [Betty] Compson even more closely." Similarly, top period film star Hayashi Chojiro (later known as Hasegawa Kazuo) was praised for his "mimicry of Bancroft" in *A Wolf Howling in the Blizzard* (*Fubuki ni sakebu ookami,* Shochiku Kyoto, 1931). As Yamamoto goes on to point out, the "Underworld" (*ankokugai*) series of films (e.g., *Scarface,* 1932, known in Japan as *Boss of the Underworld* [*Ankokugai no kaoyaku*]), and the "Dragnet" (*hijosen*) series (named after another Bancroft-Sternberg collaboration, *The Dragnet*), spawned a genre of Japanese gangster films in the early 1930s, from *Capone Returns* (*Capone saigen,* 1932) at the short-lived Tokatsu studio in Kyoto, to Ozu Yasujiro's *Dragnet Girl* (*Hijosen no onna,* 1933) at Shochiku Kamata.[48]

Yamamoto's research on the relation between Japanese and foreign cinema is invaluable. However, comparing his understanding of that relation to the tone of the 1930s journals reveals a slight difference of emphasis. Although there had been film studies classes in Japanese universities even before World War II, Yamamoto belongs to the generation of scholars that established film studies as an academic discipline in Japan in the 1970s and 1980s. With Sato Tadao and other postwar critics, Yamamoto insisted on the distinction between Japan and the United States as a means of highlighting Japan's cultural specificity: the "incomplete modernity" that resulted from the failure of the People's Rights movement in the late nineteenth century and the postwar struggles for

democratization.[49] Given the legacy of the occupation, and wars in Korea and Vietnam, these critics were particularly sensitive to the role of the United States in sponsoring Japan's compromised political institutions, and looked to the cinema as a site of cultural resistance to American power. That resistance is a symptom of the leveling of the "geo-political incline" between Japan and the United States, itself a consequence of the growing contradictions between claims for American exceptionalism and the realpolitik of the United States' postwar involvements. The change became particularly clear after the "oil shocks" of the 1970s and Japan's emergence as a global economic power by 1983, when Yamamoto's book was first published.[50]

Perhaps for those reasons, Yamamoto insists on adaptation—essentially, Japani-fication—as a necessary intertextual translation of specific scenes and characters, because the mass audience would not tolerate direct transcriptions of Western films. Yamamoto's evidence, however, does not fully support his argument: Japanese film critics around 1930 seem far less disturbed by the corrosive nature of cultural adaptation than later critics. Instead, cinephile critics writing in popular magazines found a kind of giddy hilarity in recognizing the absurd "localization" of foreign modes and genres with Japanese characters (Oka Joji as George Bancroft, Mizukubo Sumiko as a Western-style ingénue) and settings, something that comes to the fore again in the Nikkatsu studio's popular "films without nationality" (*mukokuseki eiga*) and Toho studio's musicals of the 1950s and 1960s. The wry acknowledgment of the insufficiency of Japanese film vis-à-vis Hollywood cinema, as well as the bold declarations for a future cinema that could overcome it, are less an early-Foucauldian disciplinary discourse than a means of "lightening the burden" of being on the global cinematic periphery—a cinephilic combination of longing, parody, and a pointed awareness of geopolitical hierarchies that we can recognize as a form of knowledge.

Vernacular Modernism and Transcultural Mimesis

Miriam Hansen's writing on "vernacular modernism" is similarly concerned to suspend a political and cultural economy of the cinema that relies on a too-simple notion of Americanization.[51] She emphasizes the "negative dialectic" of Frankfurt School critical theory: both the negation of instrumental rationality and the mutual implication of high art and mass culture, such that negation does not stand at a critical distance but is immanent in the commodity itself, like Kracauer's reading of Weimar Americanism and Benjamin's dialectical image. In prewar cinema, for example, the idea of vernacular modernism promises to redeem not only American slapstick from Adorno's contempt but Chinese and Japanese melodrama, seen as both progressive in their redefinition of gender and obedient to local cultural norms.[52] The argument treads a careful path between acknowledging the global simultaneity of film cultures permeated by images

and fashions from the United States and avoiding the reduction of such exposure to a universal and trans-historical "Hollywood mode of narration."

Rather than such a timeless utility, Hansen's essays insist on linking local cinema to the contemporary experience of actual audiences, exposed to the same forces of global capitalism but in specific configurations. In Hansen's argument, for example on Shanghai melodramas of the 1930s, the films both radicalize audience perception of their historical circumstances and confirm them in a situated, non-cosmopolitan identity. She is more careful than most political economy critics of Hollywood's international reach to acknowledge the "locally and culturally specific aesthetics" of 1930s Shanghai melodramas, at the same time that she recognizes them as a "cultural translation" of the Hollywood model.[53] However, I am not sure they can do both. If film offers a new matrix of experience that allows audiences to recognize the conditions of their contemporary alienation, including the historical arbitrariness of gender subordination, then it cannot also maintain the cultural traditions that naturalized that hierarchy without producing some form of cognitive dissonance. Perhaps Hansen is too careful to avoid the universalizing arguments for classical narration, and too willing to accommodate her analysis to local cultural traditions, instead of recognizing that for vernacular modernism to offer the messianic potential for an "alternative public sphere" it *must* change existing cultural relations.

Reading etymologically, "vernacular" has less to do with local architecture, or even with the creole languages that Hansen emphasizes, than with the *verna*—Latin for slaves born of slaves brought from outside the slave owner's domain. An uncomfortable metaphor, the word points to the violent and appropriative nature of the cinematic "borrowing" under discussion here. Hollywood films did not simply dominate Japanese cinema, or Japanese spectators: studios profited from distributing prints they had bought free and clear, and only focused more on production when the Hollywood studios sought to take back those rents. Hollywood cinema was ransacked by the new film production, sometimes literally cut up and incorporated into Japanese films. To emphasize materiality is to recognize that even when Hollywood film was popular in Japan, most of the profit was kept by Japanese middlemen. And when the actual imports were substituted by Japanese versions, homage was mixed with parody. As Ozu hints in *Woman of Tokyo* (*Tokyo no onna,* 1933), cinema was always exploitation, of topics and of opportunities for profit. So how should we understand Japanese cinema's too-close relation to Hollywood?

In a 1930 issue of *Kinema Junpo,* Okamura Akira praised Ozu Yasujiro's *Walk Cheerfully* (*Hogaraki ni ayume,* 1930) for its "portrait of gangsters who are so natural in their actions that it's as if a gang of ruffians from New York's East Side red light district had immigrated [*iseki shite*] to Japan" and went on to praise the sensibility of Ozu's set design and camera position that reproduces the American films perfectly.[54] Postwar writer Sato Tadao summarized the common sense among prewar critics when he praised the "peculiar reality" of Ozu's *That Night's Wife,* in which "if a young Japanese couple lived on the back streets of New York, this is what they would be like."[55] Sato's supposition expresses a general attitude among Japanese film critics in the period before the

cultural turn toward militarism sent it underground: not so much lamenting the theft of Japanese cultural patrimony, nor detecting allegories of resistance in Japanese films, but aiming for impossible formulations that point up the instability and humor of the sensory experience the films provide, as a means of lightening the burden of standing on the global periphery.

My name for that sensory experience is "transcultural mimesis." *Transcultural* because it entails "translation" or "adaptation" across a marked cultural boundary, something that was always part of the production and reception of these films, and *mimesis* because the relation of original and copy is ever-present in this "mimetic medium." Rather than the reductive sense of mimesis as naïve copying, I would like to restore to mimesis some of the complexity of its original uses: in classical Greece, *mimesis* and its cognates encompassed ritual repetition as a form of ontological re-presencing, the dramatic staple of the parodic stereotype, and the Aristotlian sense of learning by imitation that was revived by Frankfurt School thinkers.[56] There is a "closeness" to mimesis that is not part of all copying, what Michael Taussig calls "the nature that culture uses to create second nature"—a pre-rational intimacy that Adorno and Benjamin also saw as a way out of the subject-object divide.[57] This essay has reread films and the critical discourse on them to discover at least three aspects of the "adaptation" of foreign cinema in Japan: aspects that could be termed homage, parody, and learning. Japanese filmmakers were engaged in a practice of transcultural mimesis that aimed, simultaneously, at *re-creating* Hollywood film in Japan, *parodying* the absurdities of American cinema (e.g., heterosexual romance, strong female characters) in the Japanese context, and even *learning* from the gap between Japanese and American cinema something of the invisible but nonetheless real "geopolitical incline" between Japan and the United States. Rather than dismiss this complex of impure motivations as derivative or simply "Americanized," we should recognize it instead as the *specificity* of Japanese cinema, or at least cinema on the global periphery, a psychological expression of the material conditions to which East Asian filmmakers "faced up" throughout the studio period.[58]

Critics in 1930s Japan seem to have been more ready to acknowledge that complexity than current writers. Film director Yamamoto Kajiro noted in his autobiography that Hollywood was often written as "聖林" or "holy wood," a pun that Yamamoto acknowledges but then dismisses by arguing that it was simply a mistake. Mistake or not, it's funny: the translation resonates with the combination of worshipful respect, absurdity, and wry acknowledgment of geopolitical unevenness that seems characteristic of peacetime Japanese studio cinema.[59] Not just a code, nor an ideology, we need a broader understanding of the pleasures of this "transcultural mimesis" that acknowledges both the fluidity it introduces into cultural identity and the multifaceted nature of "imitation." Actual audiences are notoriously opaque, but by paying close attention to the films, the film culture of which they were part, and their popular discursive reception we can at least speculate on the "structure of feeling" of a minimally specified but still real audience that engaged with these films.[60]

Conclusion

How then should we understand the history of shameless adaptation in Japanese cinema, made as if the other culture had "immigrated to Japan"? Cinema in Japan was always adaptation: *from* other media, *to* particular contexts, and *of* a foreign form. This chapter has been about that last kind of adaptation, of Hollywood cinema itself as a powerful cultural other. Surely there is something "punctual" about the late 1920s, just as Japanese film production was establishing its dominance, that makes adaptations of Hollywood cinema particularly pointed. But that concern extends throughout the studio period, even at the height of the "cultural war" against the West. For example, when Japanese critics debated what the new "People's Film" (*kokumin eiga*) should be in the early 1940s, the dominant understanding of the task became not how to produce an ethically and aesthetically Japanese cinema but how to replace *Gone with the Wind* for citizens of a pan-Asian empire that preferred Hollywood to Japanese film.[61] The most successful of the new People's Films were action films with clear references to foreign sources such as *Stagecoach* and *Olympia,* and even Ri Koran, the biggest of the wartime pan-Asian stars, followed a trail of celebrity blazed by Deanna Durbin in Japan.[62]

Even more explicitly, the "cinema of high economic growth" of the 1950s and 1960s both copied directly and commented on its relation to American cinema and culture. Toho's musical films starring pop singer celebrities such as Misora Hibari and Yukimura Izumi constantly tweaked the substitutability of these "imitation" (*monomane*) singers and their Western models. The stars' transmedia celebrity and the films' cultural promiscuity were vehicles for the thoroughgoing exploitation of a popular culture that at first glance seems to originate in the West. Even the song tunes were copied from foreign originals, leading Kawakita Kashiko, the doyenne of film exporters, to say she would love to show the film to foreigners as an example of Japanese cinema now—but it would be too expensive to clear the copyrights.[63] After the ANPO protests of 1960, those references became more cynical, even in the seemingly popcorn musical genre. For example, *Young Season* (*Wakai kisetsu,* 1962), the film adaptation of a TV drama series played almost entirely by pop singers, is an "industrial competition" (*sangyo kyoso*) musical comedy set among cosmetics companies competing for foreign technology to develop "drinkable foundation" (drink it and become white). The film dramatizes a post-ANPO resentment toward the "geopolitical incline" by dissolving it in absurd comedy at the same time as preserving a pointed critique of global racial politics. How much more knowing can the cinema be? Enough to also claim, in another throwaway line, that these days "the copy is better than the original." That cynicism is foregrounded, too, in the notorious "films without nationality" of the early 1960s, in particular the "wandering outlaw" series starring Kobayashi Akira. The films have a reputation as straight imitations of the western "singing cowboy" genre, but as Watanabe Takenobu astutely observes, the central character Taki Shinji carries the traumatic history of World War II along with his guitar, and the genre is characterized by an absurd overlay of western

genre conventions, including wide-open landscapes, and touristic Japanese locations where it is always "the day of the festival" when Taki comes to town.[64] The films are not stable allegories but ambivalent fantasies—of beating up hairy foreigners in bars, for example, while at the same time siding with the Ainu against predatory Japanese developers.

From copy to adaptation—the pleasure of these films seems something like the Benjaminian vernacular modernism analyzed by Miriam Hansen. Not simply a matter of reflexivity but a taking up of social reality in the mode of *play*.[65] Like Benjamin on the power of cinema, these films value playing at being American, though they never forget that the border exists. The films remind us that Americanization is more complicated than the language of "cultural flow" allows: they ambivalently engage in and expose the growth of an "Americanization without America," which challenges the reduction of cultural forms to economic interests. Regulatory barriers lead to a kind of "cultural quantum tunneling" in which particles of foreign films seen only by an educated, cinephile minority (including filmmakers) appear in popular Japanese cinema, despite barriers caused by quotas, subtitling, and cultural distance. Those regulations reduced the trade deficit, but they did not preserve a hermetically "Japanese" cultural zone. Instead, a large fraction of Japanese studio cinema is distinguished by a baroque fascination with its Western parallel—a fascination that extends to the explicitly nationalist gangster films of the 1960s and the countercultural porno-period films (clearly modeled on blaxploitation) of the 1970s. We cannot understand films, or the debates around them, without recognizing that dual orientation of Japanese film and film discourse: toward the authority of Western cinema *and* toward the project of making it "Japanese."

Vernacular cinema comes into being in acts of violent appropriation, and is not simply the result of cultural colonization. But the agency does not lie simply with creative reception either, even when conceptualized as labor-power: vernacularization leaves no layer unturned.[66] Tradition and the past become topics of debate within various modernities that cannot be disciplined solely by geography.[67] Writing the history of audiovisual adaptation, at least in the relatively successful capitalist modernization of East Asia, calls for a theory of transnational cinema in which geopolitical unevenness is measured by the specifics of regulation and institution, and actual textual figuration, as much as by the "logic" of late capital. Cinema is not simply "remade in Japan"—instead of indulging in horizontal wishful thinking we should consider how "facing up" to Hollywood engaged all the modes of transcultural mimesis.[68] From the introduction of cinema until the 1970s, cinema in Japan, even when it dominated the domestic box office, was haunted by foreign, especially American, films. That intertext was both a model and a threat—and an interpretive horizon. As the geopolitical incline levels out we risk losing sight of how cinema in Japan was a form of adaptation: not only from theater and literature but from something closely identified with the West into something more ambiguous that could split the difference between homage and parody, and sometimes even become an instrument of reflexive understanding.

Notes

1. See, for example, Hortense Powdermaker, *Hollywood: The Dream Factory* (Grosset & Dunlap, 1950) on fantasy; Ruth Vasey, *The World According to Hollywood, 1918–1939* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1997) on international trade; and of course Christian Metz, *The Imaginary Signifier* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982) on absent objects.

2. This was recognized early by Walter Benjamin in his famous article "The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technical Reproducibility," in *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings*, vol. 2 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005).

3. For the idea of heterotopia as an "other space" that juxtaposes incompatible spaces and incompatible dimensions, see Michel Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," *Diacritics* 16 (1986). Foucault's idea is valuable precisely because it is abstract and not formal: it is neither positive nor negative, not tied to a particular definition of medium, and points to the way that spaces of illusion can destabilize social life outside them in the way that I am describing here. Cinema is both heterotopic and heteronomic: it gives access to other spaces, but at the same time exerts power over the perceiving subject.

4. For some sophisticated examples, see the essays in Natasa Durovicova and Kathleen Newman, eds., *World Cinemas, Transnational Perspectives* (New York: Routledge, 2010).

5. The classic statement of the problem is Armand Mattelart's influential *How to Read Donald Duck: Imperialist Ideology in the Disney Comic* (New York: International General, 1975). See also Toby Miller, "Cinema Studies Doesn't Matter: Or, I Know What You Did Last Semester," in *Keyframes: Popular Cinema and Cultural Studies*, ed. Matthew Tinkcom and Amy Villarejo (London: Routledge, 2001). Aspects of the argument are echoed in Mette Hjort, "Themes of Nation," in *Cinema and Nation*, ed. Mette Hjort and Scott MacKenzie (London; New York: Routledge, 2000), and Yomota Inuhiko, *Ajia eiga no taishuteki sozoryoku* (Tokyo: Seidosha, 2003).

6. Yamamoto Kikuo, *Nihon eiga ni okeru gaikoku eiga no eikyo (The Influence of Foreign Film on Japanese Films)* (Tokyo: Waseda Daigaku Shuppanbu, 1983).

7. See Steven Crofts, "Reconceptualizing National Cinema/s," *Quarterly Review of Film and Video* 14, no. 3 (1993) for a rejection of Hollywood as the "Big Other." Against that rigidity, Thomas Elsaesser argues for the significance of foreign film to the constitution of a national cinema in *New German Cinema* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1989). In an essay full of spatial metaphors, one more at the margin: we should recognize a "non-commutative cultural distance" that makes Japan further from the United States than the United States is from Japan.

8. See, for example, Jenny Lau, *Multiple Modernities: Cinemas and Popular Media in Transcultural East Asia* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2003); Kinnea Shuk-Ting Yau, *Japanese and Hong Kong Film Industries: Understanding the Origins of East Asian Film Networks* (London; New York: Routledge, 2011); Dina Iordanova, *Cinema at the Periphery* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2010); Fredric Jameson, *A Singular Modernity: Essay on the Ontology of the Present* (London; New York: Verso, 2002); and Harry Harootunian, *Overcome by Modernity: History, Culture, and Community in Interwar Japan* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001).

9. For the critique of received opinion that is "agreeable to reason" see Charles Peirce, Collected Papers 2.166 (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1932)

10. Yamamoto, *Influence of Foreign Film,* 301. See also the cinema pamphlet for the Shinjuku Shochikukan (1935.01) for a description of Saito Torajiro's "artful nonsense."

11. Komatsu Hiroshi, "Some Characteristics of Japanese Cinema before WWI," in Arthur Nolletti Jr. and David Desser (Eds.) *Reframing Japanese Cinema: Authorship, Genre, History* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992).

12. See Yoshimoto Mitsuhiro, *Kurosawa: Film Studies and Japanese Cinema* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000), 417, for a brief description of Tachikawa (Tatsukawa) bunko. Critics have written of the close connection between Japanese cinema and theater, but in the early period the connection was stronger to lower forms such as *taishu engeki* (popular theater) and traveling kabuki, via the new form of *shinkokugeki* (an adaptation of *kengeki* [swordplay] scenes from popular theater) than directly to established kabuki, or the new theatrical forms of *shinpa,* or *shingeki.* See Okada Hiroshi, *Taishu geino shiryo shusei*, vol. 9 (Tokyo: San'ichi Shobo, 1982).

13. See the cinema pamphlet from the Teikokukan (1931.07.15) for Kido's proclamation. See also Chika Kinoshita, "Mise-en-scène of Desire: The Films of Mizoguchi Kenji" (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 2007), for a discussion of the relation between popular literature and Japanese cinema. One of the most prolific screenwriters at Shochiku, Kitamura Komatsu, also wrote many novels that were ostentatious with foreign things, and words.

14. I am developing an account of "transmedia exploitation" in my book project *Modernism, Materiality, and Transcultural Mimesis: New Japanese Cinemas, 1955–1964.* For a description of the media age, see William Gardner, *Advertising Tower* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006). The radio dramas that Mizoguchi Kenji and others directed after the introduction of radio broadcasting in 1925 would be another interesting, albeit later, intermedial site of adaptation.

15. See Michael Raine, "No Interpreter, Full Volume: The Sound Image as Cultural Modernity in Japan," (forthcoming). See also Edward Mack's groundbreaking *Manufacturing Modern Japanese Literature: Publishing, Prizes, and the Ascription of Literary Value* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010) for an approach to an institutional history of literature. I have found James Lastra, *Sound Technology and the American Cinema* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), and Steve Wurtzler, *Electric Sounds: Technological Change and the Rise of Corporate Mass Media* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), helpful in formulating these ideas. For a demonstration of the vertiginous intermedial play those developments made possible, see *Daigaku no wakadanna* [Young master goes to college] (director: Shimizu Hiroshi, 1933).

16. The Club cosmetics company was the most prolific advertiser, both in cinema pamphlets and through the ubiquitous "club toothpaste" illuminated sign in Shochiku films of the period.

17. Fukui Keiichi (*Eiga Hyoron,* June 1930). My thanks to Yuki Takinami for bringing this quotation to my attention.

18. David Bordwell, *Ozu and the Poetics of Cinema*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988) Noel Burch, *To the Distant Observer* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979).

19. See Yamamoto, *Nihon eiga ni okeru gaikoku eiga no eikyo*; Chiba Nobuo, *Ozu Yasujiro to nijusseiki* [Ozu Yasujiro and the twentieth century] (Tokyo: Kokusho Kankokai, 2003); Tanaka Masasumi, *Ozu Yasujiro no ho e* [In search of Ozu Yasujiro] (Tokyo: Misuzu Shobo, 2002); and *Ozu Yasujioro shuyu* [Travels around Ozu Yasujiro] (Tokyo: Bungei Shunju, 2003).

20. The idea of going beyond by going through is related to Harry Harootunian's idea that an alternative to "overcoming modernity" in prewar Japan by adopting an authoritarian cultural nationalism was an even closer embrace of that Western-associated culture: a state of being "overcome by modernity." See Harry Harootunian, *Overcome by Modernity* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000). See also Yuki Takinami, "Reflecting Hollywood: Mobility and Lightness in the Early Silent Films of Ozu Yasujiro, 1927–1933" (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 2012), for an extended discussion of the philosophical aspects of Ozu's relation to Hollywood. The idea of film as an "art form" in the sense of German art theory was strong in prewar Japan. Ozu and his circle (Noda Kogo and others) shared that interest in "pure" visual narration and the titleless film (for example, their praise for *Asphalt*), but what is striking about Ozu is his interest in what cinema could *do*. In my book project *The Culture of the Sound-Image in 1930s Japan,* I argue that Ozu responded to the specific configuration of expectations (in terms of narration, genre, and technology) in typically contrarian fashion, to produce a "medium specific intermediality" that aimed at a "new form of silent cinema."

21. Ozu Yasujiro, *Eiga no Tomo,* January 1931, quoted in Chiba Nobuo, *Ozu Yasujiro,* 84.

22. Inagaki Takao, *Chuo koron,* July 1936, 64.

23. "Crisis Time Japan" (*Hijoji Nippon*) was announced in 1932 after the "Manchurian Incident" and the assassination of Prime Minister Inukai. There was even a "Crisis Time Japan song" as part of a call on Japanese to give up their cosmopolitan ways and return to "Japanese spirit"—as in Tanizaki Jun'ichiro's *In Praise of Shadows,* 1933. See Peter High, *The Imperial Screen: Japanese Film Culture in the Fifteen Years' War, 1931–1945* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2003), 40–50 for background information on this period.

24. In Kyushu, at least, it was paired with another bucolic subject: *Paddy the Next Best Thing* (1933), starring Janet Gaynor.

25. For a discussion of "sound version" films see Raine, "No Interpreter, Full Volume." (forthcoming).

26. Kido describes seeing the sound film demonstration in New York in his autobiography *Nihon eigaden: eiga seishakusha no kiroku* [The Story of Japanese Cinema: Record of a Film Producer] (Tokyo: Bungei Shunju Shinsha, 1956), 69. Kido was instrumental in pushing Shochiku to invest in sound film by establishing a research group in which the Tsuchihashi brothers produced the first "made in Japan" sound recording system, and prided himself in inventing the term "part talkie" for films with just partial dialogue.

27. See *Eiga nenkan* [Film Yearbook], (Tokyo: Asahi shinbunsha, 1934), 287–289, for a list of films released through 1932 with dialogue or with music.

28. Itagaki Takao, *Chuo Koron,* 1936.07, (July 1936) 59.

29. That subtlety was the constant in critical discourse on Ozu from the early 1930s on: an artist working in a popular medium, creating scenes of such psychological subtlety that surely, said the critics, the audience would not notice. See for example the review of Ozu's *Mata au hi made* (lost) by Q (Tsumura Hideo) in *Asahi shinbun* 1932.11.28, p. 9: Ozu is like asparagus: "fine threads and a high flavor"!

30. See, for example, Kinnea Shuk-Ting Yau, *Japanese and Hong Kong Film Industries,* i–xxii, and Iordanova, *Cinema at the Periphery,* 1–19. In literature, see Karen Thornber, *Empire of Texts in Motion: Chinese, Korean, and Taiwanese Transculturations of Japanese Literature* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), although the book recognizes hierarchies within "contact nebulae" that are ignored by its publicists.

31. Kristin Thompson points out that Japan was almost unique in dominating the domestic market without overt political controls. She is correct that the vertical integration of the industry made that possible (along with strong discursive support for local production and the complexity of extracting value from "intellectual property" so far from the metropolitan center).

32. *Eiga nenkan* [Film Yearbook] (Asahi shinbunsha,1926), 76.

33. Ibid., 67.

34. Ibid., 1928–1929, 85.

35. Kozono Suenori, "Mukojima satsueijo no hoshin name ni hofu" [Policy and aspirations of the Mukojima studio], in *Kakushin seru Mukojima satsueijo* (Tokyo: Nihon katsudo shashin kabushiki kaisha, 1923). My thanks to Diane Lewis for bringing this pamphlet to my attention.

36. Komatsu Hiroshi, "The Foundation of Modernism: Japanese Cinema in the Year 1927," *Film History* 17, nos. 2/3 (2005), 363.

37. Itatsu Yuko, "Japan's Hollywood Boycott Movement of 1924," *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* 28, no. 3 (2008).

38. Aaron Gerow, *Visions of Japanese Modernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), 14.

39. Aaron Gerow, *Writing a Pure Cinema: Articulations of Early Japanese Film* (PhD diss., University of Iowa, 1996), 299–338, and Aaron Gerow, "Nation, Citizenship, Cinema," in *A Companion to the Anthropology of Japan*, ed. Jennifer Robertson (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2005), 408. For an analysis of "the people are missing" as the loss of constituency in Western radical cinema, see Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 2: The Time Image* (London: Athlone, 1989), 211.

40. Mitsuyo Wada-Marciano, *Nippon Modern: Japanese Cinema of the 1920s and 1930s* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2008), 125. Her argument that the middle-class film dovetails with Japanese cultural nationalism also questions the notion of "code-switching" between two "subject positions"—the subject of capitalist consumption and the subject of the militarist state—in Miriam Silverberg's *Erotic Grotesque Nonsense: The Mass Culture of Japanese Modern Times* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006).

41. Wada-Marciano, *Nippon Modern,* 124.

42. Iwasaki Akira, *Eiga to shihonshugi* (Tokyo: Oraisha, 1931), 91.

43. Gerow, *Visions of Japanese Modernity,* 14, 34,91, 97.

44. *Kamata* 1932.12, 63, 66.

45. Quoted in Yamamoto, *Influence of Foreign Film,* 428.

46. Ibid., quoted on 432–433.

47. Ibid., 432.

48. Ibid., 429–440.

49. Ibid., 436.

50. Fredric Jameson's famous periodization of postmodernity as the economic crisis brought on by the oil shocks, the falling rate of profit that Marx prophesied would doom capitalism, is perhaps better understood less as "late capitalism" than as a shift in the center of economic power from West to East. See Jameson, *Postmodernism, or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1991), xviii–xxii

51. See Thomas Guback, *The Film Industry in Post-war Western Europe: The Role of Euro-American Interaction in the Shaping of Economic Structures and Operations* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1969), and Thomas Guback, *Transnational*

Communication and Cultural Industries (Paris: UNESCO, 1982). Also the discussion in the UNESCO-sponsored *McBride Report* (Paris: UNESCO, 1980) of media concentration (pp. 96–99) and the need for a "new world information and communication order" (pp. 268–275); UNESCO, *Many Voices, One World: Towards a New More Just and More Efficient World Information and Communication Order* (Paris: UNESCO, 1980), and Frederick Wasser, "Is Hollywood America? The Trans-Nationalization of the American Film Industry," *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 12 (1995).

52. See Miriam Hansen, "The Mass Production of the Senses: Classical Cinema as Vernacular Modernism," in *Reinventing Film Studies*, ed. Christine Gledhill and Linda Williams, 332–350 (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000); Miriam Hansen, "Fallen Women, Rising Stars, New Horizons: Shanghai Silent Film as Vernacular Modernism," *Film Quarterly* 54, no. 1 (2000): 10–22; Miriam Hansen, "Room for Play: Benjamin's Gamble with the Cinema," *October* 109 (2004): 3–45; Miriam Hansen, "Vernacular Modernism: Tracking Cinema on a Global Scale," in *World Cinemas, Transnational Perspectives*, ed. Natasa Durovicova and Kathleen Newman (New York: Routledge, 2010).

53. Hansen, "Fallen Women," 19. See also Ackbar Abbas, *Hong Kong: Culture and the Politics of Disappearance*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997) 12, for the idea of "cultural translation."

54. Yamamoto, *Influence of Foreign Film,* 436.

55. Ibid., quoted on 436.

56. See Gunter Gebauer and Christof Wulf, *Mimesis* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996) for a magisterial overview of the complex intellectual history of the concept, including Aristotle's theory of learning that cannot be reduced to simple imitation. For mimesis as ontological re-presencing, see Jean-Pierre Vernant, "From the 'Presentification' of the Invisible to the Imitation of Appearance," and "The Birth of Images," in *Mortals and Immortals: Collected Essays* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991). My thanks to Mark Payne for pointing me toward Vernant. For dramatic parody see Froma I. Zeitlin, *Playing the Other: Gender and Society in Classical Greek Literature* (University of Chicago Press, 1996), 387.

57. See Michael Taussig, *Mimesis and Alterity* (New York: Routledge, 1992), xiii.

58. Ana Lopez, "Facing Up to Hollywood," in *Reinventing Film Studies* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000). The emphasis in the films and the criticism not on foreign ideas but on non-Japanese bodies and things (including Nipper, the RCA Victor dog), recalls the tactility of mimesis in Michael Taussig's *Mimesis and Alterity* (1992). And the potential for transcultural mimesis to open onto something like reflexive understanding is also anticipated in his Benjaminian hope that "mimetic excess provides access to understanding the unbearable truths of make-believe as foundation of an all-too-seriously serious reality, manipulated but also manipulatable" (p. 255).

59. See, for example, Ushihara Kiyohiko, *Eiga mangekyo* (Tokyo: Yumani shobo, 2006 [reprint of 1927 edition]), 25, 102, 189, 191, and Yamamoto Kajiro, *Katsudoya jitaden*, (Tokyo: Ozorasha, 1998) [reprint of 1972 edition], 317, as well as passing references in magazines from the period.

60. Raymond Williams introduced the idea of "structure of feeling" in his essay "Film and the Dramatic Tradition," in Raymond Williams and Michael Orrom. *Preface to Film* (London: Film Drama, 1954) and went on to employ it in more widely known works such as *The Long Revolution* (London, Chatto & Windus, 1961).

61. As Aoyama Yuichi wrote of the Shanghai exhibition space now controlled by Japan, "*The Loyal 47 Ronin* and *Battle at Kawanakajima* are no substitute for *Gone with the Wind*" ("Shin taisei natta Shanhai eigakai," *Nippon eiga* 1942.03, 96). He went on to criticize existing "continental films" such as *China Nights*: "These ridiculous films called Continental films, we can't even show to hairy foreigners [i.e., Westerners], never mind to Chinese. Continental films that work only in Japan? Continental films that are laughed at on the continent!"

62. The "classical music boom" in Japanese cinema after 1937 was triggered by the Deanna Durbin film *100 Men and a Girl* (*Orchestra Girl* in Japan). The film played at Toho's flagship Nichigeki cinema and drew crowds so large they blocked traffic, four years before Ri Koran's live show in the same theater, singing the same "Libiamo" song, sealed her star status by causing similar disruptions. As Hazumi Tsuneo wrote in *Eiga to minzoku* (1941), p. 262, no one watches American film anymore—except Chaplin and Durbin, of course.

63. Kawakita Nagamasa and Kawakita Kashiko, interviewed by Tanaka Jun'ichiro. "Yoroppa eigakai kinkyo arekore" in *Kinema junpo* 1957.2 (#168), reprinted in Kinema junposha, *Besuto ob Kinema Junpo 1950–1966,* 555.

64. Watanabe Takenobu, *Nikkatsu akushon no karei no sekai* (Tokyo: Miraisha, 2004), 122, 152.

65. Miriam Hansen, "Room for Play: Benjamin's Gamble with the Cinema," *October* 109 (2004): 3–45. See also Miriam Hansen. *Cinema and Experience: Siegfried Kracauer, Walter Benjamin, and Theodor W. Adorno* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011).

66. For an account of the labor power of reception see Toby Miller et al., Global Hollywood (BFI, 2001), and *Global Hollywood 2* (BFI, 2008).

67. See the discussion of various pertinent "-scapes" in Arjun Appadura, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), for a tentative loosening of the disciplinary ties of geography. For a naturalization of "regionalism" see Iordanova, *Cinema at the Periphery,* and Kinnea Shuk-Ting Yau, *Japanese and Hong Kong Film Industries.*

68. See Joseph J. Tobin, *Re-Made in Japan: Everyday Life and Consumer Taste in a Changing Society* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992), for this trope of remaking applied to Japanese adaptations of Western culture.

THE EDGE OF MONTAGE: A CASE OF MODERNISM/*MODANIZUMU* IN JAPANESE CINEMA

CHIKA KINOSHITA

GENEALOGY OF *MODANIZUMU*

"THE Speed Era," "Gonda Yasunosuke," "The Modern Girl," and "Nakai Masakazu and the Machine Aesthetics"—these are some of the subheadings of *Japanese Cinema and Modernism, 1920–1930* (*Nihon eiga to modanizumu 1920–1930*). In retrospect, this single volume, edited by film scholar Iwamoto Kenji in 1991, posed most of the central research questions that Japanese film studies would pursue in the subsequent two decades. The most pressing issues of the era can all be found in the Pure Film movement, film censorship, interwar mass culture, domestic melodrama, and changing gender roles. In other words, the almost self-evident and yet contested relationships between modernism/modernity and cinema in Japan lie at the very heart of our field. This chapter assumes the task of unraveling these ties by focusing on the Tokyo March (*Tokyo koshinkyoku*) phenomena, the well-known 1929 popular song and its accompanying media texts, particularly the film adaptation directed by Mizoguchi Kenji. Made at the time of multidimensional crisis in modern Japanese history, the Tokyo March texts went beyond mere emblems of *modan* (modern) or *modanizumu* (modernism), condensing the possibilities and limitations of Japanese modernity itself. This chapter thus zooms from the microscopic view to the big picture. Before going into detail, however, let us roughly sort out the major issues in *modanizumu*, particularly its relationship with the trinity of modernization, modernism, modernity.

The collection *Japanese Cinema and Modernism* both encapsulated and profited from the ambiguity of the term "modernism" (*modanizumu* in the phonetic script katakana) in Japanese. The connotations *modanizumu* carries do not neatly fit into the clearly defined and widely shared meaning of "modernism" as the heterogeneous but interconnected movements of arts and letters situated roughly between the late nineteenth century and the mid-twentieth century, characterized by rebellion against bourgeois values, self-reflexivity, and the foregrounding of the materiality of the medium, among others. To quote a passage from Iwamoto Kenji's introduction:

> The term *modanizumu* embraces slightly different values from *kindaishugi*. The latter includes the positive and negative poles at which European rationalism, be it critical thought or science, arrived; and we have been reflecting upon the negative pole for some time. In particular, "Overcoming the Modern" was already advocated in prewar Japan, carrying heavy issues like the state, ideology, and history with it. In contrast, "*modanizumu*" embraced an image that was lighter, coalesced with superficiality, brightness, and novelty. How did "*modanizumu*" as an image, rather than "*kindaishugi*" as an ideology, enter Japanese cinema?[1]

Here, Iwamoto places *modanizumu* in the realm of "images." In the paragraphs that follow, he goes on to identify two different but interrelated manifestations of *modanizumu* in film: the surface ephemera of mores and fashion and the shocks and sensations of "visual language."

Iwamoto's blithe celebration of the superficial and the transient in consumer capitalism and media culture must be framed within the historical context in which it was written. His idea was premised upon a shrewd separation of *modanizumu* from *kindaishugi*, the ideology of modernization that was characterized by industrialization, rationalization, and scientific progress modeled upon the West. In so doing, on the eve of the bursting of the bubble economy, Iwamoto clearly echoed the discourse on postmodern Japan in the 1980s: Japan as an empire of the surface play of signifiers, utopia/dystopia after the end of history.

In effect, in the 1980s, Japanese scholarship on interwar cultural production and consumption emerged in a variety of disciplines. This emergence was clearly conditioned by a heightened interest in contemporary consumer culture and urbanism in megalopolis. Economic historian Takemura Tamio opened the decade by casting new light on the Taisho era (1912–1925) as the formative period of mass consumer culture in Japan.[2] In 1982, sociologist Minami Hiroshi edited an essay collection titled *Studies on Japanese Modernism* (*Nihon modanizumu no kenkyu*). In his introduction, Minami offered a succinct periodization of Japanese modernism/*modanizumu* that spanned from the early 1920s to 1937, the year the government ordered the dance halls to close. Minami called *modanizumu* a "modernization phenomena particular to Japan" (*tokushu Nihon teki na kindaika gensho*) that culminated in the 1930s. Labeling it "erotic, grotesque, nonsense," he situated it between the two official waves of modernization: civilization and enlightenment in Meiji and Americanization under the Allied occupation.[3]

Adopting the understanding of *modanizumu* as a response to the transformation of social mores and fashion in interwar Japan, literary critic Unno Hiroshi wrote a vastly influential study of the representation of Tokyo in literature of the 1920s. Unno's *Tokyo the Modern City* was certainly a pioneer: it shed light on then-obscure works of literary modernism, such as Kawabata Yasunari's *The Scarlet Gang of Asakusa* and Hagiwara Kyoshiro's poetry and put them side by side with journalistic reportage, film, and advertisement. Yet, *Tokyo the Modern City* recoiled from completely identifying *modanizumu* with the historical avant-garde and/or high modernism in the West. Commenting on Dadaist Yoshiyuki Eisuke's style, Unno stated:

> The fancy rhetoric and speedy style as seen in phrases such as "the skirt has revolving windows" and "constructing the cityscape of shoes" characterize *modanizumu*. Its impressionistic descriptions attempt to grasp the instant modality of details and thereby spotlight those things which were hitherto deemed unworthy of literary attention, such as a piece of wastepaper swirling on the street. *Modanizumu* valorizes the ephemeral and transient superficiality of the city. *Modanizumu* is fragmentary, incoherent, and decadent....*Modanizumu* tries to break itself free from old values. It is iconoclastic, to be sure, and yet does not attempt to create new values, as the Proletarian School does. Rather, it enjoys a moment of freedom that follows the loss of values. It affirms phenomena, the surface, and the present, suspending the value judgment.[4]

Unno's insistence on the surface and mistrust of political opposition bespeak their own historicity. In the postmodern Japan of the 1980s, *modanizumu* was discovered as an origin of "now," the constantly renewing present in the consumer culture of late capitalism, not as the dead-serious *kindaishugi*, the obsolete and passé ideology of modernization. In this sense, *modanizumu* had an affinity with the vision of the decadent and playful Edo as cultural storehouse, discovered and celebrated in the postmodern 1980s.[5]

Indeed, it is rather odd that *modanizumu*, a phonetic transcription of "modernism," was so sharply separated from modernization and political and aesthetic avant-gardes and aligned with the postmodern, or even the pre-modern. Yet, as Suzuki Sadami points out in his essay that maps out the history of reception and appropriation of both *kindaishugi* and modernism, modernism itself, whether in the West, in Japan, or in other parts of the globe, has always been a critique of the modern condition. Thus, modernism has embraced elements of antimodernity or "overcoming modernity." Suzuki highlights how heterogeneous intellectual traditions in Japan, from Confucianism to medieval aesthetics, worked as receptacles of modern thought imported from the West, and at the same time were reconstructed and mobilized to question and challenge modernity. In other words, modernism structurally requires its other. Suzuki's approach is in line with the recent critical endeavors to reexamine alternative, colonial and/or non-Western modernities as confluent, hybrid, and reciprocal, if asymmetrical. In this light, the looser understanding of *modanizumu* as a social, everyday, and fashion plural, rather than the strict definition of high modernism, reemerges with use value.

Accelerated globalization in the twenty-first century renewed the interest in global modernity. As Andreas Huyssen argues, on one hand, colonialism and imperialism have been recognized as not merely contemporary with, but also constitutive of, the historical avant-garde, as the modernist discovery and use of the primitive or presentational in non-Western cultures most saliently demonstrate. On the other hand, the simplistic dichotomies of the West and East (or the rest), center and periphery, global and local, and high and low have been undermined by their acute attention to complex hierarchies and temporarities within specific local contexts of cultural production/consumption.[6]

It was within this emerging debate on alternative modernities that the late Miriam Hansen proposed the term "vernacular modernism." It engages with the debate at two separate but interrelated levels: the issues of high modernism and mass culture and the plural relationships between Hollywood and alternative modernities, such as China and Japan. Hansen argues that the study of modernism should encompass the ephemera of modernity such as fashion, advertisement, and cinema, because they articulated and mediated industrial capitalism's assault on the human sensoria, just as high-modernist arts did.[7] Moreover, since Hollywood cinema was mass-produced by modern industry and mass-consumed in culturally diverse audiences in the United States, it had the possibility of providing the vernacular idiom, by which each local audience around the world could respond to the industrial-capitalist modernity and modernization.[8] This possibility has marked implications for the study of East Asian modernities in the interwar period. Both in China and Japan, audiences and film-makers appropriated Hollywood cinema to respond to the rapidly changing society, in which traditional and modern, rural and urban, and rich and poor were juxtaposed, overlapped, and often violently conflicted with each other.[9] Hansen's concept has enabled the students of East Asian cinemas to discuss the interrelations between Hollywood and local practice without drawing upon the now-dirty word "influence."

Aaron Gerow's warning that reliance on the concept of "appropriation" as cultural translation can unwittingly reinforce Hollywood cinema's central position must be taken seriously.[10] This chapter responds to Gerow's remark in two ways: First, it retains the terms "appropriation" and "vernacular" despite Gerow's oppositions, precisely as a reminder of the asymmetrical power relations between Hollywood and local film practice, in this case Japanese cinema. Second, it draws upon the concept of "montage"—film idiom derived from a French word that refers to a Soviet theorization of the classical Hollywood paradigm—to eschew the dyadic relationship between Hollywood and its "alternative." In effect, as this chapter will demonstrate, montage encapsulates multiple facets of modernity, as it connects and juxtaposes Americanism and communism as mass culture, and high modernism and melodrama as articulations of sensory trauma in modernity.

Hansen's idea allows us to look at *modanizumu* anew: as a conceptual tool that articulates the relationships between politics and everyday life in Japan, as the aestheticization of politics and the politicization of aesthetics. In the oft-quoted ending of his essay "The Work of Art in Its Age of Technological Reproducibility," Walter Benjamin writes:

> "*Fiat ars—pereat mundus* [Let art flourish—and the world pass away]" says fascism, expecting from war, as Marinetti admits, the artistic gratification of a sense perception

altered by technology.... Its [mankind's] self-alienation has reached the point where it can experience its own annihilation as a supreme aesthetic pleasure. Such is the aestheticizing of politics, as practiced by fascism. Communism replies by politicizing art.[11]

As "aesthetics" refers to the study of the senses and body, the surface of everyday life and mass culture on which *modanizumu* flourished was none other than the battlefield where fascism and communism competed with each other, seeking to manage, take advantage of, or undo the sensory alienation in modernity.[12]

It is a legitimate question as to whether sensory alienation can actually generate stylistic features like montage.[13] In response, this chapter introduces historical discourse as a mediating ground between montage and modernity, rather than establishing a causal relationship between the mechanized workplace and montage through physiological research. As I will demonstrate, from the 1920s to the 1930s, many people, including influential social critics and filmmakers, believed that film had some profound affinity with modernity, and therefore considered it most suitable for articulating modern conditions, singling out montage as its quintessential device. Whether modernity actually changed the human nervous system is irrelevant; in the sphere of cultural representations, many believed, talked about, and practiced the connection between film and modernity.

Japanese Modernity as Montage

"Tokyo koshinkyoku" ("Tokyo March," 1929)

Lyrics: Saijo Yaso
Composer: Nakajima Shinpei

Willows of Ginza make me nostalgic.
Who knows that frivolous woman?
We dance to jazz, drinking liquor all night long.
Morning rain feels like a dancer's tears.

The Maru Building is for lovers. In that window
Someone writes a letter in tears.
During rush hour he picked up a rose.
He keeps it in memory of that girl.

Love makes the large Tokyo small.
We have a secret date in chic Asakusa.
At the stop you take the subway, I take the bus.
It's hard to stop love, though.

Shall we go to movies, or to a café?
Or, shall we run away by the Odakyu line?
Shinjuku has changed. Even the moon of Musashino
Rises over the roofs of department stores.[14]

The song "Tokyo March" has been seen as the epitome of Japanese modernity. Miriam Silverberg succinctly describes its characteristics: "The original hit ["Tokyo March"] had celebrated the beat of the urban culture of Tokyo. In it, Saijo's march tempo referred to the rhythms of jazz, the pleasures of sipping on café liqueurs, and the 'rush hour' motions of subway and bus."[15] Lyricist Saijo himself has offered more cynical a commentary than Silverberg: " 'Tokyo March' is a jazzy satire of the life of the frivolous contemporary city dwellers dancing wildly under an irrationally swelled economy."[16] Musically neither jazz nor a march, "Tokyo March" seems to be a phantasmagoria of phantasmagoria—a mere signifier of flourishing mass culture.[17]

"Tokyo March" was a phenomenon that found expression in the media of serial novels, the phonograph, radio, and cinema.[18] From June 1928 to October 1929, the popular novelist Kikuchi Kan (1888–1948) serialized *Tokyo koshinkyoku* (Tokyo march) in *Kingu* (King), the illustrated monthly with a readership of more than 700,000 that typified the flourishing mass culture in late-1920s Japan. Even while the novel was still being serialized, other mass culture forms based upon the novel emerged. On April 30, 1929, Victor Japan released a record of the song "Tokyo March," written by Saijo, the most renowned lyricist in prewar Japan, set to a tune composed by the hit maker Nakayama Shinpei. Then JOBK (the call letters for the public radio station in Osaka) broadcast the radio drama *Tokyo March* on May 27, 1929. Finally, on May 31, 1929, the film studio Nikkatsu released *Tokyo March*, directed by Mizoguchi Kenji, which was based on Kikuchi's novel and incorporated the song. Produced at the dawn of sound cinema in Japanese film culture (the Hollywood talkie had just reached the Japanese screen on May 9, 1929), the Mizoguchi film was initially planned to be a "talking film" (*hassei eiga*) but was eventually released as a silent.[19] The song and the film helped each other become phenomenal commercial successes.[20]

The story of Kikuchi's novel, set in contemporary Tokyo, was an unabashed melodrama. Michiyo, a sweet and beautiful orphan who works as a *joko* (female factory worker), becomes a geisha to help her unemployed uncle's family. The wealthy entrepreneur Fujimoto persistently woos her, trying to make her his mistress, while Fujimoto's son Yoshiki also falls in love with and proposes to her. The awful truth, however, which eventually shatters both father and son, is that Michiyo is Fujimoto's illegitimate daughter by a geisha, making her Yoshiki's half sister! Fujimoto also has a legitimate daughter, Sayuri, and another thread of the narrative revolves around this "ultra modern girl" (*cho modan garu*),[21] who takes pleasure in conquering all of the society men with her beauty and intelligence.

The novel *Tokyo March* opens with the following passage: "Tokyo: the largest modern city in Asia, where Japan's culture, education, arts—and vice and corruption—are concentrated."[22] Mizoguchi's film faithfully reproduces this phrase as the first title, and judging from the two surviving shortened versions of the film and the published film script, it by and large follows Kikuchi's parallel story lines of the two sisters in urban modernity throughout the film. Even though Saijo claimed that he and Nakajima wrote the song in a train ride without ever having read Kikuchi's novel,[23] his lyrics roughly embodied Kikuchi's view of the megalopolis, showcasing the glamour and pathos of Tokyo life. The

intermedial package, Tokyo March, was a palatable commodity and masterminded by the major players in the culture industry, including Kikuchi Kan, Kodansha (the publisher of *King*), Victor Japan, Saijo, Nakayama Shinpei, Nikkatsu, and Mizoguchi. Yet, in 1929, a cultural artifact also needed to be "edgy" (尖端的, *sentanteki*) if it really wanted to sell well. The edge (*sentan*), in contemporary jargon, signified political and aesthetic avant-gardism.

The valorization and commodification of "edginess" bear significant historical markers. As Andrew Gordon has persuasively argued in his *Labor and Imperial Democracy in Prewar Japan*, 1929–1931 marked a turning point in prewar Japanese history.[24] I locate the Tokyo March phenomena within this brief period—a period of multidimensional crisis, not necessarily directly caused, but certainly overdetermined by the ramifications of the global depression. This period of crisis ended with Japan's invasion of China, starting in September 1931, and the collapse of the parliamentary government in the hands of right-wing terrorists in May 1932. Gordon shows that strong popular demands for political participation and democracy, which were intimately tied to nationalism grounded on the emperor system and colonialist expansion, resulted in the establishment of a parliamentary government in 1924. Universal manhood suffrage was promulgated in 1925, and labor organization, unionization, socialist/anarchist/communist thoughts gradually took root in working-class culture throughout the 1920s, forming what Gordon calls the dispute culture. During the depression, however, bankruptcies, the closure of shops and factories, and an unprecedented number of labor disputes, most of which were prolonged, bitter, and ended in labor defeat, created a sense of crisis, particularly among bureaucrats and political and economic elites. The ongoing social changes enhanced this sense of crisis, particularly in terms of gender roles and sexual mores, which were epitomized by the figure of the modern girl (*moga*). The crisis intensified political polarization between left and right, eventually foreclosing the possibilities of negotiation and compromise.[25]

A close look at contemporary mass cultural artifacts including film texts, however, suggests that the crisis also produced an ephemeral carnivalesque moment, in which everything—alliances across party lines, genuinely revolutionary *and* popular arts, and perhaps a revolution—seemed possible. The concept of montage, introduced to Japan in 1928–1931, played a central role in this moment, connecting different social spheres and media and giving an aesthetic and political edge to mass-cultural forms. The carnivalesque moment of aesthetics and politics in Japan was short-lived, as is any such moment. Mizoguchi is said to have included a dynamic montage sequence, inspired by Pudovkin's *Storm over Asia* (1928), in his imperialist adventure/espionage film *Manmo Teikoku no reimei* (The dawn of the Manchu-Mongolian empire), shot on location in Manchuria in 1931.[26] In the mid-1930s, montage theory stimulated scholars and critics such as Terada Torahiko and Imamura Taihei, resulting in fine, if culturally nationalist, essays analyzing and celebrating the visual narration of Japanese hand scrolls (*emakimono*) as montage.[27] These two cases of the later "appropriation" of montage theory testify that montage has no intrinsic political signification. Yet this chapter highlights how this connection was brilliantly forged, hoping to suggest the possible

implications of political montage on the human senses within a broader framework than that of Marxism as a historically specific theoretical and activist movement occurring around 1930.

Berlin/Tokyo: Symphony and a Little Song

The specter of communism haunted the seemingly harmless lyrics of "Tokyo March." According to his autobiography, Saijo at first wrote the first two lines of the final verse differently. The initial version was "A Marx boy with long hair holds *Red Love*[28] as usual." This sentence was withdrawn upon a Victor Japan executive's suggestion for fear of the censor, and Saijo revised it to the existing version.[29] As has been often noted, reading *Capital* or *Red Love* and having long hair and a *rupashka* shirt was the coolest thing to do in 1929 Japan, although the police's torture chamber and maybe even the scaffold awaited those who took the trend too seriously. The censored passage was more Saijo's cynical gesture of edginess than an expression of sympathy.

The revised version, however, did not entirely succeed in repressing the specter. Perhaps the specter of "Tokyo March" was not that of communism, but a different type of specter that nonetheless was a symptom of the same sociopolitical condition that fostered the emergent interest in communism: anonymity and homelessness in the metropolis and the everyday life of white-collar workers, in which both work and entertainment were produced by the same machinery of industrial capitalism.[30] It is highly significant that the first two verses of the song depict ephemeral contacts and chance encounters between strangers in public space. In the last two verses, illicit relationships take advantage of anonymity in a big city. *Moga* and *mobo* (modern boys) in a dance hall or café, or salarymen at work in the Maru Building, were interchangeable, like mass-produced commodities. They exchanged glances and made love, not because of destiny, but because of contingency. This is a song that might well have accompanied King Vidor's *The Crowd* (1928), Curt and Robert Siodmak's *People on Sunday* (*Menschen am Sonntag*, written by Billy Wilder, 1930), and above all, Walter Ruttmann's *Berlin: Symphony of a Big City* (1927).

Let us investigate the language of the lyrics. The first three verses generate an impression of kaleidoscopic montage or juxtaposition of snapshots of city life, by constantly shifting the subject position through which an event is depicted. Given that the Japanese original lacks the first person singular and plural nouns in the first verse, the subject-object relationship of the depiction becomes further blurred. Even though it might not be entirely impossible to reduce the last three verses into a linear narrative of a boy-meets-girl story ("he meets a girl in the train, picks up a rose she drops, and writes her a letter at work; then, they have a rendezvous in Asakusa and fantasize about eloping in Shinjuku"), multiple locations and perspectives accentuate spatial juxtaposition

rather than temporal linearity. Thus, Saijo's lyrics construct surface aesthetics tinged by consciously cheap sentimentality.

Beneath this surface, however, opens up an abyss, indicated by the phrase "Shall we run away on the Odakyu line?" Because the preceding verses do not explicate the couple's situation, the sudden proposal to elope, especially when put in the same paradigmatic category as going for movies or to cafés, sounds shockingly lighthearted, or at best impulsive. The modernity of the lyrics lies not only in the name of the newly opened commuter train from and to the suburbs, but also in this surge of the desire to escape from the surface monotony of everyday life in the city. This monotony points to an abyss created by anonymity, homelessness, and the complete interchangeability of persons. The song describes a specifically modern elopement, completely different by nature from that of destined lovers dramatized in the Tokugawa doll theater.

This aspect of "Tokyo March" not only struck a chord with the listeners/consumers but also got on the authorities' nerves. Teishinsho (the Ministry of Communications) abruptly banned the radio broadcasting of the song performance scheduled on June 15, 1929.[31] The ministry official responsible for the banning explained, "Jazz in itself was all right. But we reached the decision to ban the song because the lyrics were somehow improper. [If the medium is film], that is OK. Only those who want to watch the film go there; but this is radio. It is really a problem to expose the upright and innocent youth to the lyrics that talk about a rendezvous in Asakusa and elopement on the Odakyu."[32]

This self-consciously superficial, decadent song that condensed the characteristics of *modanizumu* was not merely a "theme song" of Mizoguchi's film version, but was deeply integrated into its texture through the exhibition practice called *kouta eiga*. *Kouta eiga*, directly translated as "little song film," refers to silent films featuring popular songs.[33] In little song films in 1929, somewhere around the time when the genre had reached its maturity, a professional singer gave a live performance of the song as the image track played more or less like a music video, with the lyrics superimposed on the image in the manner of karaoke. For the film *Tokyo March*, Nikkatsu held a special preview at the Hinode Newspaper Company Hall in Kyoto on May 24, 1929, prior to its nationwide release. At the preview, the singer Kawahara Setsuko's live performance of the song was highlighted as one of the main attractions.[34] Film critic Iijima Tadashi noted that Musashinokan had a "dancer" (*odoriko*) sing the little song as prologue at the screening of *Tokyo March*.[35]

While no print of the complete version of the film *Tokyo March* survives, the existing two shortened versions, both around twenty minutes, partially preserve what must have been the little song sequence.[36] Furthermore, the shooting script by Kimura Chieo was published in the film journal *Eiga chisihi* right after the film's release. To quote the opening sequence:

> A train comes up on an elevated rail
> (An oblique bird's-eye-view from a place around the Yurakucho railroad bridge captures a view of the Shinbashi station.)
> —Which overlaps with—

The sky (blank)
(The following title appears, superimposed on the sky:)
Title
"Tokyo: the largest modern city in Asia, in which Japan's culture, education, arts—and vice and corruption—are concentrated."
After the above title disappears, the sky remains there briefly. (Then, P.V.P. [alphabets in original, unidentifiable abbreviation])
A bird's-eye-view of the main street
The camera (placed on the roof of the Yurakucho Building) pans from Mitsukoshi [a department store], through Nihonbashi, Kyobashi, and Ginza, and stops around the Shinbashi station.
—Which overlaps with—
A traveling shot either from Suidobashi to Ochanomizu or from Ochanomizu to Manseibashi
(A panoramic view from the window of the Metropolitan Train [Shoden])
A fountain in a large park (surrounded by flower gardens)
—Which overlaps with—
(Effects of the same movement)
A public faucet in a back alley (against the background of garbage cans or diapers hung to dry)
—Which overlaps with—
A Persian cat lying on fur rug licks milk in a sunny parlor.
—Which overlaps with—
(The same movement)
A carriage horse drinks water at the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.
An extremely long shot of Ginza streets (a bird's-eye-view from the Daiichi Sogo Building)
The first verse of "Tokyo March" starts overlapping.
—Which overlaps with—
A closer view of Ginza streets (a forward traveling shot taken from an automobile)
Feet, feet, and feet walking on the pavement
(Use the pavement in the Riken laboratories.)
The first verse of "Tokyo March" ends.
—Which overlaps with—
The Maru Building
(Effects of the silhouette taken from the pavement around the Mitsubishi Village [the blocks in which the office buildings belonging to the Mitsubishi Zaibatsu were concentrated])
The song's second verse starts overlapping.
—Which overlaps with—
A glimpse of rush hours in front of the Tokyo station
A triple superimposition of
—A crowd of office workers coming out of the station
—Passengers bustling, getting on and off a train
—Getting on and off a bus
The song's second verse ends.
The Arakawa factory district viewed from the Arakawa drainage canal (the skyline of chimneys sticking out like a forest)

The song's third verse starts overlapping.
—Which overlaps with—
The Sumida River reflecting the setting sun (in backlight capturing the Eitai Bridge)
—Which overlaps with—
The subway rushing forward
—Which overlaps with—
The Goddess of Mercy of Asakusa (effects of the roof from a low angle)
—Which overlaps with—
Illuminations of the Ikenohata 6th Quarter
—Which overlaps with—
The engine belt is vigorously revolving.
—Which overlaps with—
A female factory worker [*joko*] is working hard with types.
It's Michiyo (medium close-up).
Title
Michiyo has to work a night shift, putting her exhausted body together.
Michiyo looks up, fixing loose hair.
The soot-covered lamp of the factory
—Which overlaps with—
A large chandelier in the dance hall of the Imperial Hotel
—Which overlaps with—
Champagne glasses
—Which quickly overlaps with—
The face of a gaudy woman putting lipstick on
—Which quickly overlaps with—
Dancing foot, foot, foot (Bust [English in original, which probably means medium close-up])
—Which quickly overlaps with—
The dance hall (full view)
(Tapes, jumbled, fall flamboyantly)
—Which quickly overlaps with—
Men and women dance merrily
—Which quickly overlaps with—
Sayuri and Matsunami Nobuo come out of the dancing crowd of men and women[37]

Following the city symphony format, the *Tokyo March* opening orchestrates documentary footage of Tokyo, with the first three verses of the song superimposed, joining different fragments of city life together by means of visual or semantic association. It clearly shows the impact of Ruttmann's *Berlin: Symphony of a Big City* (1927). Iwasaki Akira, a German-speaking Marxist film critic, introduced the Ruttmann film to Japanese film culture with fanfare as soon as it came out in Weimar Germany.[38] The film was eventually released at Hogakuza in September 1928. *Tokyo March*'s phantom ride from the automobile was designed similar to *Berlin*, and we continue to such scenes in existing versions. The crowd on the pavement (Figure 6.2), the Maru Building (Figure 6.3), and the Asakusa street scene also survive (Figure 6.4).

Modernist poet and film critic Kitagawa Fuyuhiko brilliantly commented on this city symphony sequence in a 1929 article. Kitagawa started by pointing to the

FIGURE 6.1 Phantom ride from an automobile, *Tokyo March*.

similarity between *Berlin* and the opening sequences of three recent Japanese films, including *Tokyo March*, "in descriptions of the machine, the engine, the crowd, public transportation, architecture, speed, and money."[39] He lauded *Berlin* as follows: "This is the camera. Nothing other than the camera could represent a modern, capitalist metropolis like this. Indeed, because the camera is a product of a scientific

FIGURE 6.2 The pavement during in the rush hour, *Tokyo March*.

FIGURE 6.3 The Maru Building, *Tokyo March*.

civilization, it brings its ability to full when directed toward a scientific civilization."[40] Moreover, Kitagawa refused to censure the Japanese filmmakers for imitating the German filmmaker. He argued: "To the contrary, I consider that capitalism has ceased to make any marked difference between the physiognomy [*sobo*] of Berlin and that of Tokyo; in other words, to represent these two metropolises that look like each

FIGURE 6.4 A busy street in Asakusa, *Tokyo March*.

other, the filmmakers were naturally compelled to have recourse to similar styles."[41] Both in Tokyo and Berlin, the camera's eye is most suited to registering speed and motion—industrial-capitalist modernity's assault on the human sensoria from which it was born.

Although to this day *Berlin* maintains high critical acclaim precisely because of this surface inscription of industrial modernity, the same characteristics triggered skepticism about its politics among perceptive contemporary critics. Siegfried Kracauer, in his *Frankfurter Zeitung* film review, wrote:

> But does it convey the reality of Berlin? No: it is just as blind to reality as any other feature film, and this is due to its lack of a political stance. Instead of penetrating its enormous object in a way that would betray a true understanding of its social, economic, and political structure, and instead of observing it with human concern or even tackling it from a particular vantage point in order to resolutely take it apart, Ruttmann leaves the thousands of details unconnected, one next to the other, inserting at most some arbitrarily conceived transitions that are meaningless.[42]

I have not discovered any Japanese translation of this review in contemporary film journals. Nevertheless, the *Tokyo March* scriptwriter Kimura's comment on *Berlin* sounds a bit like Kracauer. Kimura, a great admirer of Ruttmann and Karl Myer (script), worries that, as *Berlin* lacks clarity of expressions, the filmmakers' "subtle" (English in original) intentions might well escape undiscerning viewers. By clarity (*meikakusa/meiryosa*), Kimura seems to mean ideological explicitness. He states: "Since no clear ideology appears from the morning through the night, the film [*Berlin*] clearly falls into the 'unreliability of a non-ideological person' [*mushisosha no tayorinasa*]."[43] In other words, Kimura also found Ruttmann's *Berlin* lacking in "a political stance" or "a particular vantage point." Kimura-Mizoguchi's little song film *Tokyo March* should be taken seriously as explicit and unsubtle proletariatization—politicalization and popularization—of Ruttmann's symphony.

In Kimura's published script, the overt juxtaposition and comparison of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat run through the song sequence, aggressively combining documentary footage and staged shots.[44] For example, the Persian cat on a fur rug is juxtaposed and thereby contrasted with the horse at an anti-cruelty society. Kimura-Mizoguchi obviously owes Ruttmann for this idea. Both animals engage in the same movement of licking, making the effect of montage even clearer. Yet, this sort of juxtaposition continues in the narrative sequence that emphasizes the disparity between Michiyo's life and Sayuri's, overtly creating a lurid contrast between rich and poor through the images of silk stockings and well-worn socks, and between the chandelier at the Imperial Hotel and the sooty lamp at the factory. Thus, whereas in the Ruttmann film, as Nora L. Alter points out, the use of animals leads to class division being "generalized as a law of nature,"[45] Mizoguchi and Kimura insist on sociopolitical dimensions and thereby take an unmistakable ideological stance. Kracauer, if he had a chance to see it, might have chided this montage for turning social reality into a

fashionable film idiom; yet, within the historical and film-historical contexts of 1929 Japan, the style and fashion themselves were highly politicized through links to Soviet montage theory.

Moscow/Tokyo

It is significant that Kimura's essay was published right next to Iwasaki Akira's translation of Semyon Timoshenko's *The Art of the Cinema: The Montage of Films* (1926) in the November 1, 1928, issue of *Kinema junpo*. Iwasaki has been credited with introducing the term "montage" in this translation. Iwasaki, then an avid student of aesthetic and political thought, translated the Timoshenko booklet from a German translation titled *Filmkunst und Filmshnitt*, renamed it *Eiga geijutsu to kattingu* (Film art and cutting), and serialized it from March 1928 to December of the same year. In the first serialization, Iwasaki carefully used both katakana and the alphabet in translating montage in this passage: "In the artistic history of film, it is common to regard D. [W.] Griffith as the pioneer, who introduced the close-up and construction specific to film, namely montage."[46] Yet, Iwasaki shied away from embellishing the title page with this unfamiliar foreign word. He added a translator's note to chapter 2, "Montage of the Cinema: The Cognitive Economy" (Eiga no montaju: Ninshiki no keizai), in which he expressed the following sober judgment: "It is impossible to find the right translation for the word montage. Although the attentive reader of this essay will understand its precise meaning, I can say that it amounts to the English word 'cutting'—in its larger meaning."[47]

Iwasaki was technically right. Montage, derived from the French verb *monter* (to assemble, put up, mount, and edit), could simply mean cutting and editing largely in the sense of the classical Hollywood paradigm. Yet, the attraction of montage at the time resided in its nebulousness, which effectively facilitated the concept's appropriation by aesthetic and political avant-gardes across media and cultural and national boundaries.

David Bordwell singles out the "principles of montage" in his article on the close relationship between montage cinema and other modernist arts in the 1920s Soviet Union: "The fundamental principles—assemblage of heterogeneous parts, juxtaposition of fragments, the demand for the audience to make conceptual connections, in all a radically new relation among parts of a whole—seem transferable to drama, music, literature, painting, and sculpture."[48] These principles were widely adapted and practiced in modernist artistic production in the 1920s across the world. Eugene Lunn lists "simultaneity, juxtaposition, or montage" as one of the common aspects of modernist art projects between 1880 and 1930: "In much modernist art, narrative or temporal structure is weakened, or even disappears in favor of an aesthetic ordering based on synchronicity, the logic of metaphor, or what is sometimes referred to as spatial form."[49] Yokomitsu Riichi's mid-1920s work, or Murayama Tomoyoshi and Mavo's collage, testifies that the principles of montage had been instilled into literary and fine arts modernism in Japan prior to the introduction of montage theory in 1928–1929; they were,

however, not called montage (*montaju*). The term "montage" provided Japanese film culture, modernist arts, and Marxist activism with a protocol, through which they could directly connect with one another.

Marxist and left-leaning critics, such as Iwasaki Akira, brought montage from the dream factory of communism primarily *via* translations in Western European languages, with the Russian-speaking Fukuro Ippei being a notable exception. Enthusiastically received in the climate of proletarian art movements, montage bore a heavily political significance.[50] Proletarian art movements took two seemingly contradictory paths in the arena of filmmaking in Japan. On one hand, proletarian activism emerged in the form of amateur filmmaking. The film unit of the agitprop "Trunk Theater" joined union workers on strike, filming them with Pathé Baby and projecting the 9.5 mm film for them in 1928; in the same year, Sasa Genju published a manifesto for this sort of activism titled "Camera—Toy/Weapon" in *Senki* (Battle flag), calling for film fans to get out of the study and bourgeois movie theaters and into the streets. In February 1929, Nippon Puroretaria Eiga Domei (Proletarian Film League of Japan), better known as "Prokino," was formed as part of Nippona Artista Proleta Federacio (NAPF, or All Japan Federation of Proletarian Arts).[51] On the other hand, *keiko eiga* (tendency films), that is, films produced within the capitalist studio system with subject themes that showed a strong "tendency" or slant (*keiko*) toward leftist politics, suddenly blossomed. These included such films as Uchida Tomu's *Ikeru ningyo* (A living doll, 1929; no extant print), Ito Daisuke's *Zanjin zangaken* (which literally means "The sword that chops people and horses," 1929), and Suzuki Jukichi's *Nani ga kanojo o so saseta ka* (*What Made Her Do What She Did?* 1930). Mizoguchi's *Tokyo March* and *Hometown* should be understood as tendency films together with his legendary (lost) milestone of the genre, *Tokai kokyogaku* (*Metropolitan Symphony*, 1929).

Proletarian filmmaking and the introduction of Soviet montage contributed to each other's rapid success. The prelude to the Soviet film craze probably dates back to August 1926 when Hata Toyokichi, at the time living in Berlin as a businessman, published a short review of *Battleship Potemkin* in the bourgeois monthly *Bungei shunju*.[52] In March 1927, Marxist literary critic Kurahara Korehito published a Moscow report focusing on the film in *Kinema junpo*.[53] While Kurahara's report itself did not offer detailed description of the film, he effectively presented Soviet film culture as a dream cinema that overcame and synthesized both bourgeois formalism and crude agitation.[54] Riding this wave, Iwasaki's aforementioned translation of Timoshenko's *The Art of the Cinema: The Montage of Films* had a large impact, kindling the film community's interest in Soviet montage theory. Director Timoshenko's writing, if outshined by his luminous colleagues' today, was clear and practical, offering fine descriptions of actual film practice without Eisenstein's idiosyncrasy. Thus, in the second half of 1928, a number of reports on Soviet cinema were published in major film journals,[55] leading even non-Marxist film critics to undertake translations of Western writings on Soviet cinema.[56]

From 1929 to 1930, film culture established the foundation to approach Soviet film theory and practice through the release of the much-awaited translation of the work of the two most influential filmmaker-theorists: Eisenstein and Pudovkin. Translated

by Fukuro from Russian, "Fourth Dimension" and "Montage and Japanese Culture" unveiled Eisenstein's theory.[57] While V. I. Pudovkin's *Film Technique and Film Acting* initially suffered from an awkward translation,[58] it was eventually put into lucid prose by Sasaki Norio and published as a book by Oraisha in February 1930.[59] The Pudovkin book, in Japanese titled *Eiga kantoku to eiga kyakuhon ron* (Study on film direction and screenwriting), included Timoshenko's *The Art of the Cinema* as an appendix, following the German edition's format. Thus, in February 1930, the basic knowledge of Soviet montage theory became accessible to the general reading public.

Curiously, because of censorship, the import of theoretical writings preceded and overpowered that of actual films. Pudovkin's *The Storm over Asia* (1928) did pass the censor and played in highbrow movie theaters in October 1930 as the first Soviet montage film.[60] Other films such as *The Old and the New* (1929), *The Earth* (1930), *The Man with a Movie Camera* (1929, aka *This Is Russia!*), and Mikhail Kaufman's *In Spring* (1929) followed suit (these four films were all released in 1931), with varying degrees of "scissor damage" (contemporary film culture's jargon for censorship). Yet, the school's representative works like *Battleship Potemkin* (1925) and *Mother* (1926) never reached prewar Japanese shores. Thus, Soviet montage was brought to and appropriated by the local film community through a series of translations, mediations, chance encounters, and both willful and unwitting misuses.

Although Japanese filmmakers were not able to view the films that exemplified the use of political montage, two factors facilitated their experiments: First, written by filmmakers, Soviet film theory itself was formalist and practical, grounded on actual films. This factor resonated with Japanese filmmakers who had grown tired of the patronizing tone and impressionistic content of existing film criticism.[61] Second, a number of Japanese expatriates started sending to film journals detailed reports on the latest Soviet films they saw in Europe or in the United States. Their descriptions, sometimes shot by shot, went beyond plot summary. Some of them clearly emulated the Soviet filmmakers' writing style, which was characterized by short sentences, use of the present tense, staccato enumerations of nouns, the tendency toward behavioral rather than psychological observations, short dialogue, and effectively used exclamation marks.[62] A New York–based Japanese critic, for example, described a scene of *The End of St. Petersburg* as follows: "Feet, feet, marching feet, numerous marching feet. Workers' march. Farmers join the march. The numerous feet march on; dirty but powerful feet. In front of the factory entrance . . . a young farmer blurts out, Bread! Freedom!"[63]

Against this backdrop, Mizoguchi's appropriation of aggressive montage in the *Tokyo March* script makes sense. In 1929–1930 Japan, the alluring, exotic word "montage" referred less to the continuity editing, which had already taken root in the local filmmaking practice, than to what Pudovkin called "Editing [montage] as an Instrument of Impression"—contrast, parallelism, symbolism, simultaneity, and leitmotif.[64] Both Pudovkin and Timoshenko take the famous closing sequence of Eisenstein's *Strike*, wherein the slaughtering of the proletariat is juxtaposed with that of a cow, illustrative of symbolism (Pudovkin) or montage of association (Timoshenko).[65] Montage/*montaju*

articulated the ways in which the juxtaposition of different fragments generates a sig-nification not inherent in any of them, thereby enabling film to hammer in an abstract idea, such as class struggle and state oppression, with immediate sensorial power.

Asakusa/Ginza/Shinjuku

Kimura-Mizoguchi's montage of the cat on the fur rug and the horse at the animal shel-ter and the chandelier and the lightbulb in the factory yields unsubtle, explicit, and abstract signification. Yet, at the same time, the sequence, as we can reconstruct it from Kimura's script, was closely in tune with the ongoing transformations of Tokyo and densely woven into its historical and geographical specificities.

The script indicates that only the first three verses of the song "Tokyo March" appeared on the screen. In other words, the Mizoguchi-Kimura team omitted the controversial last verse about Shinjuku. While it is not impossible that they feared the censor, I would rather present a reading that relates this omission to Mizoguchi's par-ticular relationship with Tokyo. Mizoguchi was born and grew up in Tokyo; however, in 1929, he was based in Kyoto and shot most parts of the film, with the exception of the documentary footage, at the Nikkatsu studio there. A bitter reviewer commented on *Tokyo March*: "The miscast actors show irrelevant 'good performance' wearing the clothes that do not look like Tokyoites at all."[66] However, the issue here is not whether the Tokyo mores in the film were actually outmoded; rather, the disjunc-tions between the lyrics and Mizoguchi's version reveal the heterogeneity and histo-ricity of Tokyo itself.

Mizoguchi was, I suspect, uncomfortable with a Tokyo represented by Shinjuku. Literary critic Isoda Koichi points out that "Tokyo March" was the first popular song that featured Shinjuku. The Shinjuku neighborhood, located on the northwestern fringe of old Tokyo, rapidly developed after the Great Kanto Earthquake in 1923, revolving around the terminal station for the expanding suburbs. Thus, Isoda argues that the song "Tokyo March" inscribed Tokyo's transition from a city with a distinctive local culture to a homogenized and homogenizing modern metropolis, in which the flood of emigrants from the countryside learned to speak "standard Japanese."[67] Mizoguchi, like Tanizaki Jun'ichiro, grew up in *shitamachi* (low city) speaking the Tokyo dialect, and moved to Kansai (western Japan, including the metropolitan areas of Osaka, Kobe, and Kyoto) after the quake, and continued to live there in a sort of cultural exile. Shinjuku did not belong to the Tokyo that Mizoguchi knew.

If Mizoguchi spurned Shinjuku, however, the effects of this action were clearly more political than nostalgic. In brief, Mizoguchi turned the decadent and cynical lyrics into a proletarian hymn. Note that the third verse on Asakusa is introduced by a shot of the Honjo factory district taken from the vantage point of the Arakawa drainage canal. As Isoda succinctly tells us, the Home Ministry's 1925 Post-Earthquake Tokyo Recovery Plan (*Teito fukko keikaku*) "designated the western half of Tokyo as residential, the

center as commercial, and the low city as industrial, and thereby drove those who spoke the Tokyo dialect [the residents of low city] to extinction."[68] The Arakawa drainage canal was opened in 1928, facilitating the industrial development of the area.

The 1923 quake and the resulting industrialization of the low city changed Asakusa's status. In the third verse of "Tokyo March," Saijo described it using the tricky adjective "chic" (*ikina*). The English word "chic" cannot convey the unmistakable connotations of prostitution-related activities in *iki*. Asakusa always had plenty of shady elements; however, the entertainment center of the pre-quake Tokyo had become a decaying neighborhood suited for illicit rendezvous, outshone by Ginza in terms of culture as well as economy.[69] The decline was vividly manifested in the sphere of film exhibition. In the pre-quake Tokyo, nearly every film had its first run (*fukiri*) in the Asakusa Sixth District. Then, the quake and the fire turned Asakusa's many movie theaters into debris and ashes. Some of the quickly rebuilt temporary theaters did not have the large seating capacity of the pre-quake originals, and therefore could not sustain the high rentals for first runs. Thus, surviving luxury theaters in other neighborhoods, most notably Musashinokan in Shinjuku, emerged as the venues for first runs.[70] As Seiji Lippit put it, Kawabata Yasunari located his emphatically post-quake novel *Scarlet Gang of Asakusa* (1929–1930) in this declined, "spectral" neighborhood, where temporal and spatial categories were conflated, riddled with "anachronistic images and artifacts of past culture."[71]

According to Isoda, Asakusa's decline or spectralization was "closely connected to the pollution of the Sumida River."[72] It is no coincidence that Mizoguchi inserted a shot of the river at sunset. Mizoguchi was born in the petit bourgeois Yushima Shinhanacho in 1898, but when his father, a carpenter, failed in his business after the Russo-Japanese War, he moved to Asakusa Tamahimecho. Thus, he spent most of his childhood in dire poverty in East Asakusa.[73] Growing up immersed in Asakusa culture in its heyday, the proletarian Mizoguchi directed acute attention to the recent changes his neighborhood went through: rapid industrialization and the consequential pollution, as well as the opening of the subway in 1928. Thus, the illuminations in Ikenohata (southwest of Asakusa) overlap with the moving engine belts in the factory Michiyo works in Shirogane, unearthing the labor process beneath the phantasmagoria of consumer culture and thereby drawing connections between distant labor sites.

This Marxist project is consistent with an earlier example of Mizoguchi's work: a feature-length advertisement film for the Osaka Asahi Newspaper Company titled *The "Morning Sun" Shines* (*Asahi wa kagayaku*, 1929), which portrays glamorous aspects of journalism, such as a young reporter (Nakano Eiji) rushing to a marine accident site in the company jet. Yet, the film's existing version also lingers on the material process of newspaper printing—setting the types (Figure 6.5), striking a printing plate (Figures 6.6 and 6.7), and running a rotary press (Figure 6.8)—and depicts the delivery workers leaving the company gate (Figure 6.9). A fine combination of labor politics and machine aesthetics, this montage sequence allows us to imagine how, in *Tokyo March*, Mizoguchi may have introduced Michiyo, a worker at the printing factory.
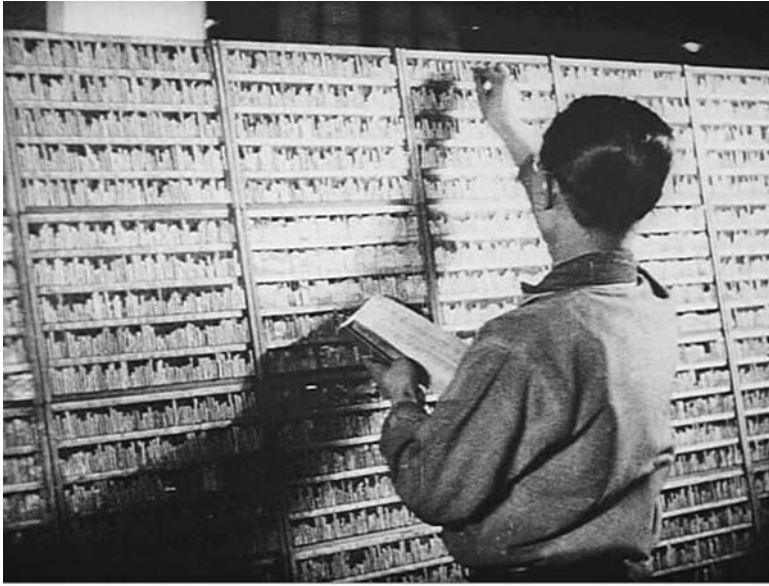
FIGURE 6.5   Type-picking, *The "Morning Sun" Shines.*
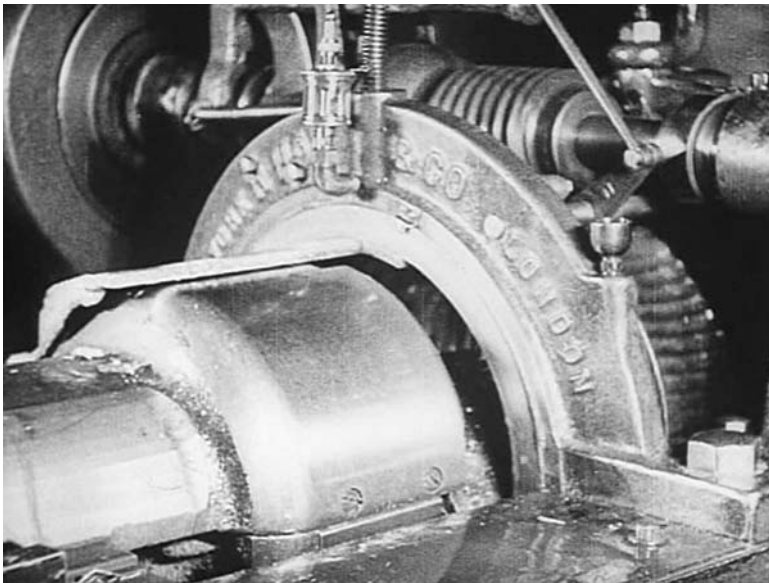
FIGURE 6.6   Making printing plates, *The "Morning Sun" Shines.*

FIGURE 6.7 A plate on the conveyer belt, *The "Morning Sun" Shines*.

FIGURE 6.8: "The Asahi method high-speed rotary printing machine," *The "Morning Sun" Shines*.

FIGURE 6.9 Paperboys leaving the gate, *The "Morning Sun" Shines.*

CONCLUSION

As seen in the passage quoted above, in 1935–1936, Benjamin argued that industrial capitalism and urbanization in modernity profoundly transformed the human senses, and he named modernism and fascism as two major responses to this transformation. As modernist theoretical approaches also claimed, the sensorial horizon has been sensitized and then numbed by stimuli such that "it can experience its own annihilation as a supreme aesthetic pleasure" in fascism. Benjamin singled out the film medium's special potential to mediate and make equilibrium between the human senses and technology.[74] Montage has been regarded as a quintessential mediator that simulates or at least responds to the human experience of time and space specific to modernity.[75]

If that is the case, did the sensorial horizon of *modanizumu* that politicized aesthetics around 1930 by generating vivid descriptions of social inequalities and class tensions, as well as the latest urban mores and fashion, also foster Japanese fascism's aestheticization of politics starting in September 1931? On the one hand, the 1980s literature on *modanizumu* tends to see a rupture between the age of *modanizumu*, characterized by dance halls, cafés, perms, and the "dark age" of war and fascism, in which those things were banned or suppressed as frivolous and un-Japanese. Moreover, in the field of Japanese film studies, many agree that a kinetic cinema of "flourishes" had been replaced by what Darrell Davis calls "monumental style" and its mediocre variants by the end of the 1930s.[76]

On the other hand, studies in intellectual history have emphasized the continuity between communist/socialist movements and fascism.[77] Media historians Kitada Akihiro and Sato Takumi point out that interwar mass culture paved the path for mobilization and total war, either through the efforts of proletarian theorists to establish film as a type of propaganda (Kitada) or the popular media's fostering the audience's distracted mode of reception (Sato).[78] Against this background, the time is ripe for a film-historical reexamination of *modanizumu* and fascism by taking into consideration a terrain that may have nurtured both, reflecting upon the issues of an agency—grassroots, top-down, the masses, the vanguard, and the elite. In effect, recent historical research suggests that "monumental" films during World War II, such as Mizoguchi's *47 Ronin* (1941–1942), bored and frustrated the majority of the audiences, and their attempt to cultivate awe and respect for Japaneseness by using aesthetics as a means of forming national subjectivity probably ended in failure.[79] An investigation of whether there was, or would have been, "attractive fascism" in Japanese cinema goes hand in hand with the politicization of *modanizumu*.

Notes

1. Iwamoto Kenji, "Modanizumu to Nihon eiga: Osanai Kaoru kara Ushihara Kiyohiko," in *Modanizumu to Nihon eiga 1920–1930*, ed. Iwamoto Kenji (Tokyo: Libro, 1991), 6–7.
2. Takemura Tamio, *Taisho Bunka* (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1980).
3. Minami Hiroshi, "Nihon modanizumu kenkyu no hoko," in *Nihon modanizumu no kenkyu: Shiso, seikatsu, bunka*, ed. Minami Hiroshi (Tokyo: Buren Shuppan, 1982), viii.
4. Unno Hiroshi, *Tokyo the Modern City* (Tokyo: Chuo Koronsha, 1983), 118–119.
5. Carol Gluck, "The Invention of Edo," in *Mirror of Modernity: Invented Traditions of Modern Japan*, ed. Stephen Vlastos (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 273–275.
6. Andreas Huyssen, "Geographies of Modernism in a Globalizing World," in *Geographies of Modernism: Literatures, Cultures, Spaces*, ed. Peter Brooker and Andrew Thacker (New York: Routledge, 2005), 6–18. In the field of Japanese cinema, Aaron Gerow's *Visions of Japanese Modernity: Articulations of Cinema, Nation, and Spectatorship, 1895–1925* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010) showcases the potential of this historical approach.
7. Miriam Hansen, "The Mass Production of the Senses: Classical Cinema as Vernacular Modernism," *Modernism Modernity 6*, no. 2 (1999): 60.
8. Ibid., 67–68.
9. Miriam Hansen, "Fallen Women, Rising Stars, New Horizons," *Film Quarterly 54* (2000): 10–22, and "Vernacular Modernism: Tracking Cinema on a Global Scale," in *World Cinemas, Transnational Perspectives*, ed. Natasa Durovicova and Kathleen Newman (New York: Routledge, 2010), 287–314.
10. Gerow, *Visions of Japanese Modernity*, 23.
11. Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in Its Age of Technological Reproducibility," in *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings*, vol. 4, ed. Howard Eiland and Michael W. Jennings (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2003), 122.
12. Susan Buck-Morss, "Aesthetics and Anaesthetics: Walter Benjamin's Artwork Essay Reconsidered," *October 62* (Autumn 1992): 3–6.

13. Citing Tom Gunning's analysis of Griffith's crosscutting, David Bordwell points out, "Stylistic changes—Griffith's innovations—are explained by appeal to broad social and economic forces characteristic of modernity. No intervening variables are invoked, nor is there any suggestion that they have the power to shape the phenomenon to be explained." David Bordwell, *Figures Traced in Light: On the Cinematic Staging* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 245.

14. The Japanese original is as follows:
昔恋しい銀座の柳/仇な年増を誰が知ろ/ジヤズで踊つてリキユルで更けて/明けりゃダンサーの涙雨
恋の丸ビルあの窓あたり/泣いて文書く人もある/ラツシユアワーに拾つた薔薇を/せめてあの娘の思い出に
ひろい東京恋ゆえ狭い/粋な浅草忍び逢い/あなた地下鉄わたしはバスよ/恋のストツプままならぬ
シネマ見ましよかお茶のみましよか/いつそ小田急で逃げましようか/かわる新宿あの蔵武野の/月もデパートの屋根に出る

15. Miriam Silverberg, *Erotic Grotesque Nonsense: The Mass Culture of Japanese Modernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), Kindle edition, locations 105–114.

16. Saijo Yaso, "Iba Takashi shi ni atau: *Tokyo koshinkyoku* to boku," *Yomiuri shinbun*, August 4, 1929, 4.

17. For an excellent musicological analysis of the song, see Hosokawa Shuhei, "Seiyo ongaku no Nihon-ka, taishu-ka 24: *Tokyo koshinkyoku*," *Myujikku janaru*, March 1991, 116–121. Hosokawa also wrote a pioneering analysis of the close link between the noise in big cities in the post-quake era and popular songs, which were called "jazz" or "symphony" no matter what they musically were. Hosokawa, "Seiyo ongaku no Nihon-ka, taishu-ka 51: zatsuon," *Myujikku janaru*, October 1991, 124–129.

18. For an informative account of the adaptation process from the novel to the film, see Saso Tsutomu, *Mizoguchi Kenji zensakuhin kaisetsu*, vol. 6 (Tokyo: Kindai Bungeisha, 2009), 35–44.

19. See the film's advertisement in *Kinema junpo*, May 1, 1929, 62. Anon., "Toki ni naru *Tokyo koshinkyoku*," *Eiga jidai*, May 1929, 53.

20. Cultural historian Kurata Yoshihiro reports that the song record had not sold well for a month, but after the film's release, the sales displayed a sharp rise up to 150,000 discs. *Yomiuri shinbun*, evening September 30, 1929, quoted in Kurata, *Nihon rekodo bunka shi* (Tokyo: Tokyo Shoseki, 1992), 157. As for the film, at Shinjuku Musashinokan, the highbrow Tokyo movie theater specializing in foreign films, where the Fox Movietone premiered and played *Tokyo March* as a rare exception, the film proved to be a great success. Musashinokan charged 70 sen for a third-floor seat, 1 yen for a ground-floor seat, and 2 yen for a second-floor seat, and collected 23,076.50 yen from 22,907 patrons in the film's one-week run from May 31 to June 6. Takahashi Nukimichi, "Musashino Kan ni okeru *Tekkamen* to *Tokyo koshinkyoku* no seiseki," *Kinema junpo*, July 11, 1929, 47.

21. Anon., "*Tokyo koshinkyoku*," *Kinema junpo*, April 21, 1929, 72.

22. Kikuchi Kan, "Tokyo koshinkyoku," *Kingu*, June 1928, 24.

23. Saijo Yaso, "Kouta eiga no tsuioku sonota," *Eiga jidai*, October 1930, 6–7

24. Andrew Gordon, *Labor and Imperial Democracy in Prewar Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991). For his periodization and definition of imperial democracy, see introduction, 1–10.

25. Ibid., 237–269.

26. Tomoda Jun'ichiro, "*Manmo Teikoku no reimei*," *Kinema junpo*, October 1, 1932, 36; Monma Takashi, "Manmo Teikoku no reimei o megutte: Fashizumu to orientarizumu" (On the dawn of the Manchu-Mongolian empire: Fascism and Orientalism), in *Eiga kantoku Mizoguchi Kenji*, ed. Yomota Inuhiko (Tokyo: Shin'yo Sha, 1999), 93–111; Saso Tsutomu, *Mizoguchi Kenji zensakuhin kaisetsu*, vol. 8 (Tokyo: Kindai Bungeisha), 315–320.

27. For their hand scroll theory and its relationship with montage, see Chika Kinoshita, "Mise-en-scène of Desire: The Films of Mizoguchi Kenji" (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 2007), 455–462.

28. Bolshevik activist and diplomat Alexandra Kollontai's novella *Red Love* (first published in 1923) was translated from an English version and had both serious and popular impacts in Japan in 1927. See William O. Gardner, "Avant-Garde Literature and the New City: Tokyo 1923–1931" (PhD diss., Stanford University, 1999, chap. 3).

29. Saijo Yaso, *Uta no jijo den*, rev. ed. (1956; repr., Tokyo: Nihon Tosho Senta, 1994), 54–55. The Japanese original reads: 「長い髪してマルクスボーイ/今日も抱える「赤い恋」」.

30. Siegfried Kracauer's "Loitering," about Weimar Germany almost the same time as "Tokyo March," highlights this machinery. *Qui Parle* 5, no. 2 (Spring/Summer 1992): 51–60.

31. Anon., "Mo ga bo no mune ni jazu wa takanaru," *Yomiuri shinbun*, June 15, 1929, 10; "Bungei ni murikai na Teishin Kyoku mata mo *Tsuji basha* o hoso kinshi." *Yomiuri shinbun*, June 20, 1929, 5.

32. *Tokyo nichinichi shinbun*, June 15, 1929, quoted in Kurata, *Nihon rekodo bunka shi*, 159.

33. For overviews of the history of little song films, see Hosokawa Shuhei, "Kouta eiga no bunka shi," *Cinema Dong Dong* no. 1 (2002), 12–15, and Sasagawa Keiko, "Kouta eiga ni kansuru kiso chosa: Meiji makki kara Showa shoki o chushin ni," *Waseda Daigaku 21 seiki COE puroguramu Engeki Kenkyu Senta kiyo I* (March 2003): 175–197.

34. *Kyoto hinode shinbun*, May 22, 1929, 3.

35. Iijima Tadashi, "Eiga no enshutsu," *Eiga orai*, August 1929, 11.

36. The two existing prints can be called the Matsuda version and the Cinémathèque version. The former is available on video in Japan and the latter came out on DVD as part of the French film journal *Cinéma 05*. The Matsuda version is originally a 16 mm print that was discovered and put into the private film archive of Matsuda Eigasha's collection in 1967. The video is accompanied by the music of *Tokyo March* arranged and recorded in 1987 and Sawato Midori's *benshi* narration (Matsuda Yutaka, personal e-mail correspondence, March 24, 2003). In 2001, Cinémathèque Française discovered a 35 mm print of *Tokyo March* in their warehouse. It was roughly identical with the Matsuda version, except that (1) it was missing the opening reel of the Matsuda version; (2) it included a couple of scenes that the Matsuda version lacked; (3) it had French intertitles. Cinémathèque restored it as the longest existing version by consulting the screenplay and Japanese film critics and incorporating the Matsuda version. The song sequence in question comes from the Matsuda version. See Emmanuel Burdeau, "Mizo des familles: Notes sur *la Marche de Tokyo*," *Cinéma 05* (May 2003): 41–47.

37. Kimura Chieo, "Tokyo koshinkyoku," *Eiga chisiki*, July 1929, 58–59.

38. Iwasaki Akira, "Berurin: Daitokai no shinfoni 1," *Eiga orai,* November 1927, 17–18; Iwasaki, "Berurin: Daitokai noshinfoni 2," *Eiga orai*, December 1927, 8–12. In his enthusiastic introduction to the film, which at the time he had not seen, Iwasaki included filmmakers' comments, the background of the production, and a review.

39. Kitagawa Fuyuhiko, "Mittsu no tokai eiga kara," *Tokyo nichinichi shinbun*, June 14, 1929, 6.

40. Ibid.

41. Ibid.

42. Siegfried Kracauer, "Film 1928," in *The Mass Ornament: Weimar Essays*, ed. and trans. Thomas Y. Levin (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), 318.

43. Kimura Chieo, "Mai hamuburu rainzu: Abauto Beruriin, Sanraizu, e ti shi," *Kinema junpo*, November 1, 1928, 57.

44. In the existing film versions, most shots in this sequence seem lost. As a consequence, the difference between the opening sequence shot on location and the rest of the film shot on stage is often jarring.

45. Nora M. Alter, "*Berlin, Symphony of a Big City*: City, Image, Sound," in *Weimar Cinema: An Essential Guide to Classic Films of the Era*, ed. Noah Isenberg (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 204.

46. S. Timoshenko, "Eiga geijutsu to katting 1," trans. Iwasaki Akira, *Eiga orai*, March 1928, 19.

47. Iwasaki Akira, translator's note to S. Timoshenko, "Eiga geijutsu to kattingu 2," *Kinema junpo*, July 11, 1928, 39.

48. David Bordwell, "The Idea of Montage in Soviet Art and Film," *Cinema Journal 11*, no. 2 (Spring 1972): 10.

49. Eugene Lunn, *Marxism and Modernism: An Historical Study of Lukàcs, Brecht, Benjamin, and Adorno* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), 35.

50. Montage's association with leftist or progressive politics in Japan remained potent well into the 1950s, as was shown in Marxist critics' dismissal of the 1950s Mizoguchi's "one scene/one shot" style. For example, Marxist literary critic Sasaki Kiichi criticized Mizoguchi's postwar films prior to *The Crucified Lovers* (1954) for his mis-en-scène with a "Japanese tempo." Sasaki Kiichi, Iwasaki Akira, Ozaki Hitsugu, and Izawa Jun, "Zadankai: Nihon eiga o kentosuru—dou tsukurare dou mirarete iruka" [Roundtable: Examining Japanese film—how films are made, how they are seen], *Sekai*, April 1955, 171. While the timing of this essay's writing does not allow me to integrate her work-in-progress into my discussion, Anastacia Fedorova's research will contribute a much-awaited theoretically informed analysis of the Russian films and discourse to the study of the Soviet-Japan connections in film theory and practice. Anastacia Fedorova, "The Reception of Soviet Documentary Film in Japan, 1920s–1960s" (presentation, annual meeting of the Society for Cinema and Media Studies, Boston, March 21–25, 2012).

51. Abé Mark Nornes, *Japanese Documentary Film: The Meiji Era through Hiroshima* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 19–47. Nornes provides a comprehensive and illuminating account of proletarian film movements in the late 1920s and early 1930s.

52. Toba Koshi, "Haiburiddo to shite no Kanikosen: Senkan Pochomukin kara Kobayashi Takiji, Yamamura So e" (paper presented at the International Research Center for Japanese Studies, Kyoto, July 31, 2011). Hata would have a colorful career as a translator, writer, and revue producer from the 1930s, becoming one of the future luminaries who contributed their reports on Soviet film culture at the time.

53. Iwamoto Kenji's pioneering article, "Nihon ni okeru montaju riron no shokai," *Hikaku bungaku nenshi 10* (1976), 67–85, provides excellent bibliographical references on this topic. Another list of early Japanese articles on Soviet cinema can be found in Yamamoto Kikuo's well-documented book, *Nihon eiga ni okeru gaikoku eiga no eikyo: Hikaku eigashi kenkyu* (Tokyo: Waseda Daigaku Shuppanbu, 1983), 184.

54. Kurahara Korehito, "Saikin no Soueto eigakai 1," *Kinema junpo*, March 1, 1927, 24; Kurahara, "Saikin no Soueto eigakai 2," *Kinema junpo*, April 1, 1927, 20.

55. For example, see Akita Ujaku, "Sovueto, Roshiya no eiga zakkan," *Eiga jidai*, September 1928, 7–12. Proletarian playwright Akita's report includes fascinating, if romanticized, observations of Moscow cinemas and moviegoers. Translator and film critic Fukuro Ippei started contributing to film journals around 1928. Fukuro, "Eiga to bungaku" [Film and literature], *Eiga jidai*, October 1928, 2–8. Fukuro also summarizes Russian reviews of Shochiku films screened in Moscow, in "Mosukuwa ni okeru Nihon eiga no yu," *Eiga jidai*, November 1928, 21–22.

56. Alfred H. Barr Jr., "Aizensutain kenkyu," trans. Iida Shinbi, *Kinema junpo*, September 1, 1928, 125–126. Iida notes that Barr's piece originally appeared in *Drawing & Design* (June 1928). Leon Moussinac, *Sovieto Roshiya no eiga*, trans. Iijima Tadashi (Tokyo: Orai Sha, 1930), was first serialized in *Kinema junpo* starting no. 307 (September 11, 1928): 73. Moussinac's "A Travelogue from U.S.S.R," also translated by Iijima, appeared in *Kinema junpo*, February 11, 1928.

57. S. M. Eisenstein, "Yojigen no eiga" [The cinema of the fourth dimension], trans. Fukuro Ippei, as part of Fukuro's essay series, "Soveto onga shokan," *Kinema junpo*, October 1, 1929, 59–60; S. M. Eisenstein, "Nihon bunka to montaju" [Japanese culture and montage], trans. Fukuro Ippei, *Kinema junpo*, February 1, 1930, 63–64; *Kinema junpo*, February 11, 1930, 60–61; *Kinema junpo*, February 21, 1930, 42.

58. Hatano Mitsuo translated Pudovkin's "Introduction to the German Edition" and "Part 1 Scenario" of the first chapter ("The Film Scenario and Its Theory") from the German translation of *Film Technique and Film Acting*, serializing it from January to July 1929 in the monthly *Eiga hyoron*. Hatano's translation was, however, not serviceable, as he could not get the key conceptual terms and important film titles (e.g., *Intolerance*) right.

59. Sasaki, also relying on the German translation, translated what amounts to chapters 1 and 2 of the English version, to which I have access. V. Pudovkin, *Eiga kantoku to eiga kyakuhon ron*, trans. Sasaki Norio (Tokyo: Orai Sha, 1930); V. I. Pudovkin, *Film Technique and Film Acting*, trans. and ed. Ivor Montagu, memorial ed. (London: Vision, 1958).

60. Marxist film critic Yamada Kazuo notes that six films made in the Soviet Union were shown in Japan prior to *The Storm over Asia*, including *Polikushka* (Alexandr Sanin, 1922) and *Dina Dza-dzu* (Yuri Zhelyabuzhsky, 1926). Yamada Kazuo, "Nihon de joei sareta Sobieto eiga," in *Bessatsu sekai eiga shiryo: Sobieto eiga no 40 nen* (Tokyo: Sekai Eiga Shiryo Sha, 1959), 56. Yet *The Storm over Asia* made an unprecedented sensation, primarily because the director's fame as a theorist had been established. See a report on the painstaking process the film underwent to pass the censor: Anon., "*Ajia no arashi* ga kenetsu tsuka suru made," *Kinema shuho*, September 12, 1930, 13.

61. Director Murata Minoru, in his preface to the Pudovkin translation, wrote passionately, "This book was not produced as armchair theory. But from the actual experience of torment over a shot of film, contemplation of camera angle, and the pursuit of truth on screen." Murata Minoru, foreword to *Eiga kantoku to eiga kyakuhon ron*, 1.

62. For example, "In the distance, in moonlight, come a group of people, with their golden clerical dresses refracting the light of lamps and candles. Soldiers go this way and that in the trench. What is it? I don't know. What to do? We should know. They come close! They come close! So much so that now their faces are clearly visible. An icon, small flags, a cross, an incense pot, a priest in a shining gown." S. Eisenstein and G. Alexandrov, "October: Danpen," trans. Iijima Tadashi, *Eiga orai*, January 1929, 16. Iijima does not specify the source.

63. Kodama Takamine, "Sento Peterusuburugu no shuen: eiga mitamama," *Eiga orai*, May 1929, 86–90.

64. V. I. Pudovkin, *Film Technique and Film Acting*, 75–78. Sasaki translated the section title as "Chui sakuin no shudan to shite no montaju" (Montage as means to attract attention), *Eiga kantoku to eiga kyakuhon ron*, 61.

65. Ibid. Pudovkin, *Film Technique and Film Acting*; S. Timoshenko, "Eiga geijutsu to kattingu 7," trans. Iwasaki Akira, *Kinema junpo*, October 21, 1928, 48–49. For Eisenstein's own close analysis, see Sergei Eisenstein, "The Problem of the Materialist Approach to Form," in *The Eisenstein Reader*, ed. Richard Taylor and British Film Institute (London: British Film Institute, 1998), 38. I have not come across any prewar Japanese translation of this essay.

66. Moriyama Toyosaburo, "Mato o hazureru: Tokyo koshinkyoku to Daitokai," *Eiga to engei*, July 1929, 29.

67. Isoda Koichi, "Shiso toshiteno Tokyo," in *Isoda Koichi chsakushu*, vol. 5 (Tokyo: Ozawa Shoten, 1991), 51–52.

68. Ibid., 27.

69. See Yoshimi Shun'ya's seminal formulation in the chapter titled "From Asakusa to Ginza" in his *Toshi no doramatsurugi: Tokyo sakariba no shakai-shi* (1987; repr., paperback ed., Tokyo: Kawade Shobo, 2008), 228–252.

70. Ishii Meika, "Nihon eiga no genzai oyobi shorai nit suite," in *Taisho jugonen ban Nihon eiga jigyo soran* (Tokyo: Kokusai Eiga Tsushinsha, 1925), 15.

71. Seiji M. Lippit, *Topographies of Japanese Modernism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 138.

72. Isoda, "Shiso toshiteno Tokyo."

73. Yoda Yoshikata, *Mizoguchi Kenji no hito to geijutsu* (Tokyo: *Tabata Shoten*, 1970), 15–16.

74. Benjiamin, 117.

75. Eisenstein, in his essay "Dickens, Griffith, and the Film Today" (1944), wrote: "Indication of this 'urbanism' in Dickens may be found not only in his thematic material but also in that head-spinning tempo of changing impressions with which Dickens sketches the city in the form of a dynamic (montage) picture; and this montage of its rhythms conveys the sensation of the limits of speed at that time (1838), the sensation of a rushing-stage-coach!" Sergei Eisenstein, *Film Form: Essays in Film Theory*, trans. Jay Leyda, 1st ed. (New York: Harcourt, 1949), 38.

76. David Bordwell, "A Cinema of Flourishes: Japanese Decorative Classicism of the Prewar Era," in *Reframing Japanese Cinema: Authorship, Genre, History*, ed. Arthur Nolletti Jr. and David Desser (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992), 328–346; Bordwell, "Visual Style in Japanese Cinema, 1925–1945," *Film History 7*, no. 1 (Spring 1995): 5–31; Darrell William Davis, *Picturing Japaneseness: Monumental Style, National Identity, Japanese Film* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996).

77. Kevin M. Doak, "Fascism Seen and Unseen: Fascism as a Problem in Cultural Representation," in *The Culture of Japanese Fascism*, ed. Alan Tansman (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009), 31–55.

78. Kitada Akihiro, "Kino gurasu no seijigaku," in *Sochi: Kowashi kizuku, Ekkyo suru chi*, vol. 4, ed. Kurihara Akira, Komori Yoichi, Sato Manabu, and Yoshimi Shun'ya (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, 2000), 295–317; Sato Takumi, *Kingu no jidai, Kingu no jidai* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2002).

79. Kato Atsuko, *Sodoin taisei to eiga* (Tokyo: Shin'yosha, 2003); Aaron Gerow, "Narrating the Nationality of a Cinema: The Case of Japanese Prewar Film," in Tansman, *Culture of Japanese Fascism*, 185–211.

NATIONALIZING MADAME BUTTERFLY: THE FORMATION OF FEMALE STARS IN JAPANESE CINEMA

DAISUKE MIYAO

INTRODUCTION

"It is no comparison. My mother had a much better acting skill than my father. My father's acting was like, 'I will show you how I can perform,' but mother's was so natural that we were able to watch it in a relaxed manner."[1] The late Hayakawa Yukio, son of silent film superstar Sessue Hayakawa, the first and arguably the only Asian matinee idol in Hollywood, thus talked about his lesser-known stepmother, Aoki Tsuruko (1891–1961).

Aoki, now only remembered as the wife of Sessue Hayakawa, was one of the earliest female Asian film stars in Hollywood, preceding Anna May Wong, Shirley Yamaguchi (aka Ri Koran, Li Xianglan), Lucy Liu, and Zhang Ziyi. In 1913–1914, *Reel Life*, the promotional magazine for films distributed by Mutual Film Corporation, placed a still photo of Aoki on its cover at least three times.[2]

More importantly, Aoki was the first Japanese female motion picture actor. In Japan, female motion picture actors did not appear until as late as 1918, when Hanayagi Harumi starred in *Radiance of Life* (*Sei no kagayaki*), a product of the film modernization movement. Before this film, the majority of female characters in motion pictures were played by *onnagata*, female impersonators in kabuki, with the exception of a few female actors, including Nakamura Kasen, who appeared in serial *rensageki*, a mixture

of film and stage drama.[3] Even in 1919, only 3 out of about 150 films released in Japan during that year used female actors for female roles.[4]

Aoki Tsuruko started her film career in the United States in the early 1910s, as supporting characters in Fred Mace's comedy films, followed by a leading role in a Majestic film, *The Oath of O Tsuru San* (director unknown, 1913), a film that was as "dainty and attractive as *Madame Butterfly*," according to the film trade journal *Moving Picture World* (*MPW*). Aoki then starred in numerous films about Japan, produced at the New York Motion Picture Company (NYMPC) by Thomas H. Ince, one of the first influential producers in the early Hollywood film industry, including *O Mimi San* (Reginald Barker, 1914), arguably Sessue Hayakawa's debut film.[5] Such success in Hollywood in the early 1910s naturally made Aoki a template for female actors in Japan, where critics and fans had started criticizing the *onnagata*'s appearance in cinema.

Yukio's comment on the performance of his stepmother is insightful because the notion of the "natural," or the sense of authenticity, played a significant role in the formation of her stardom in early Hollywood as well as in the construction of female motion picture actors in Japan. In this essay, I will discuss how female stars emerged in Japanese cinema. I consider the Japanese reception of Aoki Tsuruko Hollywood stardom to be the threshold in the formation of female film stardom in Japan. I would argue that female stars were born in Japan when the sense of authenticity was transmitted over the Pacific. A majority of American and Japanese filmmakers, critics, and fans at that time shared the idea that motion picture cameras were capable of mechanically reproducing the world around them. Based on this idea, they thought a female actor should play a female role because that would be natural and authentic.

Yet, the birth of female stars in Japan did not simply mean transformation of Japanese film production in order to meet the Hollywood standard by removing the "unnatural" kabuki convention of the *onnagata*. It was a result of a transplant to Japanese soil of the sense of authenticity about Japanese women that had been created in Hollywood. With her Japanese body, Aoki provided physical naturalism to the widely accepted archetypal view of Japanese women—*Madame Butterfly* being the most typical example. Japanese filmmakers did not reject such a stereotypical but popularized view of Japanese women but attempted to endorse it in the name of Japanese tradition. In other words, the formation of female stars in Japanese cinema was a project of recovery by way of inventing a tradition. The obedient and self-sacrificing heroine of *Madame Butterfly*, which had been created in Europe and popularized in early Hollywood, was authenticated by Japanese filmmakers who aspired to establish an internationally viable film industry. Miriam Bratu Hansen claims, "To write the international history of classical American cinema . . . is a matter of tracing not just its mechanisms of standardization and hegemony but also the diversity of ways in which this cinema was translated and reconfigured in both local and translocal contexts of reception."[6] Female stars were born in Japan as a result of a tension-ridden process of translation and reconfiguration of female stardom in Hollywood, in general, and Aoki Tsuruko's embodiment of *Madame Butterfly*, in particular.

Hideaki Fujiki argues that the import of American star images was a significant force for replacing the *onnagata* with female actresses in Japanese cinema.[7] Critics and fans ascribed to cinema "an imperative of naturalness, especially because of its mechanical properties, its ability to provide close framing, and its photographic reproduction."[8] In that sense, gender should not be a performance but should correspond to actual bodies of actors on the screen. To them, the *onnagata* of kabuki was unnatural and inappropriate to cinema because its gender existed as a performance, in which femininity was not defined by actual sexual bodies of actors but by their techniques of displaying ideal feminine behaviors. According to Fujiki, Kurishima Sumiko, arguably the first female star in Japanese cinema and one of the most popular female actresses of the 1920s, embodied the naturalism of American film stars, which was "endorsed as a sexual image and personality."[9]

However, Fujiki warns, "Homogenizing American and Japanese female stars leads us to overlook the vital peculiarities of the latter that were historically created in their tension with the former, as well as with the *onnagata*."[10] In Kurishima's case, Fujiki argues, her star image was not limited to the sexuality of her physical body but also emphasized a performativity of "Japanese conventional womanliness and femininity."[11] Her publicity photos often focused on her Japanese hairstyles, kimonos, and such "reserved" behaviors as casting her eyes downward, which were more similar to those of *onnagata*.[12] As such, female stars in Japan were distinguished from their American counterparts because of their embodiment of a national identity.

The Hollywood star image of Aoki Tsuruko was very similar to those of female Japanese stars who emerged in the 1920s. It was not limited to sexuality but also emphasized performativity. Her publicity photos often focused on Japanese features, even though the American photographers were probably not familiar with the *onnagata*. Aoki's Hollywood stardom of the 1910s was formulated around the image of "Japaneseness." Aoki was distinguished from other American stars because of her embodiment of a national identity, despite the fact that such an identity was formulated by the Orientalist imagination. Yet, her physical body as a Japanese woman provided a sense of authenticity and naturalness to such stereotypical imagery.

Aoki's Hollywood stardom was constantly publicized in Japanese film magazines even before the emergence of female stars in Japan. If her stardom prepared a template for female actresses in Japan, the impact that Fujiki claims of American star images upon the emergence of those actresses turned out to be more complicated. What was imported was not limited to the image of immediacy of physical bodies. The image of traditional Japan and its femininity had already been invented in Hollywood, as we shall see, with no reference to the *onnagata* but within an Orientalist imagination. The formation of female stars in Japan, then, was a process of nationalizing that Orientalist image of Japan. It was a mission that would bring Cio-Cio-San back to Japan.

After discussing the initial construction of Aoki's star image in the United States with regard to the melodramatic imagination and the sense of authenticity, I will examine how Aoki's star image was incorporated in the formation of female stars in Japanese

cinema, in close relation to "changing representational strategies and ongoing cultural struggles over women's public and domestic roles" in modern Japan.[13]

Embodying Madame Butterfly in Hollywood

By the time Aoki Tsuruko started her acting career in early Hollywood cinema, Japan's image of cultural refinement, in the form of *Japonisme*, the European vogue in art and style, had been fascinating American women. Since the late nineteenth century, the penetration of Japanese goods into the American market brought about a "Japan craze."[14] After the Centennial Exhibition of 1876 in Philadelphia, when many Americans made their first contact with Japanese art and culture, high-class Japanese art and culture gradually became popularized among the middle class and fitted to their taste. Then, the success of the English light opera *The Mikado* (1885) by Gilbert and Sullivan and the popularity of *Madame Butterfly* (1898) had a strong influence among middle-class audiences on forming a popular imagination of Japan as a land of refined culture.

This cultural image of Japan, especially in the form of an obedient female like Cio-Cio-San in *Madame Butterfly*, functioned to safely contain the imminent horror of the "yellow peril." When Puccini's opera opened in the United States in 1906, Japan had defeated Russia in the Russo-Japanese War in 1904–1905 and created an imminent threat to other colonial powers. The period from the 1910s to the 1920s witnessed the rapid increase of anti-Japanese sentiment against Japan's militarily and politically growing power.

Historically, an important function of such a melodrama as *Madame Butterfly* was to contain the horror of modernity.[15] According to Peter Brooks, melodrama "comes into being in a world where the traditional imperatives of truth and ethics have been violently thrown into question, yet where the promulgation of truth and ethics, their installation as a way of life, is of immediate, daily, political concern."[16] Regarding melodrama as a quintessentially modern form arising out of a historical conjuncture at the turn of the nineteenth century, Brooks argues that in the absence of a moral and social order through the collapse of an old regime, there was clearly a renewed thirst for the sacred expressed in vernacular terms, in order to make sense of the frightening modern world and the massive scale of urbanization and industrialization.[17]

The ideological nature of the melodramatic narrative of *Madame Butterfly* was to make sense of the rapid modernization and imperialistic expansion of Japan and to contain the modernizing nation within the image of an obedient and self-sacrificing female living in a premodern space. Alfred T. Mahan's doctrine of "race patriotism," the assertion of an American natural right to the power of territorial possession embodied in the masculinity of the Navy and of spreading Christianity, had a great influence not only upon American foreign policy but also upon American popular imagination

about Asia.[18] Using Christianity as its enlightening force to save and protect a Japanese woman from a primitive religion, *Madame Butterfly* normalizes the ideological aspect of American foreign policy: expansion and annexation in the name of enlightenment.

Brook argues that the melodramatic universe is imbued with moral Manichaeism. Moral conflicts between heroes and villains are unambiguously presented. The character system reflects this clear-cut division within the melodramatic world. Characters in melodrama are either morally good or evil with no middle position. With the sympathetic characterization of Cio-Cio-San, a Japanese geisha, the opera functioned to "normalize" the gendered, sexualized, and racially hierarchical relationship between the East and the West, between the premodern "evil" community and the civilized "good" nation-state, between Japan and the United States, in the popular American mind.[19]

With its capacity of mechanical reproduction and photographic realism, cinema functioned to provide authenticity to a twofold image of Japan and the Japanese people: cultural refinement and political threat. Japan and the Japanese people became popular subjects for films, including newsreels and travelogues. *The American Film Institute Catalog 1893–1910* lists ninety-four films that were released in the United States under the category of "Japan and Japanese," and the same catalog of *1911–1920* lists forty-three films under the categories of "Japan" and "Japanese" combined.[20] In particular, fully half of the films that were released in the United States from 1909–1915 portraying cross-cultural relations took the form of ill-fated romance, which were the reworks of *Madame Butterfly*'s narrative of doomed romance between a Japanese woman and an American man.[21]

Aoki's cinematic persona was constructed strictly along these lines of Japan's image of cultural refinement and "yellow peril." Aoki's Japanese body functioned to provide credibility to the rather Orientalist image of Japan, typified by *Madame Butterfly*. As one of the early celebrities, she became the physical embodiment of Japan and the Japanese people.

A typical example of such provision of authenticity to the *Madame Butterfly* narrative is found in an Aoki star vehicle, *The Wrath of the Gods* (aka *The Destruction of Sakurajima*, Reginald Barker, 1914). Thomas H. Ince, the producer of this big production, resorted to Japonisme for the newly cultivated middle-class audience of cinema.[22] And more importantly, Ince hired Aoki to make his cinematic version of *Madame Butterfly* more authentic than its predecessors. Aoki's presence in *The Wrath of the Gods* added the sense of naturalness to the archetypal narrative between Japan and the United States.

First of all, Ince emphasized the authenticity of the film in its publicity by utilizing Aoki's biography in a tear-jerking manner. A report in *MPW* noted,

> It so happens that Miss Aoki is a native of the Island of Sakura, which was practically destroyed by the eruption of the volcano Sakura-Jima. Miss Aoki, having lost practically all her relatives in this eruption, was inconsolable and Mr. Ince thought that he was due to lose her, that she would have to go back home. But in consoling her, he induced her to work in conjunction with him on a thrilling and powerful heart

interest story, entitled "The Wrath of the Gods," a four-reel Domino feature, evolving around Japanese legend and depicting the scenes and actions of her countrymen during the eruption, so that she could show the world the sufferings of her people.[23]

This report emphasized that Aoki and her family were personal eyewitnesses and tragic victims from a prehistoric volcanic island, even though in real life, Aoki was not from "the Island of Sakura." She was born in Fukuoka prefecture, the largest city in the Kyushu area, which is located about 180 miles north of Sakurajima. Indeed, on January 12, 1914, a volcano erupted on the island of Sakurajima in the southern part of Japan. It was one of the largest disasters in the history of Japan. Obviously the biographical narrative made Aoki into a melodramatic heroine of Western standards. But at the same time, the biographical-style publicity added emotional and psychological authenticity to the character that Aoki played in *The Wrath of the Gods*, in addition to her physical characteristics as a Japanese woman.

The biographical style was continuously adopted in order to add authenticity to the formation of Aoki's star image as the physical embodiment of Madame Butterfly and Japan. An article in the *New York Clipper* particularly noted that Aoki had studied piano and vocal music at a convent in Pasadena, California, before she entered the film business.[24] In real life, Aoki became the adopted daughter of a Japanese painter, Aoki Hyosai, when she toured the United States with the Japanese theatrical troupe of her uncle and aunt, Kawakami Otojiro and Sadayakko, in 1899. After the painter died, a female journalist for the *Los Angeles Examiner* raised her, but there is no record that Aoki went to the convent. She studied at the Egan Dramatic School in Los Angeles before she joined Fred Mace's company and Ince's company.[25] The convent episode in Aoki's fictionalized biography functions to emphasize not the literal but the symbolic conversion of the Japanese woman to Christianity. Conversion to Christianity is a significant motif in *Madame Butterfly* that normalizes the hierarchical relationship between civilized and masculine America and primitive and feminine Japan. Puccini's opera dramatizes the break in the sacred order when the outraged priest (Cio-Cio-San's uncle) interrupts the wedding ceremony, condemns her deceitful renunciation of the community and "her true religion," and curses her with "eternal damnation."[26] The biographical style in Aoki's star publicity provided authenticity to this archetypal tale of a religious collision.

The Wrath of the Gods and its narrative of a religious collision emphasize the difficulty for a Japanese woman to become submissive to Christianity and the American family system. First and foremost, *The Wrath of the Gods* is an archetypal fable pitting the civilized West, embodied by an American sailor, against the primitive East, embodied by a Japanese woman, told as a religious battle between Buddhism and Christianity. The film displays a Japanese village as a primitive community bound by a superstitious tradition and Toya-San (Aoki) as its victim. According to an old local legend of Sakurajima, Buddha has cursed Toya-San's family. If Toya-San marries, it would displease Buddha and the long inactive volcano, Sakurajima, would erupt. In the opening scene, a priest with dirty long hair, beard, a torn kimono, and a wooden cane warns villagers, "She came from [a] family that [is] accursed." Meanwhile, in a thunder-filled dark night,

Toya-San's father Yamaki (Sessue Hayakawa) prays to a carved stone statue of Buddha to lift the curse.

In the following scene, Tom Wilson, an American sailor (Frank Borzage), rescued from a shipwreck by Yamaki, appears as embodying the opposite religious belief. In bright daylight Tom gives Toya-San a cross-shaped necklace, saying that this represents the "god of justice." A close-up of the cross is inserted. Embraced by Tom, here Toya-San symbolically converts to Christianity.

The Wrath of the Gods uses *Madame Butterfly*'s narrative in a distorted manner in order to construct Aoki's persona as an obedient Japanese woman like Cio-Cio-San and at the same time as a satisfactorily Americanized woman for a Hollywood star. Even though it is a story of interracial romance between an American man and a Japanese woman, the Japanese woman is not ill fated as is Cio-Cio-San. The American man and the Japanese woman sail to America, the land of freedom, and live happily ever after. Yamaki, Toya-San's father, takes up the role of Cio-Cio-San. Yamaki sacrifices himself to cut Toya-San's tie with Japan. He leaves his child to the American man. Dying Yamaki hopes that Tom and the Christian God in America will protect his innocent daughter. Toya-San, on the other hand, replaces the innocent baby boy in *Madame Butterfly*, who would be protected by an American and raised as an American. She is not the one who "betrays" the Japanese ancestry. It is Yamaki. Playing out the narrative of *Madame Butterfly* in a twisted manner in cinema, Aoki thus physically embodied an ideal image of a Japanese woman who is obedient to both Japan and Christianity.

Aoki married Hayakawa after the shooting of *The Wrath of the Gods*. When Hayakawa became an overnight sensation with *The Cheat* (Cecil B. DeMille, 1915), Aoki's career as a star came to an end. Aoki stopped playing leading roles after *The Beckoning Flame* (Charles Swickard, 1916), produced at NYMPC. After 1916, Aoki's onscreen characters became subordinate ones, such as girlfriends or wives of Hayakawa. Yet, she continued embodying Madame Butterfly, the ideal of femininity and cultural refinement in the Orientalist imagination.

The Dragon Painter (William Worthington, 1919), a Hayakawa star vehicle based on a story written by Mary McNeil Fenollosa, was a perfect example of Aoki providing authenticity to the Orientalist imagination of Japan. *The Dragon Painter* was publicized as if it showed authentic Japanese landscapes, costumes, and characters, even though *Kinema Junpo*, a Japanese film magazine, pointed out, "[*The Dragon Painter*] did not show either contemporary or actual Japan."[27] American film trade journals reported that *The Dragon Painter* successfully reproduced an "authentic" Japanese atmosphere. Margaret I. MacDonald of *MPW* wrote, "One of the especially fine features of the production is the laboratory work, mountain locations of extreme beauty, chosen for the purpose of imitating Japanese scenery, and supplying Japanese atmosphere, are enhanced by the splendid results accomplished, in the work of developing and toning."[28]

In *The Dragon Painter*, Tatsu (Hayakawa), a young Japanese painter, madly seeks a dragon princess who, he believes, is hiding under the surface of a mountain lake. Undobuchida, a friend of Kano Indara, the aging master of Japanese painting, is impressed by Tatsu's paintings and his talent and invites him to Tokyo. Undobuchida

convinces Tatsu to learn the art of Kano. In Tokyo, Umeko (Aoki), the daughter of the artist, poses as the dragon princess for Tatsu. Tatsu is impressed by Umeko's refined beauty. Umeko is fascinated by Tatsu's talent. Yet, after Tatsu marries Umeko, he becomes unable to paint. She decides to sacrifice herself and so leaves Tatsu in order to save his talent. Tatsu leaps into the pool in which he believes his wife has drowned herself. He is rescued and, afterward, he succeeds with his art. After his successful exhibition, Umeko, who has actually been hiding at a temple, comes back to him.

Playing the role of Umeko, Aoki provides a sense of authenticity to the stereotypical self-sacrificing Japanese woman like Cio-Cio-San. Umeko's room is filled with the objects of Japonisme: a Japanese garden with a gate, a stream, a small bridge, stone lanterns, and a peacock in front of a small shrine; a room with tatami mats, *fusuma*, Japanese sliding doors, and shoji; paintings of Mt. Fuji and a dragon; paper lanterns. She wears a luxurious kimono and the beautiful hairstyle of an unmarried woman, *shimada*. After making up in front of a Japanese-style mirror table, she dances a Japanese dance with a silver fan in front of flowers arranged in a Japanese style, while her housemaid plays the samisen, a Japanese banjo-like musical instrument, and Japanese drums. She sits beside a shoji window under the beautiful moon. Even after the wedding, Umeko keeps wearing her long-sleeved kimono, which married women traditionally do not wear, and her *shimada* hairstyle, which should have changed to the less showy *marumage* of married women. Umeko even shows her extremely obedient and self-sacrificial nature as a stereotypical Japanese woman by committing suicide as Cio-Cio-San.[29]

FIGURE 7.1 Umeko (Aoki Tsuruko) dances a Japanese dance in a kimono. *The Dragon Painter* (1919).

Certain constraints were also placed upon Aoki in defining her role in offscreen space. Aoki's offscreen image, publicized in fan magazines, became the one that represented ideal Japanese femininity in modern American middle-class domesticity. As Sara Ross claims, "The construction of Aoki as adoring wife was extremely important to the rather remarkable success of Hayakawa as a romantic lead in the late teens and twenties."[30] Aoki's image of an obedient wife enhanced that of Hayakawa's as a patriarchal husband in the United States, which functioned as a safety valve to reduce the threatening image of an alien of a different race. With the help of Aoki's domesticated image, the Hayakawas came to embody an image of a model minority who assimilates into the American way of life. A publicity photo attached to an article in a film fan magazine, *Picture-Play Magazine*, emphasized the domesticated role that Aoki played, a reminder of *Madame Butterfly*-style gender relations even between the Japanese husband and wife.[31] In the photo, Hayakawa in a Western suit is lighting a cigarette and being served tea by Aoki in a kimono. The photo emphasizes how Americanized the Hayakawas' middle-class (or upper middle-class) lifestyle is but simultaneously displays a Japanese woman faithfully serving for her American(ized) lover.[32]

FIGURE 7.2 Aoki serves tea for her husband, Sessue Hayakawa. Reprinted from *Picture-Play Magazine* 4, no. 1 (March 1917): 64.

Nationalizing Madame Butterfly in Japan

No matter how controversial the representation of Japan was in the *Madame Butterfly*-style narrative, it was still strategically appropriated in the name of Japanese modernity. The characterization of a Japanese woman as a *Madame Butterfly*-style obedient and self-sacrificial wife and mother itself did not contradict the gender politics of the time, "good wife, wise mother [*ryosai kenbo*]." In fact, Japanese popular journals highly praised the characterization of Cio-Cio-San. Terada Shiro of *Fujin Koron*, a popular women's magazine, considered Cio-Cio-San not to be "shameful" but "favorable" for her loyalty to her husband.[33] In the case of Aoki's stardom, government officials, educators, and intellectuals, who were eager to articulate a Japanese national identity in order to face down foreign observations, or foreign "gazes," tried to appropriate her star image both as an ideal representative of modernization and as a model of Japanese womanhood. Such a mixed image became the template of female actors in Japanese cinema. In other words, it was through an effort of nationalizing, or Japanizing, *Madame Butterfly* that female stars were born in Japan.

Nevertheless, in the very beginning, Aoki's name arrived in Japan in unfavorable reports through the Japanese-American press. The Japanese government was making every effort to reach equal status with European countries and the United States in international relations and, along with this, supported Japanese communities in the United States in the attempt to abolish the legal inequality of Japanese immigrants.[34] Under these political conditions, Aoki and Hayakawa were regarded as "insults" to the nation for appearing in such films as *The Cheat* and *The Wrath of the Gods*, which would enhance anti-Japanese sentiment in the United States. The films in which they appeared were severely criticized by Japanese critics and reporters as "anti-Japanese" films that depicted Japan and its people as primitive. *The Cheat* was not even released in Japan. *The Wrath of the Gods* was released at Fujikan Theater in Asakusa on September 15, 1918, but was banned from exhibition after several weeks "because of its too primitive view of Japanese people."[35]

As one of the first female Japanese actors in cinema, and especially in "Western" cinema, Aoki appeared to embody a rebelliously independent "modern girl [*moga*]," who would not be contained in the ideal image of Japanese womanhood: "good wife, wise mother." *Katsudo no Sekai* called Aoki an "unforgivable national traitor" appearing in anti-Japanese films and referred to Hayakawa as a "lover," not a husband, of Aoki to emphasize her unfavorable image as a *moga*.[36] The same magazine devalued Aoki's ability and profession, claiming, "Nobody in Los Angeles appreciates Tsuruko's artistic value."[37] Without one quote from Aoki, the magazine also reported that she was even thinking of retirement from the film industry because of the severe criticism of their films coming from Japanese communities in the United States.[38]

However, after Hayakawa obtained star status with the help of Aoki and her new subordinate image, the Japanese reception of Aoki and Hayakawa was drastically transformed. After Hayakawa achieved superstardom in 1915–1916, fan magazines in the

United States almost completely stopped publishing articles devoted to Aoki. Aoki turned into a big star's wife. However, in Japanese magazines, many articles focused solely on Aoki appeared even after Hayakawa's rise. In these articles, Aoki's star image was rearticulated within the discourse of ideal Japanese womanhood.

American film fan magazines and their Japanese counterparts played similar roles in the formation of Aoki's public image as an ideal housewife but in opposite directions. In the United States, Aoki was regarded as an ideally Americanized middle-class wife who would create a refined domestic space with consumer goods. As Sara Ross suggests, in the U.S. magazines, while Aoki visually represented a "quaint" woman, often pictured in kimono in her publicity photos, in print she was described "as behaving as a modern woman" in order to emphasize her "Western ways" that would go against her "Eastern appearance."[39]

In Japanese magazines, it was the opposite. Even if they described how Westernized her lifestyle was, they eventually emphasized how devoted she was to her husband as ideal Japanese wives are. There were several reports from those who visited the Hayakawas in Hollywood. These people expressed pleasant surprise in their reports: the Hayakawas' house appeared very Western from the outside, but once inside, they were entertained in a Japanese-style room with Japanese food prepared by Aoki.[40] In spite of her Americanized appearance, Aoki was praised as a good housewife, who was faithfully supporting her husband. Shigeno Yukiyoshi, an editor of *Katsudo Kurabu*, claimed, "Hayakawa's fame is not accidental but owes a lot to his wife Tsuruko. . . . She is a faithful wife who devotes herself to improving her husband's position."[41]

There was one specific episode that enhanced the image of Aoki as a Cio-Cio-San-like obedient and self-sacrificing wife. On August 26, 1931, the *Los Angeles Times* reported that Hayakawa and his wife, Tsuru, legally adopted a two-year-old son, Alexander Hayes, and renamed him Yukio Hayakawa.[42] Right after this report, actress Ruth Noble asserted that she was the mother and Hayakawa the father of the boy and filed a suit against Hayakawa to regain custody of her son. Noble said she had had a romantic relationship with Hayakawa when they had appeared together in a vaudeville act "The Bandit Prince."[43] The *Los Angeles Times* kept reporting the "scandal" of the nonwhite star of the silent period in a melodramatic manner. When Hayakawa left for Japan to fulfill a contract with Shochiku, a film production company in Tokyo, the *Los Angeles Times* reported in an article titled, "East and West Part in Tears": "In bidding Hayakawa bon voyage, the actress [Ruth Noble] indicated she was saying farewell to love and to hopes of regaining custody of her son. . . . 'I just told him I was sorry if I had caused him any trouble,' the actress expressed."[44] Not only Noble but also Aoki was given a role of a melodramatic victim in this incident. Reporting the Noble incident as well as Hayakawa's affairs with other women in Japan, Abe Yu of the Japanese general women's magazine *Fujin Salon* sympathetically wrote, "Hayakawa may be able to use the numerous reports in newspapers and magazines on his controversial affairs and his family problem for free publicity of his popularity. However, there are always his wife Tsuruko's tears behind, who has to put up with her famous husband's conduct."[45] Yet, Aoki maintained her image of a devoted wife. The *Los Angeles Times* sympathetically reported

that Aoki had to defend her husband from a "loyal" wife's and a "warmhearted" step-mother's perspective.[46] This news was reported in Japan as well. Despite this incident, Hayakawa did not change his womanizing. Between the years 1937 and 1949 after the war, Hayakawa stayed in Paris and Hollywood and did not even go back to Japan, where Aoki raised Yukio and two other children.

The U.S. media tried to ease the "yellow peril" of Japanese immigrants with the Hayakawas' image of perfect assimilation to the American way of life despite their appearances. Conversely, Japanese media tried to control the transgression of Aoki's existence as a *moga* and film actress working independently outside women's normal domestic sphere. Aoki's professional status could be seen as subversive to Japan's supposed national unity, which was based on a patriarchal family system whose top position was occupied by the emperor. The archetypal *Madame Butterfly*-style obedient characters that Aoki played on- and offscreen were usable to Japanese media as authentic representations of "good wife, wise mother."

It is noteworthy that in the same period, another Japanese performer, who became famous on the international stage playing Cio-Cio-San, was severely criticized for her transgressive attitude as a *moga*. After her debut in London in *Madame Butterfly* in 1915, Miura Tamaki (1884–1946) became the first Japanese opera singer to attain international acclaim. As Aoki did in Ince films, with her Japanese body, Miura appealed to foreign spectators as if she were authentically embodying a fantasy of the obedient Japanese femininity of Cio-Cio-San.[47]

Miura was the mirror image of Aoki, with regard to the discourse on Japanese womanhood. Miura divorced her first husband in 1909 and had an affair with an Italian composer during her international tour, while her second husband was waiting in Japan. As early as 1911, Miura insisted in *Chuo Koron* magazine, "Gone are the days when wives were called *okusama* [married women who should stay at home] and women distanced themselves from associating with men.... [T]oday, we women must possess 'dignity' and actresses must 'face the world with divine dignity' and faithfully pursue art."[48] Japanese magazines reported that Miura often visited Aoki and Hayakawa in their home in Hollywood when she toured the United States, but they also included Aoki's comments about Miura's lifestyle in a somewhat ironical tone and contrasted the two internationally acclaimed Japanese women. Aoki is quoted, "Shibata [Miura] Tamaki's reputation is great. Her lifestyle is very colorful and wonderful."[49] Contrasting Miura and Aoki, two modern women, Japanese media formulated an authentic image of Japanese womanhood as a Cio-Cio-San-style obedient housewife.

Aside from formulating the image of ideal Japanese womanhood around Cio-Cio-San, Aoki's star image as an authentic *Madame Butterfly* had a tremendous impact on the discourse of modernization of cinema in Japan. In the early 1910s, primarily young intellectuals, ranging from film critics and filmmakers to government officials, began to criticize mainstream commercial films in Japan. They decried films made in Japan as slavish reproductions of Japanese theatrical works. They promoted a reform of motion pictures in Japan through the production of "modern" and "purely cinematic" films. Their writings and subsequent experimental filmmaking are often called the Pure

Film Movement. According to Joanne Bernardi, one of the goals of the Pure Film advocates was "the attainment of an internationally viable level of narrational clarity for films also endowed with a comprehensible and distinct national and cultural identity."[50]

The Pure Film advocates criticized mainstream commercial Japanese motion pictures for being "uncinematic" because, for the most part, they were merely reproducing stage repertories of kabuki, most typified by the use of the *onnagata* for female roles. They eventually intended to export Japanese-made films to foreign markets and affirm Japanese national identity internationally and domestically.[51] For example, film theorist Kaeriyama Norimasa referred to *The Wrath of the Gods* and claimed, "Isn't it a huge loss that Japanese producers do not make any films for export and have all the greatly unique landscape of Japan stolen by foreigners?"[52] Aoki and Hayakawa's films were ideal products for the reformists because they used "cinematic" forms and techniques and told Japanese stories. In other words, they wanted to produce *Madame Butterfly* in Japan.

When Aoki's stardom was formulated in Hollywood, such "cinematic" techniques as close-up, artificial three-point lighting, and soft focus were utilized for film stars in both their films and publicity photos in order to emphasize the actors' physical characteristics and to convey sensual attraction. While serving for narrative clarity and consistency on the one hand, these photographic techniques could also enhance the viewers' sensory perceptions of materiality. Contrary to *onnagata*, Aoki's newness was based on an image of physical sexuality, whose physical characteristics were enhanced by photographic technologies. As Hideaki Fujiki indicates, the March 1917 issue of *Katsudo Gaho* juxtaposes a still photo of Tachibana Teijiro, a very popular *onnagata* at Nikkatsu Mukojima studio, in a *shinpa* tragedy film *Futari Shizuka* (Oguchi Tadashi, 1917), and a portrait of Myrtle Gonzalez, a Blue Bird film star. While the latter is a sensual close-up of the female actor's face and naked shoulders in low-key lighting, dramatically highlighted with side-light from the left, the former, a typical portrayal of a *shinpa*-style film of the time, is a flat-lit long shot.[53] Even though it is not clear how faithfully this still photo represents the actual scene in the film, this example among many implies how the mise-en-scène of the *shinpa*-style film emphasizes visibility of the theatrical tableaux in diffused lighting rather than dramatically enhancing fragmented body parts or anything within the frame via spot lighting.[54] According to Fujiki, *onnagata* of *shinpa* tragedy express their emotions in the movement of entire bodies, or in special configuration with other actors and the surrounding décor, and long shots and flat lighting are more suitable to display their performance than close-ups and spot lighting.[55]

More than anything else, it was Aoki's physical body that Japanese critics and fans highly valued. *Kinema Record* noted, "She [Aoki] owns a good body. Her acting and her body are as good as European and American people."[56] *Katsudo Shashin Zasshi* placed a portrait of Aoki in its photo gallery section that was usually reserved for Western stars and noted, "Miss Aoki Tsuruko is a Japanese actress in the American film industry and she is one of the most popular stars.... We are fascinated by her sensual body and gorgeous facial expressions."[57] The opposite page displays a close-up of the face of another female star, Jackie Saunders, in typical Hollywood three-point lighting. While the unblemished big round eyes and the shining blond hair are striking in the Saunders

FIGURE 7.3   Special lighting enhances Aoki's sensuality and grace. Reprinted from *Katsudo Shashin Zasshi* 3, no. 12 (December 1917): n.p. Courtesy of Kawakita Memorial Institute.

photo, relatively strong side light emphasizes Aoki's sensual chest loosely covered with a white gown while softer fill light enhances her graceful motherly facial expression.

Aoki's Japanese body was appreciated in Hollywood because it provided authenticity to the archetypal story of *Madame Butterfly*. Her female body was appreciated in Japan because it provided authenticity to cinematic representations of gender and sexuality with skillfully incorporated "cinematic" styles such as close-up, three-point lighting, and soft focus. The only thing the Japanese film reformists had to do was to combine the two and produce their own version of *Madame Butterfly* for their nationalist purposes. What they needed was a Japanese female star who could play their Cio-Cio-San.

Kurishima Sumiko was one of the first Japanese female stars that Japanized the image of Hollywood's *Madame Butterfly*, embodied by Aoki Tsuruko. With her female Japanese body, Kurishima provided a sense of authenticity to female roles in Japanese cinema, contrary to the *onnagata*. Her body was sensualized by the Hollywood-style cinematic techniques, as was Aoki's. At the same time, combined with such new and modern technology was an image of obedient womanhood, or that of "good wife, wise mother." Kurishima faithfully followed the template that Aoki's stardom had prepared along with the image of *Madame Butterfly*.

Shochiku Company appointed "Henry" Kotani Soichi to create the visual star image for Kurishima. After appearing in *Madame Butterfly*-style films with Aoki and Hayakawa at Ince's company, Kotani worked as a cinematographer in Hollywood in the 1910s under renowned filmmaker Cecil B. DeMille. In 1920, eagerly pursued by the representatives of Shochiku and highly recommended by DeMille, Kotani returned to Japan.[58]

First, disliking the kabuki-style makeup, Kotani used Max Factor cosmetics, imported directly from the United States, to make up Kurishima in *Poppy* (*Gubijinso*, 1921), in order to create a more natural and authentic appearance of a female face and to enhance the lighting effects.[59] Second, Kotani used backlight for Kurishima to perform "the less self-conscious tasks of defining space and adding a normative degree of aesthetic polish" in order to imitate the photographic techniques of Hollywood, with which the Hollywood film industry publicized their stars in photographic images.[60] In Hollywood, Kotani had been assigned as a cinematographer for Laila Lee, a Paramount star, in *The Heart of Youth*, *Puppy Love* (R. William Neill, 1919), *Rustling a Bride* (Irvin Willat, 1919), and *The Secret Garden* (G. Butler Clonebough, 1919). Thus, Kotani recreated a Hollywood-style sensual physical entity around Kurishima. Like Aoki's, Kurishima's Japanese body was displayed in Hollywood-style cinematography. Contrary to Kotani's claims, in a still photo of *Poppy*, Kurishima's conspicuously white makeup still follows the *kabuki*-style and the lighting for her looks rather flat.

FIGURE 7.4   The white makeup of Kurishima Sumiko and the flat lighting of the scene followed the styles of kabuki. Still photograph of *Poppy* (*Gubijinso*, 1921). Courtesy of Henry Kotani Production.

At the same time, Shochiku used Kurishima mostly in films with *shinpa*-style narratives with obedient and self-sacrificing heroines. Originally a political drama associated with the Freedom and People's Rights Movement of the 1880s initiated by Kawakami Otojiro (Aoki's uncle), *shinpa* (new school) dealt with contemporary social issues and Western ideas; however, stylistically, it did not completely cut off its ties to native theatrical traditions and made liberal use of many kabuki conventions, including the *onnagata*. Often called *shinpa daihigeki* (a grand tragedy), *shinpa* tended to be a sentimental drama with a tragic ending.[61] In other words, there is no critical difference between *shinpa* and *Madame Butterfly* in terms of their characterizations of their heroines. The narrative of *Cuckoo* (*Hototogisu*, 1922), directed by Ikeda Gishin, a would-be husband of Kurishima, has the theme of a Japanese woman's self-sacrifice and retains a structure very similar to *Madame Butterfly*. Lieutenant General Viscount Kataoka's daughter Namiko (Kurishima) and Navy Ensign Baron Kawashima Takeo have an arranged yet happy marriage, but she soon turns out to be suffering from tuberculosis. Finding her vomiting blood and fearing infection, her mother-in-law, Okei, forces her to divorce Takeo and return to her parents' hometown while he is away on an official trip. The film closes with scenes in which she is dying in bed and the funeral is held. As with Madame Butterfly, "blood" intervenes in an initial marriage; a hero's family member asks the heroine to leave; and the heroine chooses to die alone in the end in order to protect the hero. Stylistically, the film contributes to the construction of Kurishima's character as a Cio-Cio-San-like obedient heroine. The film contains close-ups of the face of Namiko and emphasizes the fact that Kurishima as an actual woman, not an impersonator, is playing the heroine. Yet, compared to the portrait of Myrtle Gonzalez in *Katsudo Gaho*, lighting is not fully used to enhance the sensual attraction or material reality of the actress throughout the film. Instead, as Fujiki points out, in most parts of the film, Kurishima looks down and displays her reserved nature.[62] In the end, the heroine sacrifices herself for the career of the hero in compositions that emphasize *shinpa*-style tableaux that occupy the majority of screen time. Critic Iizuka Tokin claimed in his review of this film that Kurishima "represented Japanese ladies' gracefulness."[63]

In publicity, such a *Madame Butterfly*-style obedient star image of Kurishima was explicitly connected to traditional Japanese womanliness and femininity. As Fujiki suggests, the photogravure and its caption of Kurishima in *Kamata*, a fan magazine for Shochiku films, is a typical example.[64] In the portrait photograph, the close-up showcased her casting down her eyes, wearing a kimono, and having her hair done up in the traditional Japanese style (*yuigami*) with an ornamental hairpin (*kanzashi*). This picture was captioned with the comment: "Ms. Sumiko enacts the woman unique in Japan that symbolizes 'obedience.'" Critic Tsuda Kozo described Kurishima to be nothing but a "good wife, wise mother," the idealized Japanese woman of the time.[65]

Fujiki connects such a publicity strategy that emphasized "Japanese nature" in Kurishima's star image to the "attributes of the *onnagata*."[66] As an example, Fujiki points out that Kurishima, who was proficient at Japanese traditional dancing (*nihon buyo*), often displayed her dance in her star vehicles. Fujiki argues that Kurishima's Japanese dance was a visual representation of an invented tradition that connects her star image

to the *onnagata* and its idealized Japanese womanliness. According to Fujiki, "While such choreographed physical movements [of dancing Kurishima] might have provoked the audience's sexual interest [as in Hollywood films], the largest part of her body was covered by *kimono* or another kind of costume so that she, at least except for her face, marked little difference from the cross-dressed actor."[67] What Fujiki seems to overlook is the fact that Japanese traditional dancing existed at the core of the Orientalist fantasy. Many Aoki films produced in Hollywood, including *The Dragon Painter*, included dance scenes with Aoki in kimono. Butterfly dance had been the core attraction of early cinema. If the "Japanese nature" of Kurishima's star image was connected to the kabuki convention, it was not a simple continuation between the *onnagata* and female stars. It was a strategic choice by the post-Aoki filmmakers in Japan in order to incorporate the Orientalist imagination into Japanese cinema. It was the recovery of *Madame Butterfly*.

In 1939, Marxist film critic Iwasaki Akira wrote in a harsh tone about the emergence of female stars in Japan: "Shochiku's success was also because of its introduction of the first female actors on the screen, deviating from the unnatural custom of Japanese cinema that followed the tradition of kabuki, in which *onnagata*, or male actors, play female roles. The emergence of female actors was welcomed tremendously. The first Japanese stars, including Kurishima Sumiko, were born." However, Iwasaki continued, "Shochiku's profit-oriented policy made it step back artistically and led it to safely produce brainless films that would flatter the mass taste. In short, they were shallow and sentimental films. They were unintelligent films whose only purpose was to create young and naïve girls absorbed in sweet dreams and nostalgia."[68] Such "sweet dreams and nostalgia" can be rephrased as the archetypal self-sacrificing story of *Madame Butterfly*.

Aoki Tsuruko's stardom within the Orientalist imagination provided a template of female stardom in Japan. If Kurishima Sumiko's star image had a sense of newness, such newness did not emerge only because of Japanese filmmakers' aspiration to deviate from the theatrical conventions. It was a result of their effort to nationalize the Orientalist image of femininity. It would thus reveal the historical trajectory of American images of Japan and of the Japanese formulation of self-image in the world.

Notes

1. Qtd. in Nogami Hideyuki, *Seirin no o Hayakawa Sesshu* [King of Hollywood, Sessue Hayakawa] (Tokyo: Shakai shiso sha, 1986), 62. All translations of Japanese texts into English are mine, unless otherwise noted.

2. *Reel Life* 3, no. 7 (November 1, 1913); *Reel Life* 3, no. 21 (February 7, 1914); *Reel Life* 4, no. 14 (June 20, 1914).

3. Tamura Chiho, "Eiga joyu no tanjo: Aruiwa Nana no monogatari" [The Emergence of Female Motion Picture Actors, or a Story of Nana], in *Nihon eiga wa ikiteiru dai 5 kan: Kantoku to haiyu no bigaku* [Japanese Cinema Is Alive, Vol. 5: The Aesthetics of Directors and Actors], eds. Kurosawa Kiyoshi, Yomota Inuhiko, Yoshimi Shunya, and Ri Bonu, 174–181 (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 2010).

4. Saso Tsutomu, *1923 Mizoguchi Kenji Chi to rei* [1923 Mizoguchi Kenji Blood and Soul] (Tokyo: Chikuma shobo, 1991), 19.

5. *Variety* 33, no. 2 (December 12, 1913): 12; "Miss Tsura Aoki, Japanese Actress," *MPW* 19, no. 7 (February 14, 1914): 825.

6. Miriam Bratu Hansen, "Fallen Women, Rising Stars, New Horizons: Shanghai Silent Film as Vernacular Modernism," *Film Quarterly* 54, no. 1 (2000): 13.

7. Hideaki Fujiki, "Multiplying Personas: The Formation of Film Stars in Modern Japan" (PhD diss., University of Wisconsin, Madison, 2005), 240.

8. Fujiki, "Multiplying Personas," 234.

9. Ibid., 241.

10. Ibid., 240–241.

11. Ibid., 241.

12. Ibid., 202–203.

13. Sara Ross, "The Americanization of Tsuru Aoki: Orientalism, Melodrama, Star Image, and the New Woman," *Camera Obscura* 20, no. 3 (2005): 131.

14. Mari Yoshihara, *Embracing the East: White Women and American Orientalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 10

15. Regarding the historical link between melodrama and horror, see Tom Gunning, "The Horror of Opacity: The Melodrama of Sensation in the Plays of André de Lorde, " in *Melodrama: Stage, Picture, Screen*, ed. J. S. Bratton, Jim Cook, and Christine Gledhill, 50–61 (London: British Film Institute, 1994).

16. Peter Brook, *The Melodramatic Imagination: Balzac, Henry James, Melodrama, and the Mode of Excess* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), 15.

17. Ibid., vii–ix, 2, 14.

18. A. T. Mahan, *The Problem of Asia and Its Effect upon International Policies* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1900), 168.

19. Yoshihara, *Embracing the East*, 3–7.

20. Elias Savada, comp., *The American Film Institute Catalog of Motion Pictures Produced in the United States: Film Beginnings, 1893–1910: A Work in Progress* (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow, 1995), 350. Patricia King Hanson and Alan Gevinson, eds., *The American Film Institute Catalog of Motion Pictures Produced in the United States: Feature Films, 1911–1920* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 338.

21. Gregory Waller, "Historicizing, a Test Case: Japan on American Screens, 1909–1915," 11, unpublished manuscript obtained from Sumiko Higashi.

22. Daisuke Miyao, *Sessue Hayakawa: Silent Cinema and Transnational Stardom* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007), 60–61.

23. *MPW* 19, no. 5 (January 31, 1914): 554.

24. "Japanese Film Actress Marries," *New York Clipper* 62, no. 14 (May 9, 1914): 16.

25. Yukio Hayakawa, "Tsuru Aoki: A Flower of Japan," *The Rafu Magazine 1*, no. 4 (June 19, 1998): 3–5, 16–18.

26. Nick Browne, "The Undoing of the Other Woman: Madame Butterfly in the Discourse of American Orientalism," in *The Birth of Whiteness: Race and the Emergence of U.S. Cinema*, ed. Daniel Bernardi, 234 (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1996).

27. *Kinema Junpo* 59 (April 1, 1922): 12.

28. Margaret I. MacDonald, *MPW* 42, no. 1 (October 4, 1919): 161.

29. Miyao, *Sessue Hayakawa*, 179–180.

30. Ross, "The Americanization of Tsuru Aoki," 129.

31. Warren Reed, "The Tradition Wreckers: Two People Who Became Famous, Though Few People without Almond Eyes Can Pronounce Their Names," *Picture-Play Magazine* 4, no. 1 (March 1917): 64.

32. Miyao, *Sessue Hayakawa*, 140–141.

33. Terada Shiro, "Teiso no kuni no onna Ocho fujin" [Cio-Cio-San, the Woman from a Faithful Country], *Fujin Koron 64* (April 1921): 70.

34. Yuji Ichioka, "Japanese Associations and the Japanese Government: A Special Relationship, 1909–1926," *Pacific Historical Review* 46, no. 3 (August 1977): 409–437.

35. *Katsudo Kurabu* 3, no. 11 (November 1920): 30.

36. *Katsudo no Sekai* 1, no. 4 (April 1916): 41; SZO, "Katsudo omochabako" [Toy Box of Motion pictures], *Katsudo no Sekai* 1, no. 7 (July 1916): 48.

37. *Katsudo no Sekai* 1, no. 3 (January 1916): 37.

38. "Beikoku de daininki no nihon joyu Aoki Tsuruko" [Tsuru Aoki, a Very Popular Japanese Actress in the U.S.], *Katsudo no Sekai* 2, no. 1 (January 1917): 93.

39. Ross, "Americanization of Tsuru Aoki," 144.

40. Suzuki Yo, "Shinsetsu na Hayakawa Sesshu to Tsuruko fujin" [Kind Sessue Hayakawa and Mrs. Tsuruko], in *Sesshu*, ed. Koda Honami, 16–20 (Tokyo: Shin jidai sha, 1922).

41. Shigeno Yukiyoshi, "Beikoku dewa Nihongeki ga donnna kankyo de torareruka" [Why Films about Japan Were Made in the U.S.], *Katsudo Kurabu* 3, no. 2 (February 1920): 28.

42. "Japanese Actor Adopts Heir," *Los Angeles Times*, August 26, 1931: A1.

43. "Mother Fights Hayakawa Adoption," *Los Angeles Times*, October 17, 1931: A16.

44. "East and West Part in Tears," *Los Angeles Times*, December 11, 1931: A2.

45. Abe Yu, "Appare, 'Wongu' no koi: Kuju wo nomu Sesshu fujin" [Wonderful, the Love of "Wang": Mrs. Hayakawa Suffers], *Fujin Salon 4*, no. 9 (September 1932): 128.

46. Sessue Hayakawa, "Mrs. Sessue Hayakawa Talks; Loyal to Actor in Woe," *Los Angeles Times*, December 14, 1931: A2.

47. Mari Yoshihara, "The Flight of the Japanese Butterfly: Orientalism, Nationalism, and Performance of Japanese Womanhood," *American Quarterly* 56, no. 4 (December 2004): 982.

48. Shibata Tamaki, "Joyu ni tsukite" [To Be an Actress]), trans. Mari Yoshihara, *Chuo Koron* 26, no. 12 (December 1911): 100.

49. Aokusa-sei, "Kamome tobu koreamaru no kanpan de: Aoki Tsuruko san no omoide" [On the Deck of Korea-maru: Memoir of Miss Aoki Tsuruko], *Katsudo Gaho* 4, no. 6 (June 1920): 51.

50. Joanne Bernardi, *Writing in Light: The Silent Scenario and the Japanese Pure Film Movement* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2001), 13.

51. Aaron Gerow, *Visions of Japanese Modernity: Articulations of Cinema, Nation, and Spectatorship, 1895–1925* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), 114.

52. Kaeriyama Norimasa, "Jiko wo shireriya?" [Do We Know Ourselves?], *Kinema Record* 4, no. 19 (January 10, 1915): 2.

53. *Katsudo Gaho* 1, no. 3 (March 1917): n.p. See also Fujiki, "Multiplying Personas," 210.

54. Ibid.

55. Ibid, 242.

56. *Kinema Record* 51 (November/December 1917): 14.

57. *Katsudo Shashin Zasshi* 3, no. 12 (December 1917): n.p.

58. Regarding the career of Henry Kotani in Japan in the 1920s, see Daisuke Miyao, *The Aesthetics of Shadow: Lighting and Japanese Cinema* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2013), 15–66.

59. Kurishima Sumiko, "Gubijinso no koro" [Days of Poppy], *Eiga Terebi Gujutsu* 238 (June 1972): 21–22; Okabe, Ryu, "Amerika jidai no Henri Kotani" [Henry Kotani, American Period], *Eigashi Kenkyu* 2 (1973): 25; Tamaki Junichiro, *Nihon eiga seisui ki* [Record of Adolescence of Japanese Cinema] (Tokyo: Banrikaku, 1938; reprint Tokyo: Yumani shobo, 2006), 109.

60. Patrick Keating, "The Birth of Backlighting in the Classical Cinema," *Aura* 6 (2000): 49.

61. Mitsuhiro Yoshimoto, *Kurosawa: Film Studies and Japanese Cinema* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000), 208–209.

62. Fujiki, "Multiplying Personas," 257.

63. Iizuka Tokin, "Hototogisu to Chikyodai o mite, nihon eiga no zento ni kitaisu" [Watching Cuckoo and Sisters: Expecting the Bright Future of Japanese Cinema], *Katsudo Kurabu* (June 1922): 52.

64. Fujiki, "Multiplying Personas," 202.

65. Tsuda Kozo, "Kurishima-gata to Satsuki-gata" [Kurishima Type and Satsuki Type], *Kamata* (November 1924): 20–22.

66. Fujiki, "Multiplying Personas," 267.

67. bid.

68. Iwasaki Akira, *Eiga to genjitsu* [Cinema and Reality] (Tokyo: Shunyodo shoten, 1939), 66.

PERFORMING COLONIAL IDENTITY: *BYEONSA*, COLONIAL FILM SPECTATORSHIP, AND THE FORMATION OF NATIONAL CINEMA IN KOREA UNDER JAPANESE COLONIAL RULE

DONG HOON KIM

Back then Seo Sang-Ho was the finest *byeonsa* in Korea and he even spoke Japanese fluently. As a main *byeonsa* at the High Entertainment Theater, he danced better than anyone and was very amusing. One day when I went to the movies, a film featuring a duel between a Western boxer and a Japanese *Judo* player was screened. Seo narrated the film more passionately than ever. Suddenly the tension escalated between Korean and Japanese audiences. I myself clenched my fists and impatiently waited for the outcome of the duel. When the boxer won the first match, the Korean audiences celebrated, while the Japanese audiences cursed at the screen. Then in the next match the *Judo* player won which brought the praises of the Japanese and the disappointment of the Koreans. At one point, Seo cheered for the *Judo* player. The Koreans yelled at him, "You bastard, you are also a Korean! Which side are you on?" The film finished with the victory of [the] *Judo* player. In the dark, fighting erupted—the Japanese and Koreans hurled floor cushions and mandarins at one another. The screening ended in chaos. Even Japanese police could not control the situation. I will never forget this incident.

(Yi 1970: 80–81)

In her study of African American spectatorship and its manifestation in American racial politics in the segregated American urban spaces of the early twentieth century, Jacqueline Stewart illuminates the ways in which African Americans negotiated confrontations with cinema as a major feature of modern American culture. Expanding the discussions of the politics of racial representations, Stewart introduces the notion of "reconstructive spectatorship," which refers to "a formulation that seeks to account for the range of ways in which Black viewers attempted to reconstitute and assert themselves in relation to the cinema's racist social and textual operations" (Stewart 2005: 94). According to Stewart, this reconstructive spectatorship illustrates how the public dimension of spectatorship persisted for Black viewers, complicating the presumed pleasures and limitations of classical absorption and distraction designed for the idealized spectator; Black audiences at the beginning of the classical Hollywood era were not meant to be fully integrated into the developing narratives on screen nor into American theater audiences because "the conspicuousness of Black bodies did not disappear in darkened theaters" (Stewart 2005: 110).

This chapter's opening anecdote, which recounts a firsthand film-viewing experience by a movie fan in Korea under Japanese colonial rule (1910–1945), resonates in many ways with Stewart's study of the constitutive relations between early film spectatorship and "internal colonialism" and also with her notion of reconstructive Black spectatorship. Yet what fundamentally demarcates Korean colonial film spectatorship from that of African Americans described in Stewart's work is that most of the films Korean audiences watched at the cinema did not directly concern them in terms of subject matter, narratives, and representational politics, since they were foreign in origin. Nevertheless, as the above quote demonstrates, Korean film spectators still found a way to express their cultural and social ethos through their appropriation of the film texts that seemingly had little to do with their social realities or cultural backgrounds. Significantly, this film-viewing experience also verifies the decisive function of an extradiegetic element in film exhibition and film–spectator relations in colonial Korea: the practice of *byeonsa* (*benshi* in Japanese pronunciation).

This chapter examines *byeonsa*, a voice performer/narrator who provided live narration for silent films, and its role in the development of film culture in Korea under Japanese colonial rule. Through the discussion of this filmic practice, which originated in Japan, this article ultimately interrogates questions and problems in historicizing both Korean and Japanese national cinemas in the colonial context. It especially will explore the ways in which modes of exhibition were inextricably tied to the construction of national cinema, nationalism, and national identity. The very visceral and even violent film-viewing experience portrayed in the opening anecdote allows us to reconsider and challenge exhaustive attempts to associate the concepts of colonial and national cinemas mainly with various aspects of film production—filmmakers' intentions, productions of national, and/or nationalist films—or the consumption of locally produced films. Indeed the written history of Korean colonial cinema is exclusively about the films by Korean filmmakers and Korean spectators' responses to them. In order to draw a complete picture of the formation of Korean colonial cinema, however, it is crucial to look beyond

the films produced by Koreans and Korean spectators' loyal devotion to them, since the numbers of films locally produced in Korea throughout the colonial period was substantially small; until the later years of Japanese imperial rule when the screening quota systems began to limit the number of foreign films screened, more than 95 percent of the films released in Korea were foreign imports. This means that Korean filmgoers' interactions with locally produced films were rare occasions at best and quite special events as they accounted only for a small portion of the film culture in colonial Korea. Therefore, it is intrinsically limited to discuss Korean colonial cinema by relying on a highly limited number of texts and by thinking through film spectatorship under Japanese colonial rule based solely on locally produced films. The most pressing issue is to inquire into the ways in which Korean filmgoers dealt with the *absence* of images with which they could immediately identify. In this regard, by investigating Korean film spectators' attempts to decode and resignify the meanings of foreign texts and the *byeonsa*'s role as a mediator between those texts and Korean audiences, I will elucidate the physical and discursive formations of colonial and national cinema at the sites of film exhibition and consumption. Yet this essay explores not just the migration of the *benshi* practice across the "border" and its local application but also the physical movement of *benshi* performers and film historiographical questions it poses by looking at Japanese *benshi* in colonial Korea who performed for Japanese migrants. In doing so, it will grapple with a blurry border between imperial Japanese cinema and Korean colonial cinema as the flow of the *benshi* practice across Japan's imperial territories provides a compelling instance that complicates the boundaries of early Japanese and Korean film while embodying tensions, contests, and negotiations between the cultures of the colonizer and colonized.

Byeonsa and the Formation of Colonial Film Spectatorship

As the opening quote explicitly demonstrates, the *byeonsa*'s presence at the cinema was decisive in forming the early film–audience relationship and the film culture in general in Korea. The *byeonsa,* who usually sat on the left side of the screen and narrated and/or interpreted the images, served more than just an explanatory function. Commenting on the crucial role of *byeonsa*, an anonymous film critic notes,

> Moving picture is a sort of pantomime that expresses its beauty just with its forms. Hence only after a *byeonsa*'s explanation, a spectator understands it [its beauty] in details. Also through the *byeonsa*'s explanation, the artistic value of a picture could be exposed. Therefore a *byeonsa* must completely understand the facts and nature of a picture and explain it properly according to the actors' expressions in a picture. Only then can its artistic value be fully revealed. Thus, moving picture *byeonsa* must possess more knowledge than stage actors and even analyze the progression of human knowledge in order to satisfy [the] audience's needs. (*Maeil Sinbo*, August 22, 1919)

As this observation suggests, *byeonsa* was conceived as the final touch that would complete a silent film by delivering its innermost "beauty" to the audience after carefully examining a film's every aspect. In other words, *byeonsa* was not just a component of a film's screening or exhibition but was part of the very film itself. Thus, only after *byeonsa*'s accurate interpretation and transference of a filmic text could film spectators appreciate its final form. For these reasons, filmgoers' expectations of *byeonsa* was incredibly high, which means that being a *byeonsa* was never an easy job since she or he was expected to possess extensive knowledge of the film language and style, actors/actresses, and even the cultural and historical backgrounds of the countries from which the films came. Even worse, they had to face ferocious film fans who did not restrain their strong desire for a qualified *byeonsa* nor their contempt for a poor performance. It was quite common for spectators to openly express their anger at a *byeonsa*'s poor performance during a screening. Many devoted fans also sent fan letters to newspapers and magazines to analyze or criticize *byeonsa*'s routines and even denounce some *byeonsa*'s morally inappropriate lifestyles. One of the most notorious incidents involving a *byeonsa* happened at the Umigwan Theater when a spectator enraged by the *byeonsa*'s meager explanation threw burning charcoal at him in the middle of the screening (*Maeil Sinbo*, January 18, 1919).

All these indicate the importance of the *byeonsa*'s function in film exhibition in Korea during the silent movie era. In this regard it is not surprising that the Korean *byeonsa* was the pivotal figure in shaping early film–spectator relationships. Although the films that *byeonsa* explained were almost entirely foreign films, mostly from Hollywood, it did not matter since *byeonsa* constantly linked images on the screen to Korea's colonial reality during their performance. Despite its nationalist image, however, the Korean *byeonsa* was the direct import of Japanese *benshi*, a well-known Japanese silent film practice. Thus the paradoxical nature of *byeonsa* stems from the localization process of its Japanese counterpart. There were also a significant number of Japanese *benshi* in Korea who performed for Japanese audiences in Japanese movie theaters located in Japanese communities. Japanese *benshi* and Korean *byeonsa* therefore had considerably different audiences and political constituencies, but they shared a certain fate at the same time. Due to their stardom, immense influence over the audience, and, most of all, their improvisational performance style, *benshi* and *byeonsa* were under the constant

FIGURE 8.1 A theater listing in a newspaper with the photos of *byeonsa*, which evidences the significance of *byeonsa* practice in the early film culture and industry in Korea (*Donga Ilbo*, August 30, 1920).

scrutiny of authorities and policed by the same censorship and regulations. Most importantly, the active movement of this unique Japanese film practice across "borders," insofar as it was not contained within the "borders" of its original nation, proves the prevailing influence of Japanese cinematic practices over Korea as well as the East Asian region. Specifically, *byeonsa* is indicative of colonial cinema's ambivalent relationship with imperial cinema, which reflects both the tensions and negotiations between the cultures of the empire and the colony. I use the word, "border," in an ironic way, because the "borderless" East Asia was the imperial agenda of Japanese imperialism and was often expressed in its numerous imperial slogans, such as *Ni-Man* (Japanese–Manchurian) bloc (1931), *Ni-Man-Shi* (Japan–Manchuria–China) bloc (1933), *Toa Shinjitsujo* (new order in East Asia) (1938), and *Dai Toa Kyoeiken* (greater East Asia coprosperity sphere) (1940), which sought to ideologically justify Japan's colonization of other Asian countries. Yet, in reality, there were many distinctive "borders" and hierarchies wedged between and among the colonizers and colonized. Hence whereas the Japanese *benshi* and its influence over the cinemas of Japan's colonies cinematically embody Japanese empire's pan-Asianist ideal—an imperial transnationalization of the region—the Korean *byeonsa* often reflects the emerging nationalism of colonial Korea that defied the spread of the empire's transnational ideal—or the nationalism of the colonizers. The very culture of the colonizer was thereby transformed into an effective cultural means of bolstering nationalist sentiments and challenges to the empire. This conflict was noticeably visible even inside the Korean peninsula since both *benshi* and *byeonsa* coexisted in the same urban spaces, often competing against each other, and sometimes struggling together under film censorship.

Ever since Joseph L. Anderson and Donald Richie's influential and comprehensive study of Japanese national cinema, *The Japanese Film* (1959), boosted scholarly interests in Japanese cinema in the Anglophone world, *benshi* has been one of the most popular subjects when discussing early Japanese cinema, primarily because it has been deemed a unique Japanese tradition that overtly distinguishes its cinematic idiom from that of the West. While *benshi* is a Japanese film tradition in origin, however, it was not solely practiced in Japan; *benshi* was widely practiced in Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, and among Japanese communities in Hawaii and on the west coast of the United States (*Katsudo Benshi* 2001, 4; J. L. Anderson 1992: 261). Yet there are rare scholarly works that extensively deal with the practices of *benshi* in a wider Asian or transnational context. This omission may be attributed to some limitations in research practices, but it can be traced even more to a film historiographical tendency in studies of imperial Japanese cinema, which seeks the Japanese cinema's internationality or "uniqueness" from its film style rather than its historical presence in its former colonies. Early Japanese cinema—and Japanese cinema in general—is one of the most prolifically studied non-Western national cinemas in the West and it is often considered an alternative form of national cinema, compared to Western film practices, aesthetics, and styles. In a similar line, Japanese national cinema is almost always examined as one under constant foreign influences, especially those of Hollywood or European cinemas, rather than as a national cinema that influences other national cinemas. In other words, Japanese

cinema's international position during their moment of empire tends to be determined in its relation to the West, the United States, and Hollywood. Yet it is problematic to employ Japanese cinema as the prime example of the non-Western cinemas or "alternative" cinema. Certainly, Japanese cinema displays quite unique and different features from American and European film in terms of film aesthetics. But on a historical level, early Japanese film history is more aligned to the Western film histories than it is to other non-Western or colonial cinemas, as the early development of Japanese cinema was intertwined with Japan's imperial project. Hence, these types of historiographical approaches obfuscate, sometimes actively, the presence and influence of Japanese (imperial) cinema over its surrounding region. In this sense, the conspicuous lack of discussions on the circulation of *benshi* outside of Japan's "borders" is symptomatic of this specific historiographical problem in studies of Japanese imperial cinema.

In the meantime, in Korea, which had a prolific *byeonsa* tradition only second to Japan's, film historians have casually embraced *byeonsa* as a Korean film tradition without ruminating much on its origin. Interestingly, studies of *byeonsa* in both North and South Korea have been mostly confined to the Korean context; *byeonsa* has been regarded as "an amalgam of media developed in the arts of conversation of the orient" (Kim and Jeong 2001: 142), "a prominent artist in [Korean] silent cinema" (Choi and Hong 2001: 191), and "a figure who is so crucial in discussing [Korean] national cinema" (Ahn 1998: 33) rather than as another example of an imperial culture imposed upon colonial Korea. Thus, this naturalized acceptance of *byeonsa* as a "unique" or "traditional" Korean film practice generates the same historiographical problem that arises when studies of *benshi* remain geographically contained in Japan, since both paradigms neglect the exchanges between the film cultures of Japan and its former colonies, like Korea.

Byeonsa was in fact so quickly localized and integrated into early Korean film culture without any resistance from either the Korean film industry or Korean spectators that it is difficult to accurately pinpoint how and when *benshi* was Koreanized as *byeonsa*. The primary reason for the smooth localization of the Japanese *benshi* practice in Korea is related to the absence of a theatrical tradition—as in stage dramas—in Korea. Due to this absence, the so-called New School (*sinpa*) groups, which performed Western-style modern stage dramas with contemporary subjects, had to study modern Japanese dramas, as modern Western culture was primarily channeled through Japan at the time. Hence many *sinpa* performers went to Japan to pursue modern dramaturgy. Yet they did not even have to go to Japan since they could study at any number of the early theaters that had been built in Korea by the Japanese as a place to house Japanese stage dramas for Japanese migrant audiences. Thus, the key figures who adopted the Western-style drama circa 1910 learned the very basics of the modern stage drama from these Japanese theaters located in Seoul, such as Keijoza, Kotobukiza, and Kabukiza (Jang 2000: 199–213). As a result, Korean *sinpa* groups employed many of Japanese drama's unique traits such as *onnagata* (a male actor impersonating female characters), *rensageki* (a stage drama incorporating film screening), and the use of a narrator, which would later become the inspiration for Japanese *benshi*. Korean theaters' and theater groups' names

followed Japanese styles, and performance styles used in the earliest of stage productions were heavily influenced by the modern Japanese stage drama. From production to reception the institutionalization of theater as a new cultural venue in Korea was closely tethered to the modernization of the Japanese theater system. It was "modern" culture that Korean stage and film attendees aspired to learn, not specifically Japanese culture. *Byeonsa* was part of the aforementioned process of importing Western or "modern" theatrical and cinematic institutions *from* or *through* Japan, and thus the fact that *byeonsa* was a Japanese invention put neither the Korean film industry nor spectators under any kind of moral dilemma.

Hence *benshi* (*katsudoeiga benshi* in its full name) was naturally incorporated into Korean film practices. In fact, the term did not even change, except that it was pronounced "*byeonsa*" (*hwaldongyeonghwa byeonsa*) in Korean.[1] Korean *byeonsa* began to appear around 1910, much later than when the *benshi* appeared in Japan; the first Japanese *benshi* performance dates back to 1899 (*Katsudo Benshi* 2001: 11). However, the precursors of *byeonsa* existed in the form of lecturers, translators, or commentators (*Mansebo*, May 12, 1907; *Maeil Sinbo*, May 17, 1912). The term "*byeonsa*" began to be used around 1908 (Cho 2001: 130), but it did not widely disseminate right away because lecturers or translators were more often used as late as the early 1910s. It was in the 1910s when *byeonsa* was officially integrated into film practice and culture and became a part of the major attraction in the moviegoing experience. The emergence of *byeonsa* in this decade came with the arrival of movie theaters as film screenings became a crucial component of live theater programs. A 1914 newspaper article reads,

> It [the moving picture] has been a mere part of various shows, but it has developed quickly for the last two, three years, and naturally five, six movie theaters have opened in Gyeongseong [Seoul], and even *byeonsa,* who explains the pictures, began to appear.... Now we have several Korean *byeonsa*, and many more will follow soon, but Kim Duk-Gyeong has a promising future and will be considered the best of the bunch. (*Maeil Sinbo*, June 9, 1914)

This newspaper article demonstrates that the rise of *byeonsa* was indeed tied to the advent of movie theaters and also attests to the speed with which film's popularity grew in Korea from the early 1910s on. And the influence of *benshi* over Korean *byeonsa* continued throughout the silent film era as the development and changes in *byeonsa*'s performance was constantly informed by those of *benshi*. The *benshi* performance consisted of two parts: *maesetsu*, introductory remarks prior to film screenings, and *nakasetsu*, explanations accompanying events that occurred onscreen throughout the screening. Up until the late 1910s, *benshi* devoted a large portion of their performance–twenty to thirty minutes—to *maesetsu* due to the short length of films, but as films became longer, *benshi* eventually shortened their *maesestu* to five, six minutes and instead focused more on providing live comments (Misono 1990: 34; Fujiki 2006: 71). Korean *byeonsa* not only employed such performance terms as *maesetsu* and *nakasetsu* but also followed the major shift in the narration style of *benshi* (Cho 2001: 134), which indicates that not just the *benshi* practice but also *byeonsa*'s performance methods were imported from Japan.

Wu Jeong-Sik, an aristocrat from a renowned family, who was an avid movie fan that frequented the Gwangmudae Theater, a temporary movie theater, is generally considered Korea's first professional *byeonsa*. Wu was recruited by the manager of Gwangmudae, Park Seung-Pil, who felt that a commentator was in demand since films' narratives were becoming increasingly sophisticated and complicated. However, due to his weak voice and slow pace, Wu promptly lost the audience's favor and his job as well (Ahn 1998: 31–32). The first professional and *byeonsa* star was Seo Sang-Ho, who served as the chief *byeonsa* for Gyeongseong High Entertainment Theater, the very first movie theater in Korea, which opened on February 18, 1910. Before he became a *byeonsa*, Seo worked as a Japanese interpreter, so he was fluent in both Korean and Japanese, which made him a perfect choice for High Entertainment Theater's first few years of mixed Korean and Japanese attendance. Seo turned out to be a great performer; his eloquent voice acting and his signature dance prior to each screening made him movie fans' favorite *byeonsa,* which catapulted him into stardom. Seo's rivals started to appear soon. Kim Deok-Gyeong, who would later become the chief *byeonsa* for the Second Daishokan Theater in 1914 and then for Danseongsa Theater in the 1920s, joined Seo at the High Entertainment Theater a year after Seo's debut. Yi Han-Gyeong, another *byeonsa* on the rise, was hired by the Umigwan Theater, a movie theater built in 1912, which catered to Korean audiences. Many other *byeonsa* stars would emerge after these three early celebrities made their mark.

The *byeonsa* performance in front of both Japanese and Korean audiences described in the opening quote was a quite rare occasion, as the ethnic segregation of film cultures quickly took place toward the mid-1910s. Movie theaters began to serve Japanese and Korean spectators separately, and thus Japanese *benshi* began to appear in Korea and immediately outnumbered Korean *byeonsa*. This preponderance would continue throughout the entire silent film period in Korea. Daishokan and Ogonkan, the first two Japanese movie theaters established right after High Entertainment Theater (both built in 1913), had multiple *benshi* and thus had the luxury of each *benshi* playing a film character or two. Thanks to ethnically segregated urban space, different target audiences of each theater, and language barrier, *benshi* and *byeonsa* did not necessarily compete against each other. However, when a movie theater decided to change its nature, in other words, its intended audience, it implied oncoming trouble for one party. The Second Daishokan Theater, which changed its name from High Entertainment Theater after the Daishokan Theater acquired it in 1914, initially catered to a Japanese audience and thus hired a number of Japanese *benshi*. Yet when it became a theater for Korean patrons in June 1914, it fired all of the Japanese *benshi* and hired Kim Duk-Ryong and Choi Byeong-Ryong, two Korean *byeonsa* (*Maeil Sinbo*, June 3, 1914). The theater shifted its target audience once again after the notorious Umigwan/Daishokan deal, which allowed Umigwan to monopolize the market for Korean moviegoers. This time, Korean *byeonsa* were released and replaced by newly hired Japanese *benshi* (*Maeil Sinbo*, April 24, 1915). Sometimes Japanese *benshi* who performed in Japan traveled with certain films to Korea. When D. W. Griffith's *Way Down East* (1920), one of the most popular silent movies ever screened in Korea—theatrically released five times in Seoul and countless times in

other major cities and towns throughout the 1920s—was imported for the second time in 1923, its distributor, Yi Pil-Wu, bought the rights to the film from a Japanese agency[2] and contracted two top-rated *benshi* affiliated with the Shochiku studio along with it. These Japanese *benshi* became a major selling point in the promotion of the film. Even in the 1920s, the numbers of Japanese *benshi* far surpassed those of the Korean *byeonsa*. As of 1922 when the *byeonsa/benshi* permit system was introduced, records indicate that in Korea fifty-four *byeonsa/benshi* applied for the qualification test and only thirteen were Korean *byeonsa* (*Donga Ilbo*, June 28, 1922). In fact, not all *byeonsa/benshi* applied for this permit at first and only a handful of those who did actually passed. In response, the police department of Gyeonggi Province, which was in charge of film censorship at the time, decided to pass all *byeonsa* who applied, acknowledging that the hasty implementation of this new regulation policy required some time for adjustment. Nevertheless these statistics reveal that there were significantly more Japanese *benshi* than Korean *byeonsa* in Korea, suggesting that Japanese theater businesses and cultures in Korea were flourishing much more than Korean theaters and cultures.

The introduction of the permit system in both Japan and Korea in 1921, though the first annual test was offered in 1922, indicates that Korean *byeonsa* and Japanese *benshi* became the sites of active film censorship in the empire and attests to their popularity and influence. In other words, they were considered "dangerous" public figures particularly because of their improvisatorial performance style and stardom. The following incident involving an overtly political gesture made by a *byeonsa* during his performance portrays how unexpectedly a *byeonsa* could utilize his position and his influence over the audience for his political ends:

> Around 9:30 pm on July 5th Jeong Han-Seol (22), who has worked diligently as a *byeonsa* at the Umigwan Theater for the past three years, suddenly appeared on stage during the ten-minute intermission, faced the audience with a tense look and excited voice, and shouted with his fists firmly clenched, "Today is the day we are shouting out freedom and today is the day we are waiting for action. Let's spill our pure and boiling red blood all over the world to draw the world's attention to us and make all the countries in the world realize our existence and efforts." Since he made inappropriate comments which had nothing to do with the moving picture, he was immediately arrested by a police officer present at the screening and is under custody at the Jongno police station as of now. This is the first speech-related arrest involving a *byeonsa*. (*Donga Ilbo*, July 8, 1920)

This incident that transpired before any specific film law had been initiated certainly evinces the potentially threatening nature of *byeonsa/benshi* performance, and thus it shows why the permit system was to be instituted. At the same time, film censorship and regulations of the silent film period illuminate the various ways that film exhibition practices, especially in relation to *byeonsa/benshi*, were censored and controlled. It was not until 1917 when the Japanese government took serious measure with regards to film censorship. The police took charge of film censorship and eventually initiated a precensorship screening process as its main method of surveillance. In the 1920s two major

FIGURE 8.2. *The Moving Picture ("Film") Censorship Regulation* that focuses on film exhibition and *byeonsa/benshi* performances (*The Office of the Government-General Official Report,* No. 4162, July 5, 1926).

film regulations were finally introduced in Korea in 1922 and 1926, respectively. The 1922 Exhibition and Exhibition Sites Regulation that sought to monitor entertainment including film, stage, and dance performance drew all kinds of other public spaces—schools, factories, hospitals, etc.—under its watchful eye. However, this regulation was not nationally implemented but instead limited to Gyeonggi Province, which included Seoul. Korea's first official film censorship law, the Moving Picture Film Censorship Regulation, was announced on July 5, 1926, and was one part of a larger censorship movement being crafted by the Japanese empire, not only in its colonies but in Japan,

where the leftist movement had become a growing concern for the authority. Under this 1926 regulation, the Office of the Governor General (Department of Documentation and Publication, *Toshoka*) took direct charge of the film censorship in Korea. What is most compelling about this regulation is that in order to get a permit for each film, exhibitors first had to submit a film print along with two copies of so-called explanation (*setsumei*) scripts, in other words, *benshi/byeonsa's* performance scripts (the second clause; *Chosen Sodokufu Kanpo* No. 4162, 41). In addition, among its total of thirteen clauses, four deal with how to manage the process of submitting explanation scripts, such as how to deal with the revision and resubmission of initially rejected scripts, lost scripts, and fines for failing to submit a script in a timely manner. Significantly, this film law focuses mostly on film exhibition without including any specific clauses on the production side. In other words, it shows that Japanese film censors were just as much interested in *how* films were screened as *what* was being screened. And, of course, attention was focused on *benshi/byeonsa* performances.

The Office of the Governor General tried to censor *byeonsa* performances by way of carefully examining their scripts along with the film text in advance, but there was never an absolute guarantee that a *byeonsa* would adhere to the approved scripts. Additionally, the police officers present at each screening could only censor a *byeonsa*'s action retroactively after the performance was done. Also important, as in Japan, the regulation of *byeonsa* by the censorship authority focused primarily on checking on personal backgrounds and credentials of *byeonsa*; according to Aaron Gerow, *benshi*'s qualification in Japan was dependant not on their "oratorical skills or entertainment value" but on a "character standard," since authorities hoped to transform *benshi* into a public figure or even a potential censor whose role was not simply to explain the text to the viewers but also to lead them to apprehend a socially more proper meaning (Gerow 2010: 210–211). Licensing *byeonsa* in Korea was administered in a very similar fashion, as the *byeonsa* test consisted of quizzing testers on "common sense" and police officers interviewing with testers to examine whether or not they were persons of "good conduct" (*Donga Ilbo*, June 28, 1922). In other words, the main effort was placed more on "weeding out" those inappropriate to an ideal *byeonsa* performance envisioned by the censorship entity than on regulating *byeonsa*'s live performance at movie theaters. Gerow notes that the regulation of *benshi* in this manner seemed to work just fine in Japan, especially after the nationalization of film censorship in 1925, since censorship previews and the *benshi* license practice, along with various efforts to reform *benshi* both in and outside of the film industry, had left little margin for *benshi*'s intervention at film exhibitions, and thus *benshi* was no longer considered a major problem (Gerow 2010: 214). Yet *byeonsa* continued to pose some serious challenges for film censorship efforts in colonial Korea, mainly because the Korean *byeonsa*'s "unruliness" was not only socially acceptable but even actively pursued and also expected. Indeed many reported incidents disclosed the logistical "holes" of the censorship system as well as the difficulties in regulating *byeonsa* performances. One of the most famous cases occurred at a screening of an MGM spectacle, *Ben-Hur: A Tale of the Christ* (1925), at the Danseongsa Theater in 1929. In particular, the scandal surrounding *Ben-Hur's* screening bears witness to the contesting

relationship between film censorship policies and the abilities of the *byeonsa* to betray their assigned function, generate alternative meanings, and even galvanize nationalist sentiments among Korean film spectators.

Yun Chi-Ho (1865–1945), a progressive political activist and renowned English interpreter who for more than twenty years kept journals, mostly in English, that vividly record his colonial experiences, provides his fragmentary impression of the *Ben-Hur* screening. Yun remarks, "[I] went with Jang and Ki to Danseongsa to see *Ben-Hur* screened. The *Byeonsa* or the interpreter used the word *Gamsa* (a governor) instead of *Chongdok* (a governor general) to designate the Roman Governor of Palestine. Strange [that] the police had permitted the films in Korea at all" (Yun 2009: n.p.).[3] As Yun's depiction astutely points out, it was indeed quite peculiar for a film like *Ben-Hur* to be permitted, given this biblical epic's narrative implications; the film's depiction of the Jewish people's struggle for liberation from the oppression of the Roman Empire inferentially evoked the colonial condition of Korea. Yi Gu-Yeong, a filmmaker who began working as the head of PR (public relations) department for Danseongsa Theater in 1925, told a story concerning *Ben-Hur's* release in his extensive interview (*Yi Young-ilui Hanguk Yeonghwareul uihan Jeungeonrok* 4, 283–286). Upon previewing *Ben-Hur*, Yi realized that the film could be a huge success, as its issues could potentially appeal to Korean spectators. He thus came up with an idea for how best to evade the censorship problem. Yi found out that Detective Yoshida had been assigned as the censor for the screening of *Ben-Hur*. He then researched Detective Yoshida's background and learned that he had just published a *haiku* poem in a magazine. When Yi screened the film for Yoshida for his approval, he began to praise Yoshida's *haiku* skills just as it approached the most politically charged scene. Both distracted and pleased by Yi's praise, Yoshida approved the film. Yi, aware that the film could still be banned after its release, instructed his *byeonsa*, Seo Sang-Pil, to read the carefully prepared script and not to improvise lest the audience get too excited. Despite Yi's instruction, Seo got carried away and became very vocal and enthusiastic during his performance, at one point proclaiming, "[Y]ou Roman's one hour is equivalent to a hundred years for us Jews," thus invoking the hardship of Korean people. A policeman who attended the screening came up to Yi immediately after the screening and requested the *byeonsa*'s explanation script. On the next day, Yi was ordered by the police to resubmit the film, which subsequently was temporarily banned. Yet at the time Yoshida, the elite policeman who was newly appointed to the film censorship board in Korea, had inner political rivalries with other censors who had been in Korea for more than a decade, and thus refused to admit his oversight and ardently deflected any challenge to his authority. As a result, *Ben-Hur* was rereleased after only a three-day suspension, and it was the enormous success that Yi Gu-Yeong anticipated.

The screening of *Ben-Hur* exemplifies and epitomizes some of the core features of film spectatorship in colonial Korea. Most significantly, the enthusiastic response to this Hollywood spectacle suggests that Korean spectators felt strong connections with this foreign text. In spite of the film's remote relationship to Korea's actual colonial situation, they partook in a paradoxically cross-national and cross-racial identificatory practice

through their decodification and reconstruction of this text's alternate meanings. In his influential essay "The Concept of National Cinema" (1989) and again in "The Limiting Imagination of National Cinema" (2000), Andrew Higson stresses the place of audience reception—in particular, the reception of Hollywood cinema and the way it is morphed into a national cinema—in the formation of a national cinema. Highlighting the transnational movements of films across borders and the diversity of audience reception in the debates about national cinema, Higson recognizes three distinctive responses to the foreign films by a local culture. According to Higson, the first response is an anxious concern about the effects of cultural imperialism that might possibly infect the local culture or even destroy it. The next response is that the introduction of exotic elements may have a liberating/democratizing effect on the local culture. A third possibility is that rather than foreign cultural products being treated as exotic by a local audience, they are instead interpreted according to a local frame of reference (Higson 2000: 69). The reception of foreign films, especially Hollywood films, in colonized Korea exemplified by *Ben-Hur*'s success demonstrates the second and third responses that Higson describes. In other words, within the historically, culturally, and institutionally conditioned national context where the exhibition of foreign films massively outnumbered that of locally produced films, the reception and consumption of foreign films became one of the major determinants in the construction of Korean national cinema. And its center was the *byeonsa,* who incessantly and directly influenced and intervened in the ways the audiences received, appropriated, and recreated the meanings of the films they watched.

Byeonsa, Benshi, and the Question of National Cinema

In 1938, Seo Sang-Ho, the first *byeonsa* star, was found dead in the Umigwan Theater from a drug overdose. Seo's drug problem put an end to his career prematurely in the mid-1920s, when he was repeatedly sent to prison for opium use and, near the end of his life, was spotted on the downtown Jongno streets begging for change. The infamous death of Seo was an emblematic event that signaled the dusk of the *byeonsa* era. In fact, one magazine article that chronicles the rise and fall of Seo right after his death parallels his career with the destiny of *byeonsa* in general:

> Now the time has changed, we live in a talkie era, and the trace of *byeonsa* can only be found at third- or fourth-rate theaters outside the city or in the countryside. Yet only seventeen or eighteen years ago, when the silent movie reached its peak, the quality of *byeonsa* was so crucial that it literally determined the fate of movie theaters. Every theater was more serious about getting a good *byeonsa* than good movies and invested their effort and money into bringing in a topnotch *byeonsa*. Among all those *byeonsa*, Seo Sang-Ho was without question the best in all of Korea. . . . His death and tough life make us realize how harsh the world we live in is once again. (Yoo 1938: 120–121)

This quote shows how quickly the practice of *byeonsa* had declined. It neared extinction only three years after the release of the first Korean talkie *The Tale of Chunhyang* (*Chunhyangjeon*, 1935). Yet this same magazine article also indicates that *byeonsa* was not entirely gone and was still practiced in culturally underdeveloped areas. Korean *byeonsa* did linger on for a while, as some *byeonsa* created a theatrical drama genre called *Byeonsa* drama and even formed a theater group called Yeoseongza (Korean Art Institute, ed, 1935: 38). The *Byeonsa* drama, which incorporated *byeonsa* performance with popular songs and short dramas, was short lived, and *Byeonsa* practice finally disappeared around 1940.

As discussed thus far, the migration and the localization process of Japanese *benshi* in Korea reveal both the immense influence of Japanese film practices held over the formation of national cinema in Japan's former colonies and the ways in which the colonial cultures adapted to and reciprocally transformed imperial film cultures. The essentially "transnational" nature of the *benshi* practice that spread across the empire and the coexistence of Japanese *benshi* and Korean *byeonsa* in the same but segregated urban space call for a more nuanced approach to the concepts of both Japanese and Korean national cinemas. Indeed the fact that this practice was not confined to a single national cinema context evidently challenges the boundaries between Japanese imperial cinema and Korean colonial cinema. While the practice of *byeonsa* exemplifies a shared history of early Japanese and Korean cinema, it also proves the importance of film exhibition and spectatorship in discussing colonial Korea cinema. Foreign texts,
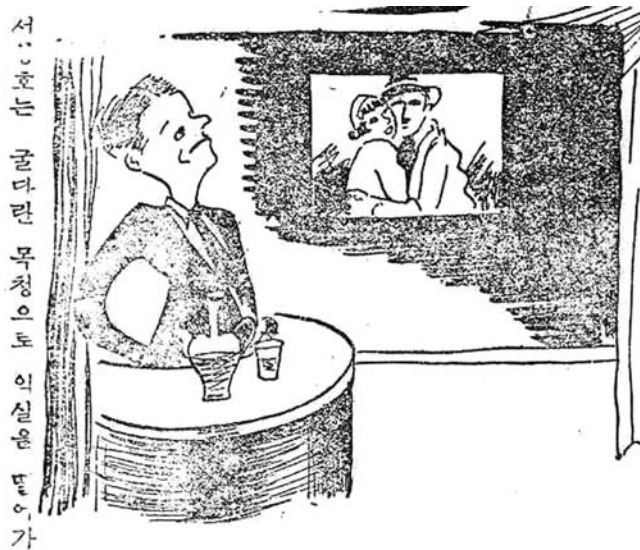
FIGURES 8.3 and 8.4 Caricatures of Seo Sang-Ho, the first celebrity *byeonsa*, as a heavy drinker and womanizer from a magazine article chronicling the rise and demise of *byeonsa* practices (*Jogwang* 4, no. 10 (October 1938)).

FIGURES 8.3 and 8.4 (*Continued*).

or more specifically Korean spectators' reception of Hollywood films explored above, reflect the tensions between the colonizers and colonized. As I have discussed, Korean spectators attempted to interpret those foreign texts and appropriate them to ponder over and address their colonial reality and politics. In the meantime, the colonizers saw the popularity of these films among the colonized as a potential threat to the colonial order. This contested interpretation of films foreign to both the colonizers and colonized demonstrates how the consumption and reception of external cultures could become a culture sphere in which political tension surrounding the colonial situation, especially the formations of national and imperial identities, arose. And *byeonsa* vigorously influenced and shaped this relationship between the identity formation and consumption of foreign films as well as the colonial film spectatorship in general by way of mediating the colonial realities of Korea through their interpretive performance.

NOTES

1. *Byeonsa* literally signifies "orator," and it did not solely designate film narrator, since the term was employed to describe orators and public lecturers even before the advent of film narrator practice. Hence although *byeonsa* was the most common term used to indicate narrators, *hwalbyeon* (*katsuben* in Japanese), a term shortened from *hwaldongyeonghwa byeonsa*, was also in frequent use. Today the word *byeonsa* is no longer part of everyday vocabulary—the term gradually disappeared in the 1950s—and it is now solely associated with film narrators during the silent film era.

2. Yi actually acquired a film's copy from a Japanese agency that bought the rights to the film. There were no copyrights issues in Japan or Korea at the time.

3. Yun has been a controversial historical figure in Korea after his collaboration with the Office of the Governor General during the later years of the Japanese Empire. Yun began to write his journal in English in 1899 when he studied in the United States.

References

Ahn, Jong-Hwa. Hangukyeonghwacheukmyeonbisa. Seoul: Hyeondai Mihaksa, 1998.

Anderson, Joseph L. "Spoken Silents in the Japanese Cinema; or, Talking to Pictures." In *Reframing Japanese Cinema: Authorship, Genre, History*, 259–311 ed. David Desser and Arthur Nolletti Jr. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992.

Cho, Hee-Moon. "Museongyeonghwauihaeseolja, *byeonsa*yeongu," *Hanguk Yeonghwaui Jaengjeom I.* Seoul: Jibmundang, 2002: 119–157.

Choi, Chang-Ho, and Hong Gang-Seong. *Nah Un-Gyuwa Sunangi Yeonghwa.* Pyongyang: Pyongyang Chulpansa, 2001.

"Chosen Sodokufurei dai59go: Katsudo shashin <fuirum> kenetsukisoku" *Chosen Sodokufu Kanpo* 4162 (July 5, 1926): 41–42.

Fujiki, Hideaki. "Benshi as Stars: The Irony of the Popularity and Respectability of Voice Performers in Japanese Cinema." *Cinema Journal* 45.2 (2006): 68–84.

Gerow, Aaron. *Visions of Japanese Modernity: Articulations of Cinema, Nation, and Spectatorship, 1895–1925.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010.

Higson, Andrew. "The Concept of National Cinema." *Screen* 30.4 (1989): 36–46.

Higson, Andrew. "Limiting Imagination of National Cinema." In *Cinema and Nation,* 63–74, ed. Mette Hjort and Scott Mackenzie. London: Routledge, 2000.

Jang, Han-Ki. *Hanguk Yeongeuksa.* Seoul: Dongguk University Press, 2000.

Kim, Jong-Won, and Jeong Jung-Heon. *Uri yeonghwa baeknyeon.* Seoul: Hyunamsa, 2001.

Korean Art Institute, ed. *Yi Young-ilui Hanguk Yeonghwareul uihan Jeungeonrok 3.* Seoul: Sodo, 2003.

Korean Art Institute. *Yi Young-ilui Hanguk Yeonghwareul uihan Jeungeonrok 4.* Seoul: Sodo, 2003.

Misono, Kyohei. *Katsubenjidai.* Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1990.

Musei Eiga Kanjokai, ed. *Katsudo Benshi.* Tokyo: Urban Connections, 2001.

Stewart, Jacqueline Najuma. *Migrating to the Movies: Cinema and Black Urban Modernity.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005.

Yi, Gu-Yeong. "Sageonuirobon yeonghwasa." *Yeonghwa Yesul* (December 1970): 80–81.

Yoo, Heung-Tae. "Dangdae Ingi *Byeonsa* Seo Sang-Ho Ildaegi." *Jogwang* 4.10 (October 1938): 120–128.

Yun, Chi-Ho. Journal No. 9 (January 16, 1929): n p.

CHAPTER 9

··

OUTPOST OF HYBRIDITY: PARAMOUNT'S CAMPAIGN IN JAPAN, 1952–1962

··

HIROSHI KITAMURA

THE years after World War II witnessed a conspicuous growth of Hollywood culture in Japan. As Douglas MacArthur's Supreme Command for the Allied Powers (SCAP) commenced its demilitarization and "democratization" of the former Axis enemy, U.S. studios began to catapult a wide variety of films through the Motion Picture Export Association (MPEA), a legal cartel that did business with regulated markets like Japan's. Following a grim era of survival and endurance, Japanese fans not only flocked to the movie houses en masse but also formed a multitude of fan clubs and circles in search of escape, entertainment, and inspiration. By the time MacArthur departed from Japan in late 1951, U.S. cinema had extended its influence far beyond key urban centers—the traditional spheres of its influence—and controlled some 40 percent of the market share. A once peripheral commercial arena had turned into one of the U.S. film industry's core markets alongside its European counterparts.[1]

This chapter is an attempt to understand how Hollywood took on this expanding commercial sphere during the ten-year period following the occupation.[2] I do so by examining the practices of a U.S. major studio—Paramount—and its campaign across the Pacific. Emboldened by the MPEA's success during the occupation, the mountain-logo studio founded its own branch office in 1952 and exported a plethora of hits,

including *Roman Holiday* (1953), *White Christmas* (1954), *Rear Window* (1954), *War and Peace* (1956), and *Psycho* (1960).[3] Through its widespread promotional efforts, the company gained fame and popularity as a producer of "respectable, artistic, spectacular, and modern" entertainment. Despite the dynamic revival of Japanese cinema, Paramount, during these years, enjoyed lucrative returns and reigned as a top U.S. studio in a competitive business arena. It also became a prominent cultural force that accelerated the inflows of American popular culture, which saturated Japan "in ways that one could not see in the prewar era."[4]

One of my goals in this chapter is to contribute to the literature on global Hollywood. In recent years, film and media scholars have offered important insight into the American film industry's international business, most notably by scrutinizing policy and trade negotiations shaped by Hollywood representatives, U.S. government officials, and their counterparts in foreign countries.[5] Much less, however, is known about the industry's worldwide operation on the "ground level." What follows eschews the traditional "top-down" or "bird's-eye" approach to the study of global Hollywood. Instead, I will investigate the American film industry's activities by focusing on Paramount's branch operation in Tokyo. As one of the many offshore outposts of a sprawling corporate bureaucracy, the Japanese office rigorously partook in a multitude of activities—including film promotion, exhibition, and consumption—to assist the studio's transpacific business on the local level. A close look at Paramount's ground-level operation will reveal not only the complex machinations of the movie business in Japan but also the neglected role foreign distribution offices play in sustaining and facilitating Hollywood's overseas expansion.

Another aim is to enrich our knowledge on cinematic hybridity. Although still sometimes seen as a "national" (or "American") formulation, the enterprise known as "Hollywood" has long been a fruit of collaboration involving filmmakers, financers, publicists, exhibitors, and consumers in the United States and abroad.[6] Paramount's activities in Japan exemplify this cross-cultural process, as its local branch was run and managed by Japanese employees. Enlisted and eager to serve the Paramount system, these home-grown workers wielded their linguistic abilities and local knowledge to survey market conditions, generate publicity, negotiate with exhibitors, and engage consumers. While operating within a U.S.-run corporate hierarchy, Japanese workers were vital "bridge figures" who mediated between the films and the movie-goers. Their existence and multifaceted endeavors challenge the view of Hollywood as a purely "American" creation. Instead of relaying a fixed "Hollywood product" to the Japanese consumer, the workers at the Japanese branch actively constructed and reinvented it through the acts of distribution and promotion. Paramount's activities in Japan illustrate that "Hollywood entertainment" is a product of many hands.[7] "Foreign" agents often play a significant role in its creation.

Finally, in demonstrating Paramount's hybridity, this chapter seeks to show the role Hollywood played in enlivening Japan's cinematic culture after the occupation. The literature on the decade often centers on the resurgence of Japanese cinema and the celebration of the "second golden age."[8] While the revival of Japanese filmmaking was an impressive phenomenon, the expanding cinematic culture of this era also owed

something to the dynamic penetration of U.S. cinema, which competed and coexisted with its Japanese rivals in a growing marketplace. Looking at Paramount after the occupation helps us understand how Hollywood anchored its presence in the face of market challenges and the ways in which it helped shape the cinematic culture of the island nation. The four decades after the 1950s saw the fortunes of Japanese studios decline, while Hollywood went on to surpass the share of local studios in a climate described as "West high, Japan low" (*yoko hotei*). Paramount's activities in the 1950s and early 1960s, then, enrich our knowledge of the U.S. film industry's long-term success in postwar Japan. It sheds light on an interactive process through which Hollywood studios gradually transformed Japan into one of the largest markets for American movies in the second half of the twentieth century.

Before the Storm

Paramount's history with Japan did not start at the end of the occupation; it emerged from the studio's growing business aspirations during the prewar era. Much of this momentum began in 1914, when the Paramount Pictures Corporation was founded. In the next few years, this distribution company, led by Adolph Zukor, launched a relentless effort to manufacture feature-length narratives, develop a network of branch offices, and acquire venues for film exhibition. By 1921, the company had turned into "the largest film-making and distribution corporation" in the United States.[9] Its global business proceeded simultaneously. Initially dependent on foreign brokers and exchanges, the mountain-logo company began to develop its own international distribution network by positioning branch offices in major cities around the world.[10] In 1932, by which a "mature oligopoly" was shaped by the Big Five, the studio created the Paramount International Company to centralize "all Par[amount]'s foreign production, distribution and exhibition biz," as noted by *Variety*.[11] Despite setbacks due to the Great Depression, the studio's international trade remained intense throughout the 1930s.

The aspiration to explore Japan emerged from this climate. Paramount's transpacific operation officially began in 1922, when the company founded a branch office in Tokyo.[12] Owing to manager Tom Cochrane and a group of energetic local employees who were touted by the trade as "modern boys" (*modan boi*) of the industry, the company generated extensive ad campaigns and, at its peak, released over sixty films per year.[13] In securing screen time from exhibitors, Paramount, unlike most other U.S. studios who arranged film exhibition under a "free booking" system, pursued a "direct management" (*chokuei*) method when possible, choosing to own and operate its own theater circuit just as it did in the United States.[14] The 1920s and 1930s were a time when Japanese film companies enjoyed a strong command over the market, at times controlling some 80 percent of the share. Nevertheless, Paramount left a strong mark in Japan as a prominent minority—a proud supplier of "superior" (*yushu*) and "exceptionally crafted" (*tokusaku*) entertainment.[15]

The Second World War brought a halt to Paramount's business in Japan, but it did not terminate the company's transpacific aspirations. In the months following the Pearl Harbor attack, the studio, together with the other U.S. companies, withdrew from much of the Asian market and concentrated on Britain and the Western Hemisphere.[16] Yet as the tide of the war began to shift in favor of the Allies, the company began to seek the opportunity to reenter Japan. As early as the summer of 1943, Paramount and the other majors began to plan for the postwar trade with Will H. Hays and Carl E. Milliken of the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America (MPPDA). Extensive discussions between the industry and the U.S. State Department led to the formation of the MPEA, a trade cartel that aimed to present Hollywood as a "united front." In the months after the end of the war, the MPEA engaged with countries that employed tough protectionist measures—such as the "Iron Curtain" nations in Eastern Europe.[17]

Japan was another market that necessitated the MPEA's involvement, as it was under the stringent control of the Allied occupation. During the six and a half years after the war, the occupation forces, led by MacArthur, enacted a slew of reforms to demilitarize and "democratize" the war-torn country. Viewing U.S. cinema as a "chosen instrument" that could facilitate Japan's postwar reconstruction, SCAP assisted the creation of the Central Motion Picture Exchange (CMPE), the MPEA's local distribution office that operated commercially after being founded as a part of SCAP.[18] While monitoring U.S. and other cinemas through a multiheaded censorship office, MacArthur's headquarters privileged Hollywood over other foreign cinemas and assisted CMPE's operation. This enabled Paramount to release its films in an otherwise tightly regulated marketplace. Thanks to favorable U.S. policy, the company was able to distribute such films as *Going My Way* (1944), *The Lost Weekend* (1945), *The Virginian* (1946), *Road to Rio* (1947), and *Sunset Boulevard* (1950)—all of which became hits.[19]

The occupation era was a rewarding time for Paramount, but its true desire was to do business on its own. As SCAP was preparing to transfer governing rights to the Japanese, each U.S. studio began to formulate new institutional networks for the transpacific trade.[20] Paramount moved to register its own office in Tokyo. During the final year of MacArthur's presence, the studio dispatched William Piper, executive assistant foreign sales manager, to set up the local apparatus. In Japan, Piper recruited veteran employees from the CMPE and pooled its resources with 20th CenturyFox and Warner Bros. to jumpstart the operation.[21] CMPE officially ended its function on December 31, 1951, as planned. The next day, U.S. studios began their autonomous business. On April 28, 1952, Japan officially regained its sovereignty from the Allies. With these developments, Paramount's history in Japan entered a new phase—an era of intense market competition.

A HYBRID OUTPOST

The market that Paramount reentered was brimming with optimism. Following an era of deadly air raids and devastating resource shortages, the number of theaters in

Japan multiplied from 1,376 in 1946, 4,109 in 1952, to an astonishing 7,457 by 1960. Likewise, during this fifteen-year period, the total of new releases grew from 108 to 763, while annual attendance figures soared from 732 million to over 1 billion.[22] Hollywood's perception of Japan changed during these years. During the prewar decades, U.S. studios did consider Japan as a growing market, but one that lagged far behind Europe. But within a few years after the war, Japan, in the words of a top studio representative, had turned into one of the industry's "best market[s]."[23] Paramount was eager to break into this business sphere. Shortly after resuming its trade, George Weltner, president of Paramount International, noted that the once war-shattered nation was now as vital to Hollywood as were the leading markets in Europe.[24]

The studio's transpacific campaign began in the United States. From the earliest stage of film production, Paramount aimed to churn out films that appealed to diverse audiences—without outrage or outcry—at home and abroad. Directors and individual crewmembers, thus, worked with the studio's International Department based in Hollywood, which intervened in the production process to ensure that the final product would fare well in offshore markets, as well as the Production Code Administration, which strove to eliminate offensive onscreen representations for foreign as well as domestic consumers.[25] The politics and tastes of Japanese consumers were an important part of the conversation.[26] The company's U.S. offices also developed strategies for global marketing. In addition to determining the filmic lineup for the Japanese market, executives and managers from the corporate headquarters in New York periodically visited the Tokyo office to arrange and coordinate sales drives for Japan, and at times for the wider Asian region.[27]

Yet success in the Japanese market required flexibility, adaptability, and cross-cultural expertise. The Japanese office, thus, became vital to the transpacific operation. Since its inauguration in 1952, the office operated around the Tokyo head office and its regional outposts in Osaka, Nagoya, Fukuoka, and Sapporo.[28] To secure manpower, the company hired scores of Japanese men and women—over a hundred during its peak.[29] The general manager of the Japanese office was veteran movie man Metori Nobuo. The only native Japanese person tasked to run the local campaign of a Hollywood major during the 1950s, Metori approached his job with pride and dignity, often boasting of the "pioneer spirit and sophisticated feeling and tradition" of the mountain-logo studio.[30] His activities were aided by the likes of Ise Toshio and Hatano Saburo—experienced movie men who oversaw the company's day-to-day affairs. Market observers in Japan sometimes charged that U.S. studios ran a "colonial" operation by rewarding Americans (and other foreigners) with managerial tasks while imposing demeaning rank-and-file work to the Japanese.[31] However, in the case of Paramount, business on the ground was largely a "Japanese" operation.

The central objective of the Japanese office, not surprisingly, was to maximize profits for the Paramount enterprise. Metori's responsibilities, thus, heavily involved promotion. According to one local manager, publicity in postwar Japan not only required the customary effort to advertise the feature presentation after the theater and release date were determined (known as "exhibition publicity" or *kogyo senden*) but also encompassed long-term advertising to build the hype (dubbed "distribution publicity" or

haikyu senden).[32] In contrast to rival companies such as MGM, which determined a promotional budget for each film, Paramount allocated advertising costs by the fiscal year. This policy would enable Metori's team to devote greater funds to distribution publicity, which could generate momentum months ahead of the film's release.[33]

The means and methods of advertising were multiple. In an attempt to reach out to consumers, the Japanese branch devised what the trade referred to as "basic publicity." The package included visual accessories, such as posters and billboards created by Japanese designers, newspaper and magazine ads, and recorded announcements for the airwaves.[34] The distributor also crafted colorful publicity texts known as "press sheets" or *puresu shiito*, which were short versions of press books created in the United States. Tie-up marketing was commonplace as well. The Japanese office frequently teamed with dairy, candy, toothpaste, and insurance companies to reach out to children, adults, and families.[35]

One of the biggest keys to success was the mobilization of stars. The physical travel of Hollywood icons was of course not unique to Japan. But during the prewar era, their overseas extension was still rare; Japan, for example, saw the visits of only a handful of stars, such as Charlie Chaplin, Douglas Fairbanks, and some others. By contrast, the years after the occupation witnessed the arrival of star after star in the island market. Accounts suggest that Paramount dispatched its onscreen icons more than any other U.S. studio, including William Holden, Danny Kaye, James Stewart, Shirley MacLaine, and Alfred Hitchcock. Metori's office accommodated the Tinseltown icons by arranging interviews with journalists, film critics, and fans. Often, extravagant press conferences and receptions welcomed these celebrities. The stars did not just create a buzz for the upcoming feature film but also assisted the "general advertising" of the company brand.[36]

Metori's team also utilized unconventional objects and spaces to build the hype. This included ad balloons in the sky, tents on the beach, the surface of buses, exhibit spaces in department stores, and floats on the streets. Stunts were used to catch wide attention. For the release of *Branded* (1950), for example, the company hired students and asked them to ride the local trains all day with a shirt conspicuously inscribed with the film title (*Rakuin*). According to publicity manager Komaki Toshiharu, this was a cost-effective stunt that successfully drew the attention of commuters.[37] The release of *3 Ring Circus* (1955), a Jerry Lewis comedy, came with a spectacle in front of the Nagoya train station, where a large elephant balloon greeted passers-by. Signs of *Strategic Air Command* (1955) popped up at the Koshien baseball stadium in Osaka. In promoting a Cold War film about a professional ballplayer joining a transpacific bombing mission, local publicists created baseball caps marked with the film's title for vendors to don on-site.[38]

While generating an avalanche of publicity, the Japanese office endeavored to secure the sites of exhibition. Unlike the prewar era, Paramount, during the postoccupation years, went for a "free booking" of theaters—a process that hinged on direct negotiations with exhibitors. This required the savvy of the company's twenty plus sales agents, who, contracts in hand, interacted with theater managers across the country.[39] The most

FIGURE 9.1 Publicity stunt for *Branded* at the concourse of the old Hankyu Umeda Station, *c.* 1952. Photo courtesy of Komaki Toshiharu.

significant partner was Shochiku's foreign film chain ("SY" chain), which not only maintained a large theater circuit but also ran coveted roadshow theaters, which enforced reserved or limited seating, urged silence and polite manners in the auditorium, and sold lavish film programs as memorabilia.[40] Paramount often released its tent-pole products in these select movie houses to build attention and prestige before they circulated widely in first- and lesser-run theaters across the nation. In spaces beyond the reach of the SY chain, Paramount turned to individual spot bookings and often shared screen time with other cinemas.[41] In order to enhance the appeal of its films, the Japanese branch also assisted exhibition ballyhoo. It advised and collaborated with theater managers to boost front displays, poster and still photo exhibits, and ad hoc publicity stunts.

Furthermore, Metori's office directly courted consumers. It did so by forming a fan club called the Paramount "Tomo no kai" (Meeting of Friends).[42] Founded in Tokyo in June 1953, this organization quickly amassed some 1,000 members and developed regional branches in Kobe, Osaka, Nagoya, Fukuoka, Yokohama, Matsudo, Yamagata, and Sapporo.[43] Its activities were manifold. Each branch organized regular meetings, lectures, roundtables, and screenings; twice a year, a "national" meeting was held in Tokyo (usually coupled with a screening). The organization also published a monthly newsletter titled *Paramount*, which introduced new and upcoming films while offering

star gossip, film reviews penned by professional critics, and essays on the movies written by member representatives.[44] At times, stars and moguls—such as Holden, MacLaine, and Barney Balaban—visited club meetings to interact with fans.[45] Although supervised by Ise and his co-workers at the Tokyo office, much of the club's activities stemmed from the voluntary spirit of Japanese youth—the core constituents of the growing membership body.[46] These moviegoers were not passive recipients of Paramount culture; they actively took part in inventing and promoting it, often in "search for authenticity."[47]

An "Entertainment from Above"

The words and images that Paramount disseminated in Japan were diverse and multiple, but they were not random articulations. On the contrary, they represented a prominent film studio's determination to maximize profits in a challenging marketplace. Metori's strategy partly involved the promotion of stars and genre traits. Yet it also concerned a desire to dignify their brand of cinematic entertainment as "respectable, artistic, spectacular, and modern." This form of class marketing was partly a means of distinguishing the Paramount brand from those of rival U.S. studios such as Columbia, Universal, and Republic, all of which were known to cater B films to the "masses" (*taishu*)—often "masses of provincial areas" (*chiho taishu*).[48] But this was also an attempt to sharpen the contrast with Japanese cinema, which was identified by many contemporaries as "lowbrow."[49] In the end, Paramount marketed its film as an "entertainment from above." This reflected a desire to develop its constituents around urban, educated, and middle- or upper-class audiences, who appeared to savor American and Western culture—hence Hollywood movies.[50]

The marketing of Paramount entertainment centered on the stars. Of course, hyping studio icons was hardly new, but according to an observation made by film critic Nanbu Keinosuke in 1956, stars had "recent[ly]...become the greatest emphasis in general publicity."[51] As expected, the Japanese office showcased the familiar faces of Hepburn, Holden, and Hitchcock in ad after ad. The company also showered consumers with genre rhetoric. For comedies, it promised an abundance of "commotion" (*dotabata*) and "explosive laughter" (*bakusho*).[52] Romantic dramas were sold as "sweet and beautiful" (*kanbi*) stories that surely offered a "moving [experience]" (*kando*).[53] Publicity for some genres amplified violence and conflict. Blurbs for westerns, for example, not only promised scenic views of the "high plains" but also highlighted "thrill, action, and breath-taking big duel[s]."[54] Similar language illuminated the ads of crime and law-enforcement films. As a result, an ad for *Union Station* (1950) came with the following line: "a bloody cross-exchange between the G-Men...and evil gangs!"[55]

Yet in general, the publicists in Japan refrained from excessive sensationalism and chose instead to present its brand of cinema as "respectable" entertainment. This signaled the Japanese office's decision to abide by the general tenets of the Production Code, as well as its efforts to present the Hollywood brand in Japan as a "cultural" (*bunkateki*)

product since the early months of the occupation.[56] The convergence of these two trends could be seen, for instance, in the marketing of *Appointment with Danger* (1951), a gun-heavy B film on a U.S. postal inspector's efforts to thwart an organized robbery. For the promotion of this crime film, the local office did not refrain from characterizing the story as "an eruption of courage and violence against a gang!!" But in so doing, Japanese publicists also boasted of the film's "educational" value, noting that it "introduced [to Japanese viewers] the organization of postal inspection in meticulous detail." What particularly justified this view was the film's ending, in which the criminals perish at the able hands of the "courageous" law enforcers. Treating the onscreen story as a model for peacekeeping, the press sheet noted of a "recent…[police failure in containing] a large-scale postal raid." "If there were a postal inspection office and a courageous policeman like Alan Ladd, that gang…may have been cornered and captured," the publicity text remarked.[57]

Another example of sensitive marketing involved *All in a Night's Work* (1961). Set in Palm Beach and New York City, this romantic comedy follows a developing love affair between a playboy nephew (Tony Curtis) who seeks to protect the reputation of his deceased uncle—a magazine tycoon—and a female employee (Shirley MacLaine), who is suspected to have been his secret girlfriend. One of the film's highlights, according to the publicity team, was skin. The front page of the press sheet coupled the image of a nearly naked heroine wrapped in a skimpy towel (a snapshot drawn from the film) with the following blurb: "A woman clad in a bath towel jumped out of a hotel room at midnight!"[58] Yet at the same time, the Japanese office sought to assure viewers that this display of (partial) nudity did not vulgarize the narrative. A publicity piece in the fan newsletter, thus, made it clear that the heroine's nudity was nothing more than a "healthy seductiveness" (*kenkō na iroke*) and that MacLaine's character "held firm ethical values."[59] Therefore, the film was ultimately a "bright and fun" story that "everyone could enjoy."[60]

While taking pains to paint its films with cultural respectability, Metori's team utilized a select lineup of films to champion artistic merit. Boasting of quality in this way was not only a means of legitimizing the business (which in Japan was often seen as "lowbrow") but also an attempt to draw educated and "intellectual" (*interi*) audiences to the theaters. The films that fit the bill were often literary and theatrical adaptations, such as *A Place in the Sun* (1951). Based on Theodore Dreiser's *An American Tragedy*, the narrative dramatized a young social climber's (Montgomery Clift) failure to make it in society. A winner of six Oscars including best director and screenplay, this heartbreaking tale highlighted the protagonist's psychological struggles, as he falls in love with a young debutante (Elizabeth Taylor) and abandons his pregnant, working-class girlfriend (Shelley Winters), who mysteriously drowns during a date with him on the lake. In selling this acclaimed film, the Japanese office treated it as the company's "fortieth anniversary memorial" production and marketed it as a theatrical masterpiece. Laudatory remarks went to George Stevens's "intense" direction, Clift's "solid acting," and Taylor's performance. Although at the time known more for her "beautiful face" than for her acting, the young starlet, according to the press sheet, delivered a "marvelous performance"

in this coveted production. In the end, *A Place in the Sun* achieved nothing less than a "milestone of film art!!"[61]

A similar kind of praise went to *Detective Story* (1951). An adaptation of Sidney Kingsley's well-known Broadway play, this police drama depicted the intense pursuits of an uncompromising detective (Kirk Douglas). Unlike *Appointment with Danger*, which places the law enforcers in dangerous stakeouts, the plot of *Detective Story* unfolds almost entirely in a spatially confined Manhattan precinct. In this airtight atmosphere, the narrative presents the detective's fierce pursuit of justice until he shockingly discovers that his wife had secretly aborted a child under the hands of a suspected criminal. The irony of the plot, the "meticulous composition" of the narrative, and the performance of the stars rendered this an "art film." The press sheet particularly lauded Douglas and the heroine Eleanor Parker for their "wonderful acting"; in addition, it touted Wyler (as "the most trustworthy director"), the cinematographer Lee Garmes (as a "keen talent"), and the entire supporting cast (for their "intense performance"). This "super-extraordinary production," thus, "far surpassed the standards of modern film art."[62]

In addition to championing the aesthetic worth of its films, Paramount promoted its brand as spectacular. Although often associated with the films of "new" Hollywood, spectacle, as Geoff King notes, more broadly formed "a central part of a post-war strategy aimed at tempting lost audiences back to the cinema in the face of demographic changes and the development of television and other domestic leisure activities."[63] In the 1950s, Paramount asserted grandeur and scale with its new big-screen technology: VistaVision. Created as a counterweight to Cinerama and 20th Century-Fox's CinemaScope, VistaVision rewarded Paramount with a wider aspect ratio (usually 1.85:1) and thereby an extended depth of field, an enhanced flexibility in character placement, and the possibility for greater complexity in mise-en-scene composition. In Japan, VistaVision functioned as vehicle of product differentiation against Japanese narrative products, which appeared to lag behind in the "war" of the wide screen.[64] "[The American] big screen," noted film critic Hazumi Tsuneo in 1955, "is a challenge against mid-sized and small movie ventures . . . the key to the future of Japan[ese cinema] lies in . . . how to confront this."[65]

The Japanese branch utilized VistaVision to stress the "visual superiority" of its products. This applied to *White Christmas*, the first film shot in this new format. This heartwarming story about two returning GIs making it in show business (and finding their true love) highlighted the cheerful song and dance by Bing Crosby and Danny Kaye. The spaciousness offered by the enhanced aspect ratio allowed the actors to stretch their movements for their musical numbers. Publicity texts for this film praised Irving Berlin's score composition as well as the stars' onscreen performances. But even more important was technology. For an evening edition of *Yomiuri shinbun*, Paramount designed a block ad with a 1.85:1 frame (to correspond with the actual VistaVision frame). While alerting readers to the enlarged screen size with the shape of the ad, a blurb in it boasted that a "breakthrough invention that reduces the size of the grains by half" has yielded an "unprecedented clarity" and an "easy to watch 1:1.85 ratio." This, the ad proclaimed, was VistaVision, which has "determined the path of the movies of tomorrow!!"[66]

Subsequent films celebrated VistaVision as a means to an end. This was the case with *The Mountain* (1956), a gripping tale about two mountain-climbing brothers who take on the Swiss Alps. Starring Spencer Tracy and Robert Wagner, the film interlaced exquisite long shots of the snow-covered mountains with tense character interaction—one in which the younger brother's greed for money leads to a fierce dispute and eventually his accidental death. The story itself, according to the press sheet, was already a "moving human drama," but what made the film "path-breaking" was the use of the VistaVision camera, which required the labor of "some sixty people" to carry it "14,000 feet."[67] The "wonderful cinematography," the studio boasted, aided the creation of "amazing effect and dynamism." According to the press sheet, the production of mountaineering films was challenging because shooting them on artificial sets "would immediately expose…flaws." However, *The Mountain* was "superior" because of the "camera techniques" as well as the "remarkable [views on the] screens." It even surpassed German filmmaker Arnold Fanck's famous "mountain films" of the late 1920s and early 1930s.[68]

Spectacle meant far more than VistaVision in *The Ten Commandments* (1956). This famous remake by Cecil B. DeMille dramatized the life story of Moses, from his birth in a slave household of Hebrew descent, his growth in the court of the Egyptian pharaoh, and his return to liberate the Hebrew women and men enslaved by Rameses. The film contained at least two main selling points. One was the presentation of historical grandeur. The narrative, to borrow from DeMille's introduction at the opening of the film, aimed to restore the "missing years" of Moses's life by turning to "ancient historians" such as Philo and Josephus, as well as the expertise of contemporary scholars from the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the University of Chicago, and the Jewish Community Library in Los Angeles. In an ad on *Yomiuri shinbun*, Paramount boasted that *The Ten Commandments* chronicled "Egyptian culture and human lifestyle from three thousand years ago, based on strict research!"[69]

The other selling point was visual spectacle. For this historical epic that even exceeded the scope and scale of his earlier productions, DeMille constructed massive sets of the Pharaoh's palace, integrated location shots from Egypt, and devised cutting-edge special effects to visualize the Jewish exodus through split waters. Beginning months before the opening in Tokyo, Paramount made sure to publicize the spectacular highlights of the film. In an interview for the company's fan magazine, George Weltner remarked that DeMille mobilized some "10,000 people" during the shooting in Egypt and that the scene of the water split in the Red Sea required "the invention and discovery of a number of special techniques." Ultimately, he expressed confidence that Japanese fans "would understand how wonderful it [the film] is."[70] Ads of the production also championed its spectacular dimension, noting the involvement of 200 professional actors, 25,000 extras, 100,000 props, 30,000 books for research, and the 3 hour and 40 minute length of the film. These helped shape the "big production" of "a greatest scale."[71]

Moreover, publicists in Japan sold Paramount as a manifestation of the "modern" (*modan*). As scholars have shown, the term "modern" often involved complex meanings and contradictory representations. But what Paramount's agents regarded as "modern" approximated what Roland Marchand articulated in his seminal study of U.S. consumer

advertising in the 1920s. This included fast-paced life in an ocean of skyscrapers, buses, and taxicabs weaving through paved streets and chain stores sprouting on street corners; a celebration of middle- and upper-class whites over people of color; women's active (but limited) involvement in the public sphere; the rise of a professional and managerial class in the business world; the sprawl of advertising, new fashion, and consumer culture embraced by middle- and upper-class Americans; and, more broadly, the championing of "the new against the old, the modern against the old-fashioned."[72] These traits helped shape a distinct aura known in Japan as the "Paramount style" (*Paramounto cho*).[73] Although not all Paramount films were encoded with these representations (as was the case with westerns), the studio's reputation centered on its "high collar . . . bright, chic, urban-style" colored with "class and dignity."[74]

One film that represented the "Paramount style" was *Teacher's Pet* (1958). This "modern" and "chic" comedy—as described by a fan in a published roundtable—revolved around the growing romantic relationship between a self-made newspaper editor (Clark Gable) and a professor of journalism (Doris Day) who come to respect each other's professions and lifestyles after initially despising them.[75] There are multiple characteristics that might have rendered this a "modern" story. One was its social setting. Staged in Manhattan, the action shapes around two middle-class professionals at the headquarters of a major newspaper company (in which "over sixty real journalists" made their appearance, as noted by the press sheet), a university, a glamorous nightclub, and a rival professor's tidy one-bedroom apartment. The dialogue was an appeal as well. Throughout much of the film, the protagonists aim to outwit and outsmart each other while falling in love; oftentimes, the more educated female professor has her way over the crusty editor and the men who surround her. As a result, publicity texts praised the film as an "exceptionally smart" "Paramount-style comedy" with "intelligent dialogues." *Teacher's Pet* was a "comedy for sophisticates."[76]

The "modern" in the "Paramount style" also applied to *The Stars Are Singing* (1953). This light musical comedy follows a fifteen-year-old illegal immigrant (Anna Maria Alberghetti) who turns into a national singing sensation. Set mostly in the New York show business scene, the narrative blends cheerful songs with Cold War tension, as the young girl—a Polish refugee—"wins" her freedom in America by impressing the public (including President Eisenhower) with her charm and vocal talent. The main highlight of the film, as the local office saw it, was in the musical performance. In addition to Alberghetti—a rising operatic singer in real life—the narrative enlisted veteran Danish singer Lauritz Melchior, who plays the role of the girl's family friend, and most important, Rosemary Clooney. In playing the character of an aspiring singer who befriends the Polish immigrant, Clooney delivers a handful of polished numbers. This led the Japanese promoters to dub her "the freshest jazz queen with a *modern* sensibility."[77] The celebration of Clooney as "modern"—and particularly her "jazz" vocals as such—comes with layered implications. In occupied Japan, jazz was often heralded as a music genre of whites such as George Gershwin and Paul Whiteman. Films that starred such noted artists, such as *Rhapsody in Blue* (1945), depicted this "white man's jazz" as a "modern musical composition" by underscoring

the influence of European classical music.[78] While centered on a woman, *The Stars Are Singing* continued the tradition to champion the jazz genre as a white creation.[79] Her "whiteness," in essence, enabled the characterization of the film as a "modern" manifestation.

This trait of the "modern" also applied to a set of "travelogue romances" set in Europe.[80] In *Roman Holiday*, for example, Princess Ann (Audrey Hepburn), tired of her duties to endlessly greet dignitaries, sneaks out from her embassy one night and meets a handsome American journalist (Gregory Peck) with whom she briefly falls in love. Of course, part of the film's allure was the backdrop; shot on location in Rome, the narrative placed the protagonists at the Trevi Fountain, the Coliseum, and other memorable sites of this historic city. But the publicity team in Japan devoted all efforts to showcase Hepburn, a "woman with a new [kind of] attraction."[81] In contrast to glamour girls typified by Marilyn Monroe, the slender Belgian actress seemed to present an aura of "nobility" and "purity" with which local advertisers could court both women and men, the young and the old. Hepburn's attraction also stemmed from her onscreen characters' desire for independence and autonomy. As *Paramount* described of her role in *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1961), Hepburn shines as "an intelligence [*sic*] urban woman who always has confidence in her actions."[82] This trait also surfaces in *Roman Holiday*, as the young princess seeks to free herself from monarchical traditions of the Old World. Even though the noble protagonist returns to her hereditary role in the end, the narrative, to a considerable degree, touts the "progressive" life of Western women. For this reason, a newspaper ad underscored that "it would be a shame to a modern person [*kindaijin*] to miss [the movie]!"[83]

Films made by Alfred Hitchcock also joined the ranks of the "modern" Paramount style. Unlike standard suspense films, the British director's narratives, noted *Paramount* magazine, embodied an "intelligent modernity."[84] One could identify this trait, for example, in *Rear Window*, a thriller that surrounds an injured news photographer's quest to uncover a murder together with his fashion model girlfriend. The "intelligence" of the film lies in Hitchcock's ingenious construction of mystery and suspense. This plot construction is enabled by the brick-clad *apartment* complex—a "modern" physical setting characterized by "mobility, impermanence, and porousness—in sharp contrast to more traditional views of home as private, stable, and family based."[85] In inspiring an artificial congregation of anonymous individuals, the Greenwich Village neighborhood makes it possible for the protagonist to follow the suspect's actions from his own room— telephoto lens in hand—while offering a voyeuristic view of the other neighbors within the confined space. The press sheet not only stressed Hitchcock's "painstaking" efforts to build an "elaborate" apartment set but also underscored the professional (not racial) diversity of the residents—from the sculptor, composer, dancer, to murderous jewelry salesman. *Rear Window*, in this sense, represented a kaleidoscope of "modern" life.[86]

The label of "modern" even applied to slapstick comedies with Jerry Lewis. Peppered with the actor's wacky facial gags and out-of-control antics, Lewis's narratives of the 1950s, on the surface, may appear as an antithesis to the elegance that one can identify in the films of Audrey Hepburn. As one scholar noted, comedies of the slapstick icon often

FIGURE 9.2 A well-publicized roadshow screening of Alfred Hitchcock's *Psycho* at the Hibiya eiga gekijo, *c.* 1960. Photo courtesy of Komaki Toshiharu.

"tended more toward the ribald than to the 'sophisticated.'"[87] For this reason, the promotion of Lewis's films often involved pure genre marketing, as the local office routinely affixed the phrase "bottomless" (*sokonuke*) to the title of his films and referred to them as a "noisy farce comedy" (*dotabata kigeki*).

Yet at the same time, Metori's office aimed to associate these comedic narratives with "modernity." This could be seen in *Hollywood or Bust* (1956), wherein a movie fanatic (Lewis) and a scammer (Dean Martin) drive across the U.S. continent to meet Anita Ekberg, the fanatic's idol, in Los Angeles. Interestingly, the publicity team advertised the film as a "modern hilarious record of a strange road trip."[88] The "hilarity" and "strangeness" of the story undoubtedly signified Lewis's wild demeanor and the film's comedic plot—one in which the scammer, after co-winning a red convertible with the fanatic, repeatedly (and unsuccessfully) tries to ditch him on the road. What rendered the film "modern" was the transportation apparatus—the automobile—and the various geographical locations that the protagonists visit. During the road trip, the duo, together with an aspiring female dancer, stop in major cities (including New York, Chicago, St. Louis, and Las Vegas) and techno-industrial landmarks (oil fields in Texas and the Hoover Dam in Nevada). Fans in Japan could thus "sightsee America" and witness its "modern elements" as they viewed the movie.

Another Lewis film that displayed "modern life" was *The Bellboy* (1960). In this comedy that the actor himself directed, Lewis was a clumsy hotel porter who repeatedly misperforms his duties in front of a grimacing bell captain. Shot on site at the "extravagant"

Fontainebleau Hotel in Miami—as the press sheet described—the narrative generates humor by mocking "modern" efficiencies in the service economy. We see this as the protagonist delivers the wrong luggage to patrons, overpolishes slippery floors (and hurts people), and accidentally unleashes a slew of pet dogs. As was the case with the other films by this comedian, the company publicized *The Bellboy* as a "noisy farce comedy." But while doing so, Metori's office also promised that the film would offer a glimpse of American life, namely "hardships and failures of the bellboy" without whom "the deluxe lives of celebrities and rich people" could not be enjoyed.[89] While making humor out of the amenities of the hotel business, the Japanese branch thus stressed that the film explained how the posh lifestyles of upper- and middle-class Americans were made and sustained. In this sense, *The Bellboy* became an unlikely champion of the "modern" service profession, as it showcased the "unsung heroes behind the scenes."[90]

Toward Hegemony

To Paramount, business in Japan was a rewarding experience. Its steady stream of filmic releases, its multifaceted promotional campaign, and the multitude of tie-ups with consumer items all enhanced the visibility and exposure of the company brand. The presentation of the films as "respectable, artistic, spectacular, and modern" dignified the studio's entertainment culture over that of rival companies. Stars and celebrities became household names. Alfred Hitchcock, for instance, made his unmistakable presence felt through countless newspapers and film magazines, a popular television show (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents*), and a mystery periodical named after him (*Hicchikokku magajin*, or *Hitchcock Magazine*). Audrey Hepburn reigned as a top fashion icon following *Roman Holiday*. The Belgium-born actress's graceful look started a fashion trend dubbed the "Audrey style"; a multitude of young women imitated her pixie hairdo, dubbed the "Hepburn cut" (*Heppuban gari*).[91] Throughout much of the 1950s, the mountain-logo studio reigned as the top foreign distributor in Japan.[92] This contributed to Hollywood's claim to a 40 percent share in the island market in the mid-1950s.[93]

Yet Paramount's success did not translate into Hollywood's instant domination. Japanese studios sharply contested Hollywood during the second half of the 1950s and cut down the share of U.S. cinema to 21 percent.[94] Their robust business owed partly to the Japanese government's stringent quota legislation, which was designed to curtail Hollywood's share as well as its transfers of "frozen funds" to U.S. bank accounts.[95] But it also resulted from the multifarious aesthetic, cultural, and business tactics employed by Japanese companies, which often adapted and appropriated U.S. conventions—instead of flatly rejecting them—to confront the specter of Hollywoodization. Paramount unintentionally facilitated this cultural negotiation. For instance, the advent of U.S. widescreen technology in the United States prompted Japanese studios to enlarge their own screen productions. Daiei thus relied on VistaVision cameras to shoot historical epics such as *Shaka* (1961), a prestige picture that recounted the life of Buddha

in ways not unlike DeMille's rendering of Moses in *The Ten Commandments*.[96] Popular westerns like *Shane* (1953) inspired the performance of Nikkatsu's male actors—such as Shishido Jo and Kobayashi Akira—who starred in a variety of Japanese-made westerns (*wasei uesutan*).[97]

The challenges that Paramount and U.S. studios faced in Japan were a tip of the iceberg. In 1962, Metori died of cancer and was temporarily replaced by veteran Paramount manager Sasho Shozaburo.[98] This transition coincided with the company's growing troubles back home, where the breakup of the vertically integrated studio system, the growth of suburbia, and, most damagingly, the rise of television, forced Hollywood majors into a struggle for survival. To Paramount, this was an ominous sign. While managing to turn out profits during these tough times, the mountain-logo studio was acquired by Gulf + Western in 1966.[99] Its business results at the end of the decade were mixed at best.[100] The transpacific business recovered during the 1960s, but the studio struggled to expand screen time with Japanese exhibitors.[101] In the spring of 1970, Paramount decided to downsize its operation by running a Japan office together with Universal.[102] Other U.S. companies turned film distribution to domestic brokers (20th Century-Fox) or simply scaled back their trade (United Artists). By the fall of 1972, the number of Hollywood's employees in Japan had dropped from 650 to 478.[103]

Yet fortunately for Hollywood, the struggles of Japanese studios were even greater than those of U.S. companies. Despite their nation's remarkable economic growth, Japanese filmmakers were strained by television and other commercialized leisure, the intensification of youth migration from country to city, and poor decision making among some local studios. This led to diminishing returns for all studios, the bankruptcies of Shintoho (1961) and Daiei (1971), and the decline of the studio system in Japan. While local companies continued to face serious troubles, Hollywood's fortunes revived in the mid-1970s.[104] In 1979, Japan became the biggest overseas market for U.S. studios. According to David Cook, it was "the first time that a non-English-speaking nation had held that position."[105] Paramount rebounded together with other U.S. studios, unleashing popular hits including *Saturday Night Fever* (1977), *Beverly Hills Cop* (1984), *Footloose* (1984), *Top Gun* (1986), *The Untouchables* (1987), and *Titanic* (1997, co-financed with Fox).[106] By the end of the twentieth century, Hollywood's hegemonic influence was undeniable. By this time, "things Hollywood" had spread through feature films as well as videotapes and DVDs, amusement parks, and a surfeit of consumer merchandise. Paramount was a key contributor to this far-reaching cultural penetration.

This chapter has aimed to demonstrate that Hollywood's globalization involves much more than "top-level" negotiations of the power elites. In addition to the policy talks in Hollywood, New York, and Washington, D.C., the practices of local offices—in this case, Paramount's Japanese branch in the 1950s—are vital to the industry's overseas extension. What also stands out is the hybridity of Hollywood entertainment. Paramount's operation in Japan reveals the active involvement of local "bridge figures" in the making of the entertainment commodity. It thus becomes clear that Hollywood cinema is not purely an "American" imposition but rather a joint creation that owed in no small measure to "foreign" agents and their imaginations. Finally, Paramount's expansion points to Hollywood's influence on Japan's cinematic culture. Despite the remarkable flowering

of Japanese moviemaking, the movie culture in the 1950s also owed much to the lively endeavors of U.S. studios. Japan's cinematic culture of midcentury involved more than the "second golden age" of local movies. Hollywood demands attention in order to understand Japan's booming movie culture of the postwar years.

Notes

1. Hiroshi Kitamura, *Screening Enlightenment: Hollywood and the Cultural Reconstruction of Defeated Japan* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2010).
2. This was a time when Metori Nobuo ran Paramount's office in Tokyo as general manager. Metori died in 1962 and was succeeded by Sasho Shozaburo. See *Variety*, July 17, 1962, 3.
3. Technically speaking, Paramount's office in Japan, according to *Eiga nenkan,* was an autonomous Japanese corporation (*Nihon no hojin*), but the trade, both in Japan and the U.S., commonly referred to it as a "branch" of the U.S. studio and not as a "subsidiary." In Japan, Metori Nobuo was commonly known as a "branch manager" (*shishacho*). This chapter will refer to the studio's Japanese office as a "branch." Jiji tsushinsha, *Eiga nenkan 1954* (Tokyo: Jiji tsushinsha, 1953), 120–121.
4. Hosoya Chihiro, *Nihon gaiko no kiseki* (Tokyo: NHK shuppankai, 1993), 128.
5. See, for example, Thomas Guback, *The International Film Industry: Western Europe and America since 1945* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1969); Ian Jarvie, *Hollywood's Overseas Campaign: The North Atlantic Film Trade, 1920–1950* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992); Kristin Thompson, *Exporting Entertainment: America in the World Film Market, 1907–1934* (London: British Film Institute, 1985); Jens Ulff-Møller, *Hollywood's Film Wars with France: Film-Trade Diplomacy and the Emergence of the French Film Quota Policy* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2001).
6. See, for example, Kenneth Chan, *Remade in Hollywood: The Global Chinese Presence in Transnational Cinemas* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2009); Toby Miller, Nitin Govil, John McMurria, Richard Maxwell, and Ting Wang, *Global Hollywood 2* (London: British Film Institute, 2005); Vanessa R. Schwartz, *It's So French! Hollywood, Paris, and the Making of Cosmopolitan Film Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007).
7. Here I rely on Richard Maltby's definition of "entertainment" as a "commercial commodity, produced and consumed as part of a capitalist industrial system." See Maltby, *Hollywood Cinema.* 2nd ed. (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2003), 56.
8. See, for instance, Joseph L. Anderson and Donald Richie, *The Japanese Film: Art and Industry.* expanded ed. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1982), 181–296; Isolde Standish, *A New History of Japanese Cinema: A Century of Narrative Film* (New York: Continuum, 2005); Sato Tadao, *Nihon eigashi 2: 1941–1959* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1995), 229–376.
9. Douglas Gomery, *The Hollywood Studio System: A History* (London: British Film Institute, 2005), 11; Tino Balio, ed., *The American Film Industry.* revised ed. (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1986), 116–119.
10. Gomery, *The Hollywood Studio System*, 20, 85.
11. Balio, ed., *The American Film Industry.*, revised ed., 253; *Variety*, November 22, 1932, 5.
12. Daidosha, *Nihon eiga nenkan Showa 16 nendo ban* (Tokyo: Daidosha, 1941), ru1–ru2.
13. "Kaisha meguri: Paramaunto Tokyo shisha," *Kokusai eiga shinbun* 27 (May 1, 1929): 5; Ise Toshio, "Senden man no tanoshimi: eiga kogyo no en no shita," *Eiga geijutsu*, May 1959, 72.

14. Sasho Shozaburo, "Shisha setsuritsu irai rokkanen," *Kokusai eiga shinbun* 23 (April 1, 1929): 27–28; Kokusai eiga tsushinsha, *Nihon eiga jigyo soran, Showa 3–4 nendo ban* (Tokyo: Kokusai eiga tsushinsha, 1928), 316.

15. See, for example, *Kinema junpo*, November 11, 1927, 65; *Kinema junpo*, June 21, 1920, 12; *Kinema junpo*, December 1, 1922, 2.

16. Thomas Schatz, *Boom and Bust: American Cinema in the 1940s* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 155–160.

17. Kitamura, *Screening Enlightenment*, 22–41.

18. On "chosen instrument," see Emily S. Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream: American Economic and Cultural Expansion, 1890–1945* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982), 59–62.

19. Kitamura, *Screening Enlightenment*, 62–111.

20. *Motion Picture Herald*, June 23, 1951, 44; *Motion Picture Herald*, September 29, 1951, 28.

21. *Variety*, December 30, 1953, 3; *Motion Picture Herald*, November 17, 1951, 28.

22. Kinema junposha, ed., *Kinejun soken hakusho: eiga bijinesu detabukku 2009–2010* (Tokyo: Kinema junposha, 2009), 180–185.

23. *Variety*, November 21, 1951, 3.

24. Jiji tsushinsha, *Eiga nenkan 1953* (Tokyo: Jiji tsushinsha, 1952), 134–135. For more on Weltner, see Bernard F. Dick, *Engulfed: The Death of Paramount Pictures and the Birth of Corporate Hollywood* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2001), esp. 45–108.

25. David N. Eldridge, "'Dear Owen': The CIA, Luigi Luraschi and Hollywood, 1953," *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* 20.2 (June 2000): 152–153; Ruth Vasey, *The World according to Hollywood, 1918–1939* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1997), esp. 127–193.

26. Eldridge, "'Dear Owen,'" 169–170.

27. Jiji tsushinsha, *Eiga nenkan 1953*, 134–135; "Paramaunto Intanashonaru shacho: Joji Uerutona shi to kataru," *Paramount* 53 (December 1, 1957): 2; *Variety*, November 6, 1964, 4.

28. Jiji tsushinsha, *Eiga nenkan 1953*, 135.

29. Jiji tsushinsha, *Eiga nenkan 1956* (Tokyo: Jiji tsushinsha, 1955), 278.

30. Metori Nobuo, "Nana shunen o mukaete," *Paramount*, 81 (February 15, 1960): 2.

31. See comment by Kawakita Kashiko, for example, in *Asahi shinbun*, March 28, 1958, 9.

32. According to Ise, U.S. studios were only responsible for distribution publicity during the prewar era. See Ise, "Eiga senden," *Eiga geijutsu*, February 1959, 64. Also see Nanbu Keinosuke, *Eiga sendensen* (Tokyo: Dobunkan, 1956), 65–66.

33. Nanbu, *Eiga sendensen*, 130.

34. Central Motion Picture Exchange, "M.P.E.A.—Japan," June 1, 1947, 45. This scrapbook is in the possession of Hidano Atsushi, a former CMPE employee, in Tokyo.

35. *Yomiuri shinbun* (evening ed.), December 9, 1954, 4; *Yomiuri shinbun* (evening ed.), April 17, 1953, 4; *Yomiuri shinbun* (evening ed.), October 9, 1953, 4.

36. Nanbu, *Eiga sendensen*, 112–113.

37. Interview with Komaki Toshiharu, July 3, 2009, Kamakura, Japan.

38. Interview with Komaki, July 3, 2009, Kamakura, Japan.

39. Jiji tsushinsha, *Eiga nenkan, 1958* (Tokyo: Jiji tsushinsha, 1957), 58.

40. *Kinema junpo*, November 1, 1951, 50–51. For more on roadshow theaters, see Kitamura, "'Home of American Movies': The Marunouchi Subaruza and the Making of Hollywood's Audiences in Tokyo, 1946–9," Melvyn Stokes and Richard Maltby, eds., *Hollywood Abroad: Audiences and Cultural Exchange* (London: British Film Institute, 2004), 99–120. Also see a special roundtable on this exhibition format entitled "Rodosho no kenkyu" in *Kinema junpo* 126 (August 15, 1955): 39–47.

41. See sample copy of Paramount's contract (as an insert) in Shibata Yoshio, *Eiga no keizai* (Tokyo: Rengo tsushinsha, 1962).

42. There were a number of organized fan bodies that patronized Hollywood cinema. One of them was the Yushu eiga kanshokai, or the Meeting to Appreciate Superior Films, a fan organization shaped by culture elites (*bunkajin*). Another organization was the Tomo no kai of *Eiga no tomo*, a monthly fan magazine edited by Yodogawa Nagaharu. In addition, there were specialized fan organizations such as the Western Fan Club (*Seibugeki fan kurabu*), the Jane Wyman Club, the William Holden Club, the Tony (Anthony) Perkins Club, the Jaguar Club (for Alan Ladd fans), and so on. See, for example, Kitamura, *Screening Enlightenment*, 155–176; *Eiga no tomo*, December 1954, 168; *Eiga no tomo*, September 1957, 165; *Eiga no tomo*, March 1959, 211.

43. Tanaka Eiichi, "32 nendo no tomo no kai no katsudo: sono hokoku to hansei," *Paramount*, 54 (January 15, 1958): 1; "Kakuchi reikai, shibu hokoku, 12 gatsu," *Paramount* 92 (February 25, 1961): 15.

44. Paramount, "Paramaunto tomo no kai e gosanka kudasai!" flyer, n.d.

45. Yamazaki Ryo, "Paramaunto tomo no kai nanashunen o mukaete," *Paramount* 86 (July 20, 1960): 3.

46. A flyer for the organization even went so far as to note that the fan organization's "activities are all run by its members." See Paramount, "Paramaunto tomo no kai e gosanka kudasai!" flyer, n.d. According to *Paramount World News*, the studio's official newsletter published in the United States, "the majority of the members are students around the age of twenty." See "'Tomo no kai' Paramaunto warudo ni shokai saru," *Paramount* 61 (August 30, 1958): 3.

47. Samantha Barbas, *Movie Crazy: Fans, Stars, and the Cult of Celebrity* (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 5.

48. *Kinema junpo*, September 1, 1951, 22–23.

49. See, for example, Aaron Gerow, "Tatakau kankyaku: DaiToa kyoeiken no Nihon eiga to juyo no mondai," *Gendai shiso* 30.9 (July 2002): 141.

50. Kitamura, *Screening Enlightenment*, 134–154.

51. Nanbu, *Eiga sendensen*, 41.

52. Paramount, *The Bellboy* press sheet, n.d.; *Yomiuri shinbun* (evening ed.), February 5, 1955, 4.

53. *Yomiuri shinbun* (evening ed.), January 20, 1961, 2; *Yomiuri shinbun* (evening ed.), February 8, 1955, 4; *Yushu eiga*, March 1, 1959, 1.

54. *Yomiuri shinbun* (evening ed.), November 18, 1955, 5; *Yushu eiga*, September 1, 1959, 1.

55. *Yomiuri shinbun* (evening ed.), February 11, 1952, 1.

56. Maltby, "The Production Code and the Hays Office," in Balio, *Grand Design: Hollywood as a Modern Business Enterprise, 1930–1939* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 42; Maltby, *Harmless Entertainment: Hollywood and the Ideology of Consensus* (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1983). On the U.S. film industry's "cultural" marketing in Japan, see Kitamura, *Screening Enlightenment*, 87–111.

57. Paramount, *Appointment with Danger* press sheet, n.d.

58. Paramount, *All in a Night's Work* press sheet, n.d.

59. "Shinsaku, 'Subete wa yoru ni hajimaru' shokai tokushu," *Paramount* 94 (April 25, 1961): 6.

60. Paramount, *All in a Night's Work* press sheet, n.d.

61. Paramount, *A Place in the Sun* press sheet, n.d.

62. Paramount, *Detective Story* press sheet, n.d.

63. Geoff King, *Spectacular Narratives: Hollywood in the Age of the Blockbuster* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2000), 1.

64. On VistaVision, see John Belton, *Widescreen Cinema* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), 125–127; Lev, *The Fifties*, 120–125.

65. *Yomiuri shinbun*, January 23, 1955, 3.

66. *Yomiuri shinbun* (evening ed.), December 9, 1954, 4.

67. Paramount, *The Mountain* press sheet, n.d.

68. Paramount, *The Mountain* press sheet, n.d.

69. *Yomiuri shinbun* (evening ed.), March 12, 1958, 5.

70. "Joji Uerutona shi to kataru," *Paramount* 53 (December 1, 1957): 2.

71. *Yomiuri shinbun* (evening ed.), March 12, 1958, 5.

72. Roland Marchand, *Advertising the American Dream: Making Way for Modernity, 1920–1940* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 1, xxi. See especially 1–24, 164–205.

73. Coined around the late 1910s, this label is said to have originally signified the "bright and beautiful onscreen style" of glitzy Paramount films. Miyao Daisuke, "Nihon eiga to Hariuddo: Shochiku no shomei to Henry Kotani no unmei," *Nihon eiga wa ikite iru* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 2010), 205–206.

74. Tstsumi Shunji, "Nyu Yoku to modan jazu to Paramaunto eiga," *Paramount* 96 (November 10, 1961): 8.

75. "Okiniiri hodankai," *Paramount* 62 (September 30, 1958): 4.

76. Paramount, *Teacher's Pet* press sheet, n.d.; "Okiniiri hodankai," *Paramount* 62 (September 30, 1958): 4.

77. Paramount, *The Stars and Singing* press sheet, n.d. The italics are mine.

78. Kitamura, *Screening Enlightenment*, 96–100.

79. An article in *Paramount* titled "New York, Modern Jazz, and Paramount" identified jazz as a creation of Elmer Bernstein, Henry Mancini, and Anita O'Day. Only one African American, Art Farmer, is mentioned as a jazz performer or composer. Tatsumi, "Nyu Yoku, modan jazu to Paramaunto eiga," 8–9.

80. Robert R. Shandley, *Runaway Romances: Hollywood's Postwar Tour of Europe* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2009).

81. "Odori senpu, ni oku sanzenmanen," *Kinema junpo*, June 15, 1954, in Kinema Junposha, ed., *Besuto obu Kinema junpo, jo: 1950–1966* (Tokyo: Kinema junposha, 1994), 323–324. Paramount routinely rewarded Hepburn with such accolades as "high taste" (*hai sensu*) and "modern" (*modan*). See, for example, "*Tifanii de choshoku o:* shinsaku shokai," *Paramount* 96 (November 10, 1961): 4.

82. Fukuda Chiaki, "Audrey Hepburn: sakuhin to sono miryoku," *Paramount* 96 (November 10, 1961): 7.

83. *Yomiuri shinbun* (evening ed.), May 29, 1954, 4.

84. Shirai Yoshio, "Paramaunto cho no kagi," *Paramount* 80 (January 20, 1960): 6.

85. Pamela Robertson Wojcik, *The Apartment Plot: Urban Living in American Film and Popular Culture, 1945 to 1975* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010), 5. Also see 139–179.

86. Paramount, *Rear Window* press sheet, n.d.

87. Ethan De Siefe, "Frank Tashlin," *Senses of Cinema*, 29, http://www.sensesofcinema.com/2003/great-directors/tashlin (accessed March 6, 2011); Paramount, *Hollywood or Bust* press sheet, n.d.

88. Paramount, *Hollywood or Bust* press sheet, n.d.

89. Paramount, *The Bellboy* press sheet, n.d.

90. Paramount, *Hollywood or Bust* press sheet, n.d.

91. Hirosawa Ei, *Kurokami to kesho no Showashi* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1993), 255–259.

92. *Variety*, July 27, 1955, 15.

93. Kerry Segrave, *American Films Abroad: Hollywood's Domination of the World's Movie Screens* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1997), 215.

94. Segrave, *American Films Abroad*, 215.

95. "Amerika eiga makari toru," *Sunday mainichi*, March 17, 1957, 20–23.

96. *Kinema junpo*, December 1, 1961, 77. The immediate inspiration of *Shaka* was *Ben-Hur*.

97. Mark Schilling and Mamiko Kawamoto, "An Interview with Joe Shishido," in Schilling, ed. *No Borders, No Limits: Nikkatsu Action Cinema* (Godalming, UK: FAB Press, 2007), 84–85. For more on Nikkatsu's westerns, see Kitamura, "Shoot-Out in Hokkaido: The 'Wanderer' (*Wataridori*) Series and the Politics of Transnationality," in Philippa Gates and Lisa Funnell, eds., *Transnational Asian Identities in Pan-Pacific Cinemas: The Reel Asian Exchange* (New York: Routledge, 2011), 31–45.

98. *Variety*, July 4, 1962, 103; *Kinema junpo*, July 15, 1962, 77.

99. Dick, *Engulfed*, 93; Lev, *The Fifties*, 204.

100. David A. Cook, *Lost Illusions: American Cinema in the Shadow of Watergate and Vietnam, 1970–1979* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 306.

101. Tanaka Junichiro, *Nihon eiga hattatsushi V: eizo jidai no torai* (Tokyo: Chuo koronsha, 1976), 107; *Asahi shinbun* (evening ed.), December 27, 1965, 4.

102. *Asahi shinbun* (evening ed.), June 30, 1970, 6.

103. *Asahi shinbun* (evening ed.), September 4, 1972, 9. Also see *Yomiuri shinbun* (evening ed.), January 29, 1972, 9.

104. Sato Tadao, *Nihon eigashi 3: 1960–1995* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1995), 219–229.

105. David A. Cook, *Lost Illusions*, 336.

106. Gomery, *The Hollywood Studio System*, 226–237.

ERASING CHINA IN JAPAN'S "HONG KONG FILMS"

KWAI-CHEUNG LO

Hong Kong Night Club/Hon Kon dai yasokai: Tatchi & Magi (dir. Watanabe Takayoshi, 1997), a Hong Kong–Japanese coproduction, is set in Hong Kong just months before the 1997 handover. A gay journalist (played by Kishitani Goro) and a greenhorn photographer (Katori Shingo) go to Hong Kong to expose drug trafficking activities there. Fleeing the triad organization, they disguise themselves as a magician couple (Katori's character is disguised as a woman; Katori has also appeared in drag in Japanese variety shows) and work in the Lost Castle nightclub. The criminal organization may allegorize the dark forces that are about to take over the British colony; the local Chinese the pair encounter, such as the nightclub singer Cora (Anita Yuen), all seek foreign passports—Canadian or Japanese or others—in order to leave the doomed city. Since the nightclub will become a karaoke bar (paralleling the change in the city's sovereignty), Cora foresees that her singing career is at an end and she will have to become a karaoke hostess or prostitute. Although it is a slapstick comedy, the film paints a gloomy picture of Hong Kong's future. China goes unmentioned, as if it never existed. But the China factor—in the Japanese version—is echoed in the song "Yelaixiang" ("Tuberoses" or, literally, "Fragrance of the Night"), sung by Cora. The song was originally sung by Manchurian-born Japanese actress Yamaguchi Yoshiko, who assumed the Chinese name Li Xianglan and passed as a Chinese national—thereby personifying the Asianist ideology promoted by Japanese propaganda films of the 1940s.

Yamaguchi remained very active in film after World War II. She even established an acting career in Hong Kong, Hollywood, and on Broadway. After retiring from film in 1958, she appeared as a hostess and anchorwoman on Japanese talk shows. Elected in 1974 to the House of Councilors (Sangiin, the upper house of the Japanese Diet), she served three terms, or eighteen years.[1] Yamaguchi remains a major icon in postwar Japan, where several televised movies and musicals have been made about her (pre-1945) life. The most recent of these productions are Tokyo TV's 2007 *Ri Koran*

(Ri Koran being the Japanese reading of Li Xianglan), starring Ueto Aya; and the Shiki Theater Company's musical, also titled *Ri Koran,* which premiered in 1991 and enjoyed a second run in March 2008. The allusion to Ri Koran in *Hong Kong Night Club* may have been intended to evoke Japanese viewers' nostalgia for a historically misunderstood Japan that worked hard during the war for the good of its Asian neighbors—especially since its final intertitles—"Hon Kon wa kawaru, shikashi, eien de aru 香港は変わるしかし...永遠である" (Hong Kong may change, but it is eternal)—connote longing for colonial Hong Kong. Even the storyline, in which Cora falls in love first with the gay Japanese and then with the photographer in drag, has much in common with those of Ri Koran's wartime melodramas. Ri often played a young Chinese woman falling in love with a Japanese man who has helped her and civilized her—a formula ubiquitous in Japan's wartime "goodwill films" (*shinzen eiga*).[2] The film's ending calls to mind Japan's failed mission of liberating other Asian peoples (represented by Hong Kongers apprehensive about the 1997 handover) and echoes both postwar Japan's fascination with its bygone empire and fear of a looming China.

The formation of modern Japanese national identity, as Koyasu Nobukuni argues, is based on its erasure of China from its frame of reference, although it is all but impossible to deny China's influences on Japanese culture.[3] Historically, Japan's interest in China has been much stronger than China's in Japan, and many Japanese elites felt driven to understand China.[4] Removed from complex historical reality, China was, in the minds of the premodern Japanese, a paragon of civilization and excellence for the island nation to emulate. It has been referred to as Chuka, the central florescence, or Chugoku, the middle kingdom. But since the eighteenth century, as the Qing dynasty (1644–1911) fell into decline, Japan's reverence for China has faded. Tokugawa era thinkers even believed Japan merited the name Chucho, or central kingdom, far more than did China, since Japan had already surpassed China in many areas. Thus, China was then called Shina and disappeared as an object of serious consideration in mainstream Japanese discourse. The failure of Qing era China to deal with the West and its inability to master Western skills were simply an example of what Japan should avoid.[5] In the early twentieth century, this attitude further intensified. The Japanese, proud of their modernity, saw China as a backward nation that was no longer able to defend itself against Western aggression. But China was still a presence, and its representation was a major problem in Japanese cinema during and after the Second Sino-Japanese War,[6] since it had more to do with Japanese consciousness than what the Japanese actually knew about China. Although China has been a significant entity for Japan and its cinema, Hong Kong, as a former British colony now part of China, plays an interesting role in the way Japanese film imagines itself. If China usually symbolizes an archaic, unmodernized, and mysterious Asia in the modern Japanese consciousness, it is Hong Kong that symbolizes an alternative East Asian modernity in Japanese film. Hong Kong usually serves as a safety valve for Japan, especially during periods of Sino-Japanese tension. This essay examines Japan–Hong Kong film productions in light of historical developments and analyzes the ideologies beneath some of these motion pictures.

From the late twentieth century onward, transnational film coproductions within Asia, and East Asia in particular, have primarily been founded on the economic synchronicity brought about by the success of capitalist modernity in the region.[7] The homogenizing forces of global capitalism and, arguably, cultural proximity and racial similarity may have contributed to the emergence of a pan-Asian cinema. Cooperation among the film industries in East and Southeast Asian countries sometimes operates under the pretext of resisting the global dominance of Hollywood, though these trans-Asian coproductions are rendered possible by the U.S. Cold War strategies. There has been a shared motivation to secure a stronger foothold in local and regional markets and to rejuvenate local or national industries and cultural identities in these collaborative films. China's rapid economic development also provides a strong incentive for film and other cultural industries in the region to fabricate Asian-identified products vis-à-vis Hollywood's predominantly white representations in order to appeal to the potentially huge Chinese market.

Indeed, Asian cinematic coproduction can be traced back to the Japanese imperialist era, when the Japanese military used film as a propaganda tool to promote and expand its empire in the region. Competing with Hollywood films across the Asian continent,[8] these movies—produced in homeland or in (semi)colonial spheres, such as Taiwan, Korea, Manchuria, Shanghai, and Southeast Asia—constructed "an attractive modernist vision of empire"[9] for their target Asian audiences. The practice of cross-racial impersonation was used in Japanese imperialist films; Japanese actors were cast to play different Asian nationalities. The most outstanding example of this, of course, is Ri Koran, whose charming portrayals of Chinese characters appealed even to Chinese audiences,[10] even though other colonized Asians portrayed onscreen by Japanese actors were much less successful in local markets.

Although the essentialist argument that Confucianism and Buddhism have traditionally constituted a common East Asian culture has been severely challenged and undermined,[11] it is probable that historical factors such as the imperial tributary system before the arrival of Western powers[12] as well as militarized Japan's aggressive expansion and colonial rule have established some intertwining and subtle interactions among the nations in the region. Japan established motion picture corporations with Chinese filmmakers in China during World War II to coproduce "Greater East Asian film" (*Daitoa-eiga*), but virtually no films were produced in Hong Kong under Japanese occupation between 1941 and 1945; filmmakers in Hong Kong, unlike those in other parts of China, refused to collaborate with the Japanese government on any coproduction.[13] The Japanese hegemonic notion of pan-Asianism may have faded away after the war; however, the concept of Asia has been often revived and reiterated in various forms. Cinematic collaboration between Japan and Hong Kong began in the mid-twentieth century, when anti-Japanese sentiments had been overshadowed by the political conflict between Nationalists and Communists in Chinese communities. As early as the 1950s—when Communist China was no longer a viable market for Hong Kong productions—Shaw Brothers, Cathay, and other Hong Kong–based film companies initiated cooperative schemes with Japan in order to acquire its advanced skills and technologies

to improve production quality and expand their markets. In 1955, Shaw Brothers collaborated with Japan's Daiei Company to produce the costume drama *Yokihi/Princess Yang Kwei-fei* (dir. Mizoguchi Kenji). Cantonese cinema also generated features with Chinese–Japanese cross-racial portrayals around 1955. Yamaguchi Yoshiko starred as Pan Jin Lian in Shaw Brothers' *Chin Ping Mei* (dir. Wang Yin) in 1955. From that time forward, she became a popular actress in Hong Kong's Mandarin features. In the 1960s, MP & GI (Motion Picture & General Investment) Studio in Hong Kong initiated a series of coproductions with Japan's Toho Studios to make interracial romantic dramas starring Lucilla You Min and Takarada Akira.[14]

From the mid-1960s to the 1970s, numerous Japanese directors (including Inoue Umetsugu) and production crews were employed by Shaw Brothers and produced dozens of Mandarin features.[15] Since then, there has been a great deal of interaction between Hong Kong and Japanese film companies. But it has always been Hong Kong that has taken the initiative to import Japanese films to the local market[16]; to learn Japan's technology in order to increase production efficiency, cut costs, and enhance film qualities; to endeavor to expand into the Japanese market; and to cast Japanese actors to make the films more attractive to various markets. Early on, Japan did not reciprocate. Shochiku's top management even chastised Inoue Umetsugu for directing for Shaw Brothers and elevating the standard of Hong Kong films when the Japanese film industry was in decline.[17] It took many years for Japan to develop a mutual commercial relationship with the Hong Kong film industry. Chua Lam, a Hong Kong producer who has played a pivotal role in establishing Japan–Hong Kong transnational productions for Shaw Brothers and Golden Harvest, points out that when Japan and Hong Kong began to collaborate, both parties "became driven by considerations for their own markets, [strove] to shoot material that matched respective tastes, and [stayed] away from ambivalent wishy-washy productions."[18]

Although its cinema firms worked with the Hong Kong film industry for the reasons of reaching multiple markets and asserting its cultural-economic influences in the region, postwar Japan was not particularly interested in Hong Kong cinema. Before Bruce Lee's kung fu films hit the country in the 1970s, only three Hong Kong films had been released in Japan: *Qinggong mishi/Sorrows of the Forbidden City* (dir. Zhu Shilin, 1948), *Haitanghong/Blood Will Tell* (dir. Evan Yang [aka Yi Wen], 1955), and *Jiangshan meiren/The Kingdom and the Beauty* (dir. Li Hanxiang, 1958).[19] Although Lee's action movies were a spectacular success (that later had been sporadically achieved by Jackie Chan's kung fu films and Michael Hui's comedies) in the Japanese market, it was only in the late 1980s that Hong Kong films began having a real impact on the perceptions of Japanese audiences. Given the Japanese postwar cultural and economic dominance in Hong Kong and that the influence of Japan on Hong Kong is much greater than the other way round,[20] the so-called impact of Hong Kong films has much to do with the changed Japanese consciousness and imagination of Hong Kong. Japan's attraction to Hong Kong film and popular culture actually is closely connected with the nation's rekindled Asianist ideology.

By no means was Asianism confined to Japan; it had spread across Asia as a response to the threat of Western imperialism. China, India, Korea, and Southeast Asian countries each have different, and sometimes conflicting, versions of it.[21] But some Japanese Asianists envisioned a united front with China against the West in the years before the Second Sino-Japanese War. Japanese Asianism began as a romantic vision of Asian brotherhood and solidarity but then transformed into a tool in the service of its nationalist aggression,[22] nurturing the emergence of imperialism in the nation.[23] After its 1905 victory in the Russo-Japanese War (Nichi-Ro Senso), the Japanese state and its elites discussed how to steer the nation in new directions in order to emulate the Western powers and to establish Japan's leadership role in Asia. Faced with Western racism, Japan relentlessly produced its own racist hierarchy, according to which it arrogantly regarded the rest of Asia as backward and something from which Japan, as Fukuzawa Yukichi urged, should remove itself (datsu-A). Japanese political elites believed that their country was the only modernized and civilized one—and the only one that could master Western civilization in the region. Thus it was entitled to rule and colonize other Asian nations and save them from the encroachment of Western powers. In a way, Japan sees itself as geographically within but culturally above Asia.

In postwar Japan, it was not politicians, but intellectuals such as Takeuchi Yoshimi, who reignited the debate on Asianism.[24] According to Takeuchi's reading of Chinese writer Lu Xun, Chinese modernity represents a creative self-expression of the Chinese people that overcomes the framework of European modernity violently imposed upon Asia. In comparison to China, Japan, in Takeuchi's view, is only a zealous slave of the West and lacks its own subjectivity. "In its turn toward modernity," Takeuchi writes, "Japan bore a decisive inferiority complex vis-à-vis Europe. (This inferiority complex was the result of Japanese culture's superiority.) ... Japan sought to emerge from *slavery* by becoming the master—and this has given rise to every fantasy of liberation. ... Ignorant of his own status as *slave,* the subject of liberation movements remains trapped within the fantasy that he is not a *slave,* and from this position he attempts to emancipate the [other Asian] people."[25] Takeuchi thus negates Japan and idealizes China; this view is shared by only a limited intellectual circle. However, during the Cold War China was on the side of the so-called enemy, and it was difficult for Japan to reestablish relations with the nation at that time. Under U.S. hegemony and having renounced its armed forces, postwar Japan could have only economic involvement in Asia. Although Asianism after World War II in Asia was characterized by the trends of national self-determination, decolonization, and political independence from Western domination, Japan's economic drive to move into the vacuum left by the West in the region was seen as similar to and consistent with its prewar impetus. Its claims of egalitarianism, cosmopolitanism, and support for Asian economic development were suspected to be justifications for postwar Japan's (neocolonial) economic expansions in the region, especially in the face of rising capitalist competition. However, Japan's bubble economy began to collapse in the 1990s. The economic downturn drove Japanese society to look at its developing Asian neighbors in a nostalgic manner, "as if Asia's present were Japan's past."[26]

Meanwhile, Japan has imported increasing numbers of Asian films, in tandem with the changing political and social climate of its society. Although there are growing numbers of coproductions among Japan and other Asian countries, and films from Asia have consistently comprised more than 10 percent of the total number of foreign films released in Japan since the mid-1990s (among these, Hong Kong films have been the most frequently released in Japan between 1990 and 2004, followed by films from South Korea, China, Taiwan, and India), it is an exaggeration to state, as some critics have, that the Japanese film industry has been "Asianized."[27] Since the Allied occupation period, when American forces censored and regulated the Japanese film industry, Hollywood films promulgating American ideology have held a dominant market share in Japan, despite the fact that many Asian countries have now developed competitive cultural industries. Since the late twentieth century, American and European films have made up a decreasing percentage of the total number of foreign films released in Japan, but the United States still releases over 100 films in Japan annually.[28] The continued strong presence of Western films in Japan indicates that the Japanese may not position themselves culturally with the rhetoric of Asianism or Asianization to the degree that critics have suggested.

Treated differently from other backward but "uncorrupted" Asian neighbors by affluent Japanese tourists nostalgic for a preurbanized and unspoiled natural world, Hong Kong under British rule was seen as the modern equal of Japan—especially after its bubble economy burst and the nation faced serious economic decline and social contradictions. What the fast-developing Hong Kong symbolizes for the Japanese is the "energy" and "dreams" that Japan has already lost.[29] It also represents an alternative modernity and a certain openness that Japan has never achieved. In the minds of some Japanese, Hong Kong represents a model for Japan that is neither entirely Asian nor thoroughly Western, but a merging of both cultures. Yet the Japanese fantasy of Hong Kong is intertwined with an orientalist imagination. Although Hong Kong was much admired and appreciated, "premodern" China was going to take back Hong Kong in 1997 and to sinicize it, thus destroying its cosmopolitan charm. In his study of Japanese fans of Hong Kong popular culture, Koichi Iwabuchi writes, "The recognition of Hong Kong's synchronous temporality with Japan actually displaces the notion of Japanese cultural superiority and generates self-critical insights into Japanese modernity itself. . . . The consumption of [Hong Kong] popular culture has become a site where the continuities, rearticulations, and ruptures of historically constituted 'Asia' in Japan are complexly manifested."[30]

Hong Kong, and its heterogeneous type of Chinese culture, is popular in Japanese cinema, where it is often presented in an exotic, orientalist mode. A number of Hong Kong movie stars have been recruited to play major or minor characters in Japanese films (usually presented as coproductions), including Anita Yuen in the above-mentioned *Hong Kong Night Club*; Joey Wang in the science fiction film *Pekin genjin/Peking Man* (dir. Sato Junya, 1997); Michelle Reis in the gangster film *Hyoryu-gai/The City of Lost Souls* (dir. Miike Takashi, 2000); Edison Chen in *Dead or Alive 2: Tobosha* (dir. Miike Takashi, 2000); Kelly Chan in the melodrama *Reisei to jonetsu no aida/Between Calm and Passion* (dir. Nakae Isamu, 2001); Pauline Suen in *Koroshiya ichi/Ichi the Killer* (dir.

Miike Takashi, 2001)[31]; Josie Ho Chiu-Yee, Terence Wan Chi-Wai, and others in *Dead or Alive: Final* (dir. Miike Takashi, 2002); Sam Lee Chan-Sam in the manga-based sports flick *Ping Pong* (dir. Sori [aka Masuri] Fumihiko, 2002); and Kelly Chan and Faye Wong in various Japanese television dramas. The Chineseness of these Hong Kong stars is represented ambivalently—as something in between the elusive, menacing other and the friendly neighbor or partner who is the reflection of the Japanese self. Chinese–Japanese relations are always represented in terms of a Japanese masculine self in an ambiguous connection with a Hong Kong Chinese feminine other. More Chinese females than males are cast in Japanese films. Sometimes, a woman's Chineseness has to be contained and controlled by turning the woman into a Japanese national. For example, Kelly Chan's character in *Between Calm and Passion* has the Japanese name Aoi because she is half-Japanese (indicating her "traditional" fidelity to her man), whereas her exotic Hong Kongness, her experiences in Europe, and even her past romance with a half-Caucasian businessman (Michael Wong) make her an attractive and always unforgettable love interest for the protagonist Agata Junsei (Takenouchi Yutaka). Postwar Japanese cinema rarely challenges Japanese imperialism or reflects on the meaning of the Japanese invasion; other Asians, including Hong Kong Chinese, are orientalized or portrayed as romantic partners in many miscegenetic dramas that draw on racial and sexual stereotypes from the Japanese imperial past.

When Japan's economy was at its peak, its film industry simply financed Hong Kong productions without interfering with their creative content. Examples of films made under this model include *Kujaku o*/*Peacock King* (dir. Nam Lai-Choi; starring Yuen Biao and Mikami Hiroshi; Toho and Golden Harvest, 1989) and its sequel *Kujaku o: Ashura densetsu*/*Saga of the Phoenix* (dir. Nam Lai-Choi and Lau Sze-Yu; starring Abe Hiroshi, Katsu Shintaro, and Yuen Biao; Toho and Golden Harvest, 1990) both adapted from the manga by Ogino Makoto; *The Christ of Nanjing* (dir. Tony Au Ting-Ping; starring Tony Leung Ka-Fai and Tomita Yasuko [who won the Best Actress award at the Tokyo International Film Festival]; Amuse Group and Golden Harvest, 1995), based on the novel *Nankin no Kirisuto* by Akutagawa Ryunosuke; and *Wo ai chu fang/Kitchen* (dir. Yim Ho; starring Jordan Chan and Tomita Yasuko; Amuse, Inc. and Golden Harvest, 1997) based on the novel *Kitchin* by Yoshimoto Banana. One of the most recent examples is *Sasori* (dir. Joe Ma Wai-Ho, starring Mizuno Miki, Dylan Kuo, Sam Lee, and Simon Yam; Art Port and Same Way, 2008), based on the action manga by Shinohara Toru. However, these movies are usually categorized as Hong Kong rather than Japanese films. Most of these Japanese "Hong Kong films" did not do particularly well both in their critical receptions and in the Hong Kong market, which suggests that these transnational works may accommodate one regional market but not suit the tastes of another.[32] On the other hand, Hong Kong also produces its own "Japan films." There are more than a dozen Hong Kong film adaptations of Japanese manga—some of which have never acknowledged their sources because of copyright issues. Since the mid-1990s Hong Kong studios aiming at the Asian markets have consistently cast Japanese actors or actresses in their productions.[33] Indeed, Japan's fantasy about Hong Kong manifests more in different film genres made by Japanese filmmakers themselves.

The futuristic cosmopolitan city in Oshii Mamoru's animation *Kokaku kidotai/Ghost in the Shell* (1995) and its sequel, *Inosensu/Innocence* (2004), looks much more like contemporary Hong Kong than Tokyo, where old and modern architecture chaotically but also harmoniously stand side by side.[34] Along the same lines, Miike's "lo-fi" sci-fi film *Dead or Alive: Final* also uses present-day Hong Kong as the futuristic location of twenty-fourth-century Yokohama, where Cantonese-speaking people rule the world and the Japanese become replicants. However, the extravagant richness and photo-realistic style of the street scenes in *Ghost in the Shell,* accompanied only by music with action in slow motion, offers a strong sense of exoticism and strangeness. The bird-like aircraft that flies across the sky and right above the roofs of old buildings—although breathtaking to viewers—is actually a familiar sight; Hong Kong's old airport is located in the middle of Kowloon City. Like the Hollywood sci-fi film *Blade Runner* (dir. Ridley Scott, 1982), in which the futuristic Los Angeles is congested with obscure signs and Asian, black, and brown races speaking inscrutable languages, Newport City in *Ghost in the Shell* is overwhelmed with shop signs and advertisements in the traditional and simplified Chinese characters extending horizontally and vertically over the capillary-like streets and canals. As Takeuchi Atsushi, the film's mechanical designer, explains, "In terms of street scenes and general atmosphere, it is obvious that Hong Kong is the model. Such a choice has, of course, something to do with the theme: on the streets there flows an excess or a flood of information, along with everything this excess brings out."[35] The excess of Hong Kong that fascinates the filmmakers is probably its crowd, congestion, chaos, and concurrence of old and new that somehow create a mysteriously new order. But even if the cityscape symbolizes the flood of information and the fluidity of the Internet and its boundaries, the space of Hong Kong is fixed as a fantastic other for the Japanese cyberimagination. With strong references to its local features, the projected and expanded imaginary about colonial Hong Kong does not overwhelm or dissolve the city that stands as an entity existing in a specific historical space and time.

In *Innocence,* Bato the cyborg detective travels to an industrialized city in the Northern Frontier in order to investigate a murder committed by a robot. While his aircraft descends upon the mythic city and he prepares for landing, Bato describes the history of the city to his new partner in a way that is reminiscent of Hong Kong's past and its post-1997 conditions: "This area was once intended as the Far East's most important information center, a Special Economic Zone in its heyday. These towers survive as a shadow of the city's former glory. Its dubious sovereignty has made it an ideal haven for multinationals and the criminal elements that feed off their spoils. It is a lawless zone beyond the reach of UN and E-police. Reminds me of the line 'what the body creates is as much an expression of DNA as the body itself.' . . . If the essence of life is information carried in DNA, then society and civilization are just colossal memory systems and a metropolis like this one, simply is a sprawling external memory." But to whom does the memory belong? In fact, the memory is strictly selective, leaving out the historical fact that the city has been conquered by Japan, although it is precisely Hong Kong's colonial heritage that fascinates the Japanese gaze. Hong Kong is well favored by the postwar Japanese films probably because Hong Kong was a willing collaborator of (British if not

Japanese) colonialism and a place that obviously benefited from and prospered because of its colonial experiences.

Troubled pasts buried in celluloid or in cyberfantasy can come back in different forms. What Bato and his partner encounter in the "lawless" city under snowflakes are the dreamlike images of dragon totems, oriental temples, junks, parades, huge animated animal and god statues, Chinese opera performances, and many faceless children wearing opera masks—all elements of traditional Chinese folk culture remixed in a science fiction background through the mediation of an exotic Hong Kong that once attracted Japanese visitors. The faded glory of the city under Chinese influence may make it less an absolute other than a mirror image of contemporary Japan. In *Ghost in the Shell* the female cyborg Kusanagi Motoko, the leader of Shell Squad, travels through a dirty canal on a boat and sees a replicant of herself in an upstairs restaurant, making her reflect on her own cyborg existence. The coincident encounter of the protagonist with her double may reveal how Japan sees itself in Hong Kong, a place where dynamic differences and hybrid cultures mix and merge to generate the zeal and energy that a future technocapitalist society needs. But are zeal and energy real remedies for Japan's social and economic problems? Is it not precisely an ideological obfuscation or mystification to substitute the traumatic historical causes of inequality, exploitation, or injustice with such lofty but abstract qualities as enthusiasm, energy, or zeal?

As energy or zeal is always projected on the foreign other, Japanese cinema concerns itself with how to make such imagined foreignness available for consumption by Japanese audiences. More and more films about ethnic minorities in contemporary Japan have appeared since the 1990s. These films seem to challenge and subvert the myth of an ethnically homogeneous Japan. But representations of ethnic groups in these films are still governed by the hierarchical dichotomy of self and other, rendering the myth of ethnic homogeneity unquestioned. A fetishized but displaced Asian other (in the forms of ethnic and linguistic diversity) has been repackaged into an object of consumption to suit the tourist's exoticism and to reinforce the reemergence of Japanese nationalist discourses that are understood to be reactions to the perceived threat of a rising China.

Suwaroteiru/*Swallowtail Butterfly* (dir. Iwai Shunji, 1996) features a hybrid portrayal of a Chinese immigrant ghetto on the outskirts of "Yen Town," an allegory of Tokyo in the near future. In the tradition of cross-racial impersonation, the film uses Japanese actors to play all the Chinese characters and features Hong Kong pop singer Andy Hui in a small role as a non-Chinese figure.[36] The ghetto depicted in the film is said to be based on Kowloon Walled City in Hong Kong. One of the most densely populated areas in the world, Kowloon Walled City was a product of Sino-British historical conflicts. Built as a coastal fort after Hong Kong Island was ceded to the British after the end of the First Opium War (1839–1842), the Walled City was constructed in order to check further British influence. However, the other Hong Kong territories were later leased to Great Britain for ninety-nine years. Only in the Walled City was China allowed to continue to station officials. Refugees from China flooded to the enclave to seek Chinese protection over the years. In the ensuing decades, as China changed from empire to republic, the British did little with the place, although the Walled City became a curiosity for British

colonials and tourists to visit. Because of the British nonintervention policy in most matters concerning the place, the Walled City turned into a hotbed of crime, drugs, prostitution, and other illegal activities until it was demolished in the mid-1990s. Its legendary background has inspired several local and Hollywood films, as well as video games and comics. In a Takarazuka (all-female) Revue performance of *The Tempest* (dir. Saito Yoshimasa, 1999), an adaptation of Shakespeare's play set in 1942 Hong Kong, Kowloon (not only the Walled City, but as a whole) is presented as a slum ruled by Chinese mafia that is full of crime, gunfights, and drug dealing. Japanese manga, such as Ikegami Ryoichi's *Kuraingu furiiman/Crying Freeman* and Kisaragi Hirotaka's *Buraddo purasu Yakojoshi/Blood+ Kowloon Nights* have used the Walled City as a setting; in addition, Japan has a role in the history of the Walled City. During its occupation of Hong Kong between 1941 and 1945, the Japanese military tore down the City's wall and used its stone to expand the nearby Kai Tak Airport.

To an extent, this Walled City–like ghetto of Yen Town may correlate to Japan's imperial colony, if we grasp the inner-city shantytown or slum as a kind of colony that reinforces unequal power relations between the dominant metropolitan center and the subordinated "colonized" territories. Although the slum dwellers (including migrant workers, former peasants, marginalized laborers, and retirees), having been uprooted and dispossessed, are excluded from the benefits of the state system and may not be regulated by its police force, they are actually products of the colonizing logic of capitalism and have to live by providing menial services to the metropolitan center. What *Swallowtail Butterfly* reveals is that colonial relations can indeed be the constitutive elements of the national culture of modern Japan. Colonization in the economic arena continues in the form of appropriating the wealth and resources of other Asian countries by dominating their markets or exploiting their cheap labor by outsourcing production lines. Domestically, Japan may be full of undocumented multiethnic immigrants, but Yen Town allegorizes a larger neocolonial global structure in which Japan as a developed nation actively exploits developing and undeveloped countries. A new mode of colonial relations arises when the domination of other nations and races is realized through economic exploitation. The English-language monologue by the young girl Ageha (literally, swallowtail butterfly) at the film's beginning confirms Japan's monetary hegemony: "Once upon a time, when the yen was the most powerful force in the world, the city overflowed with immigrants like a gold-rush boomtown. They came in search of yen, snatching up yen, and the immigrants called the city Yen Town. . . . If they worked hard, earned a pocket full of yen, and then returned home, you could become a rich man. It sounds like a fairy tale, but it was a paradise of yen." Although Japan's economic supremacy is already a thing of the past, the tone of the film obviously resonates with national pride and the nostalgia for its former glamour even as it implies that Japan is a fair society in which hardworking immigrants can realize their dreams.

Although during Japan's imperial age its film industry participated in the nation's overseas expansion and created an ideology and value system that elaborated, supported, and strengthened the empire, postwar Japanese films feature an apparently unrepentant longing for its past glories and the vanished energies that once contributed

to its empire building. Regarded as a colonizer by its Asian neighbors, postwar Japan may ironically consider itself a colonized state created by American occupation and protection on the frontlines of the Cold War. Identifying with the ethnic minorities' marginalized victim role but also seeing them as the intrusive alien other, *Swallowtail Butterfly* remains ambivalent about the existence of foreigners in Japan: anxious about the real damage they may bring (their counterfeit yen may destroy the Japanese economy) but also intrigued by their resourcefulness, vitality, and hybridity—which is particularly demonstrated in these migrants' linguistic proficiency.

The migrant characters generally converse with one another in a mix of English, Chinese, and Japanese and easily switch from one language to another in different situations. If speaking English is in vogue among Japanese audiences who have high esteem for American culture, Chinese spoken onscreen may connote a sense of uneasiness and even a threat—especially since all the Chinese characters are actually performed by Japanese actors who cannot really speak Mandarin. Celebrating so-called multiculturalism and linguistic diversity, Iwai's film actually reduces hybridity simply to a loosely defined Western or Anglophone other to be admired and a dangerous Chinese alien to be abhorred. A more radical example of eulogizing linguistic diversity in Japan is Miike Takashi's *The City of Lost Souls,* in which no Japanese is uttered for seventeen minutes (the film starts with a Cantonese voiceover by Michelle Reis, who is writing to tell her mother she is in love with the Brazilian Mario), and there is more Chinese and Portuguese dialogue than Japanese throughout the film. In contrast to the linguistic diversity and fluency of non-Japanese characters (manifested in their smooth transition from Japanese to a foreign language and back), none of the Japanese characters (including cops and gangsters), who openly express their xenophobic feelings toward the foreigners, can speak a foreign language. But in another Miike film, *Ichi the Killer,* the Anjo gang boss's mistress Karen (played by Hong Kong actress Pauline Suen)—who speaks a mix of English, Cantonese, and Japanese—can be fully understood by Japanese characters that speak no foreign language.

The fantasy of linguistic fluidity is perpetuated in *Hong Kong Night Club,* in which the Japanese character "Tatchi" (Tategami) is assumed to be very fluent in Cantonese. However—like the wartime Japanese actors in Asian roles speaking various Asian languages—Kishitani apparently does not know his neighbor's tongue but memorizes the Chinese dialect phonetically. Although Japanese viewers can uncritically accept Japanese actors speaking Cantonese in a Japan–Hong Kong coproduction, Cantonese-speaking audiences in Hong Kong may find this practice irritating or laughable; Kishitani's Cantonese is almost incomprehensible and his intonation is not correct. Perhaps Japan's dreams of linguistic fluidity, hybridity, or "fluidentity" via cinematic representation attracts Japanese audiences but cannot be easily shared with its Asian neighbors. As a result, "the extra-narrative song sung by Katori, Yuen, and Kishitani throughout the film's end credits sung in Mandarin," which is once again incomprehensible to Chinese ears, has to be covered up by "a (loud) Japanese SMAP-style beat"[37] in order to keep Japan's dream of Asia intact. The fantasy that a Japanese community that has little knowledge of foreign languages could communicate well with Asian

migrants persists in the manga-based sports film *Ping Pong,* in which Hong Kong actor Sam Lee Chan-Sam impersonates a Shanghai table tennis player called "China," and his Cantonese (not Shanghainese or Mandarin) is easily understood by all Japanese characters in this sports genre film.

The language barrier probably means nothing in the myth of the *mukokuseki* (nationless or borderless) characteristic that is dominant in postwar Japan's popular culture.[38] Perhaps it is not just a self-imagining fantasy but also a drive motivated by changing circumstances to counteract the stereotypical view of Japan as a nation formed of one people with the same culture. However, how much would the host culture change in order to accommodate the demands of new immigrants? Although the *mukokuseki* myth is always at work in cultural productions, movie characters cannot be as ethnically ambiguous as anime figures in imaginary realms. Instead, transcultural icons, multiple ethnicities, or mixed races onscreen can convey the strong sense of cosmopolitanism that *mukokuseki*-ness embodies. Transnational Chinese organized crime, which is a common theme in Hong Kong cinema, has attracted the Japanese gaze precisely for its distinct ethnicity and border-crossing nature. The fascination with Chinese gangs in Japan is found in the hard-boiled fiction of Hase Seishu (a best-selling Japanese writer whose pen name 馳星周 uses the same characters as those in the name of Hong Kong comedian Stephen Chow Sing-Chi 周星馳, but in reverse order), from which some Japanese gangster films have been adapted. Hase (whose real name is Bando Toshihito) explains that his pen name is a tribute to Chow and demonstrates his love of Hong Kong cinema.

Fuyajo/Sleepless Town (dir. Lee Chi-Ngai, 1998), which is based on Hase's novel of the same title, can be seen as exoticizing the ethnic Chinese gang in the Japanese orientalist gaze. Its Hong Kong director was hired to make this Japanese film, which deals with Chinese gang wars in the Kabukicho area of Shinjuku. Kaneshiro Takeshi was cast as a half-Chinese, half-Japanese gangster. Lee manages to depict an exotic Shinjuku full of ethnic groups and cultures, even though the film does touch upon the sensitive and complicated issues of racial tension and sociopolitical problems. Certain issues related to China, not limited to how the Chinese gangs have created turbulence in Japan, pertain to this movie. Some of the "Chinese criminals" are actually Japanese descendants or half-blooded Japanese left behind (*zanryu koji*) in the former Manchukuo (1932–1945), a puppet state in Manchuria and eastern Inner Mongolia colonized by the Japanese military government—which had encouraged more than 500,000 Japanese to migrate there in order to build a new nation with Manchus, Mongols, Koreans, and Han Chinese. The "abandoned" later "return home" but find themselves rejected by mainstream Japanese society, and they are marginalized as ethnic minorities. The ethnic groups and the Japanese descendants that have been ethnicized occupy the places of dispossessed and displaced in *Sleepless Town,* symbolizing a nationless or borderless "Asian" subject that can be consumed and imagined by Japanese audiences. The irony is that, at the symbolic level, they represent the new Asian dream of being looked up to by the Japanese community; in reality, they have never been absorbed by the dominant society but have been relegated to the criminal underworld, to be cleaned up by their own kind without the attention or intervention of the mainstream consciousness.

In another film freely adapted from a Hase Seishu novel, *The City of Lost Souls* goes beyond Asian ethnicities by bringing in the diasporic Brazilian community (whether they are of Japanese descent [*nikkeijin*] is never specified in the film) to Shinjuku, which is rendered a multinational haven for Chinese drug dealers, Japanese *yakuza*, Russian human traffickers, Japanese running a Latino café, and Brazilian hookers and reprobates. Although the story primarily takes place in Shinjuku, the film creates confusion and misidentification of locations: the Brazilian hit man Mario and his Chinese girlfriend Kei have to go to Okinawa in order to take a ship to Taiwan (note that both Okinawa and Taiwan have been—or still are—Japanese colonies); Mario has hijacked a helicopter to rescue Kei from a deportation bus (a bus transporting illegal immigrants to the borders sounds more like U.S. policy than Japanese) traveling in a North American desert, but the onscreen title states that the place is "Sasame, Toda, Saitama," and there is a huge billboard of a geisha under Mount Fuji; the Chinese gang stays in a large, natural cavern hideaway supposedly right under Shinjuku. The peculiar representations of space and location may imply the displacement and dislodgement of these ethnic peoples in Japan. However, the film also makes use of many cultural stereotypes to represent ethnic groups, such as samba music, cockfighting (which features *Matrix*-inspired CGI), and ping-pong.

Undoubtedly, Miike's gangster movies are famous for their depictions of ethnic minorities in Japan. However, this serious theme is always treated with his provocatively outlandish style, manga-like narrative, and ultraviolence (whose eccentricities are sometimes compared with the tongue-in-cheek styles of Hong Kong cult directors such as Tsui Hark and John Woo). These violent films about ethnic gangsters may reinforce the dominant media representations of the crime wave among foreigners. It is no surprise that Korean–Japanese critic Mika Ko sees Miike's approach to Japan's multiracial situation and multiculturalism as "cosmetic" since his films do not challenge "the dominant structure [of Japanese appropriation of other cultures as objects in a self-congratulating mode] and the definition of Japaneseness vis-à-vis others."[39] Perhaps Miike's incorporation or fusion of other Asian and ethnic elements (including Hong Kong Chinese cultures) in his works is not an intended politicization of the changing Japanese sociocultural conditions. Given his prolificness, commercial filming orientation, and "street-smart [talent] navigating various demands and using those smarts to negotiate his films,"[40] any political message in his works can only be ambivalent or seemingly superficial. Such political ambivalence may remind us of the similar situation that many Hong Kong filmmakers face when they treat the topic of the 1997 handover in their films. But Miike's ambiguity could be positive in the sense that the incorporation of foreignness, without bringing any structural transformation, may invite conflicting interpretations and generate further reflections on Japan's situation.

In these Hong Kong films produced by Japanese filmmakers, the foreign elements have inscribed in their works a gap that may escape all intended bridging. Against the larger context of a rising China, these films attempt to play up ethnic Asian factors in order to play down Chinese ones. Opposed to the activity of consciousness in a dialectical way, China always bounces back when repressed. These films may serve as a testing

ground for Japan's willingness to recognize the presence of China in the reconfiguration of its self-identity in a new era. Indeed, Japan's self-identity might be very flexible, as Oguma Eiji argues. It can expand or contract in tandem with the changing boundaries of the Japanese state, appropriating concepts of mixed origin and assimilating outsiders when it seeks empire and returning to the myth of family state and image of ethnic homogeneity as an isolated, island nation.[41] But if fascination with Hong Kong can shed any light on Japanese culture, it is always the in-betweeness of the (post)colonial city that makes its way.

Notes

1. See the autobiography of Yamaguchi Yoshiko (with Fujiwara Sakuya), *Ri Koran: Watashi no hansei* (Tokyo: Shinchosha, 1987). There are at least three different Chinese translations of the book, the most recent one being *Li Xianglan: Si no bansheng,* trans. Xiao Zhiqiang (Taibei: Shangzhou chuban, 2008).

2. Michael Baskett, *The Attractive Empire: Transnational Film Culture in Imperial Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2008), 79–84.

3. See Koyasu Nobukuni, *Dongyalun: Riben xiandai sixiang pipan* [On East Asia: A Critique of Japanese Modern Thoughts], trans. Zhao Jinghua (Changchun: Jilin People's Press, 2004), especially his preface to the Chinese edition.

4. See, for example, Joshua A. Fogel, *The Literature of Travel in the Japanese Rediscovery of China 1862–1945* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1996); Atsuko Sakaki, "Japanese Perceptions of China: The Sinophilic Fictions of Tanizaki Jun'ichiro," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 59, no. 1 (1999): 187–218.

5. Harry D. Harootunian, "The Function of China in Tokugawa Thought," in *The Chinese and the Japanese: Essays in Political and Cultural Interactions,* ed. Akira Iriye, 9–36 (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1980).

6. For an analysis of the depiction of China and Chinese people in Japan's wartime films, see Peter B. High, *The Imperial Screen: Japanese Film Culture in the Fifteen Years' War 1931–1945* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2003).

7. The number of academic studies on the transnationality of East Asian cinema has grown rapidly in recent years. A few of those available in English are Kinnia Yau Shuk-ting, ed. *East Asian Cinema and Cultural Heritage: From China, Hong Kong, Taiwan to Japan and South Korea* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011); Chris Berry, Nicola Liscutin, and Jonathan D. Mackintosh, eds., *Cultural Studies and Cultural Industries in Northeast Asia; What a Difference a Region Makes* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2009); Jinhee Choi and Mitsuyo Wada-Marciano, eds., *Horror to the Extreme: Changing Boundaries in Asian Cinema* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2009); Tan See Kam, Peter X. Feng, and Gina Marchetti, eds., *Chinese Connections: Critical Perspectives on Film, Identity and Diaspora* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2009); Leon Hunt and Leung Wing-Fai, eds., *East Asian Cinemas: Exploring Transnational Connection on Film* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2008); Gina Marchetti and Tan See Kam, eds., *Hong Kong Film, Hollywood and the New Global Cinema: No Film Is an Island* (London: Routledge, 2007); Andrew David Jackson, Michael Gibb, and Dave White, eds., *How East Asian Films Are Reshaping National Identities: Essays on the Cinemas of China, Japan, South Korea, and Hong Kong* (New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 2006).

8. Although wartime Japanese propaganda films were openly anti–Anglo American, many of them actually were modeled on the Hollywood film formula. See Washitani Hana, "The Opium War and the Cinema Wars: A Hollywood in the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere," *Inter-Asia Cultural studies* 4, no. 1 (2003): 63–76.

9. Baskett, *The Attractive Empire,* 8.

10. In the 1940s not many Chinese viewers knew that Ri Koran was Japanese. Indeed, the actress was presented to the Chinese cinema audience as ethnically Chinese. But it is also argued that her secret identity was protected as a way of retaining Japanese, rather than Chinese, interest in the star, since she could capture the Japanese imaginary of Asianism, Asian unity, or an idealized pan-Asian subject under Japanese leadership. See Shelley Stephenson, " 'Her Traces Are Found Everywhere': Shanghai, Li Xianglan, and the 'Greater East Asia Film Sphere,' " in *Cinema and Urban Culture in Shanghai 1922–1943,* ed. Yingjin Zhang, 233–234 (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999).

11. See, for instance, Arif Dirlik, "Confucius in the Borderlands: Global Capitalism and the Reinvention of Confucianism," *Boundary 2,* 22, no. 3 (November 1995): 229–273; Beng Huat Chua, "Conceptualizing an East Asian Popular Culture," *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies* 5, no. 2 (2004): 200–221.

12. Takeshi Hamashita, "The Tribute Trade System and Modern Asia," in *Japanese Industrialization and the Asian Economy,* ed. A. J. H. Latham and Heita Kawakatsu, 91–107 (London, 1994).

13. For a detailed description of Hong Kong and Japanese cinemas during the occupation and their postwar cooperation, see Kinnia Yau Shuk-ting, *Japanese and Hong Kong Film Industries: Understanding the Origins of East Asian Film Networks* (London: Routledge, 2010).

14. The three movies, directed by Chiba Yasuki, are *A Night in Hong Kong/Honkon no yoru* (1961), *Star of Hong Kong/Honkon no hoshi* (1962), and *Tokyo, Hong Kong, Hawaii* [original English title] (1963).

15. For details, see Yau, *Japanese and Hong Kong Film Industries,* 73–103.

16. Japanese films were first released in Hong Kong in the 1960s through the distribution of Shaw Brothers. The manager of their Japanese branch mentions that "Hong Kong's young audience liked Japanese martial arts movies because they felt they were more realistic. The majority of the titles I bought were action: from Nikkatsu, mostly gangster films, and from Toei, classical warrior films. From Daiei, I bought *Zatoichi* and the *Nemuri Kyoshiro* action series. Toho had fewer action titles" (Law Kar, Kinnia Yau, and June Lam, "Transnational Collaborations and Activities of Shaw Brothers and Golden Harvest: An Interview with Chua Lam," in *Hong Kong Cinema Retrospective: Border Crossings in Hong Kong Cinema*, ed. Law Kar, 140 [Hong Kong: Leisure and Cultural Services Department, 2000]).

17. Kinnia Yau Shuk-ting, "Interview with Umetsugu Inoue," in *Hong Kong Cinema Retrospective,* 144–147.

18. Chua goes on to say that, in the Japan-Hong Kong coproductions, each party has its own calculation. A Hong Kong film company would not "make a 100% Hong Kong film and sell it to the Japanese (which didn't bring in much revenue, except for one or two cases)"; rather, it would hire "a few Japanese actors and split the costs. This ensures a market and makes both sides happy. . . . This was the only way in which I would be willing to work with the Japanese. Despite the manly limitations they imposed to protect their interests, my mentality was this: even if the film were a flop, I wouldn't get hurt" (Law, Yau, and Lam, "Transnational Collaborations and Activities," 142).

19. Lori D. Hitchcock, "Transnational Film and the Politics of Becoming: Negotiating East Asian Identity in *Hong Kong Night Club* and *Moonlight Express*," *Asian Cinema* 13, no. 1 (Spring/Summer 2002): 70; Yeung Yin Lin, "Understanding the Japanese Market of the 1980s: Interviewing Peter Lam and Lau Fong," in *Hong Kong Cinema Retrospective,* 150–153; Leung Cheuk Fan, "The Lure of the Exotic: Hong Kong Cinema in Japan," in *Hong Kong Cinema Retrospective,* 156–159.

20. Brian Bridges, "Hong Kong and Japan: Commerce, Culture and Contention," *The China Quarterly* 176 (December 2003): 1053.

21. See, for instance, Rebecca Karl, "Creating Asia: China in the World at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century," *The American Historical Review* 103, no. 4 (1998): 1096–1118; Prasenjit Duara, "The Discourse of Civilization and Pan-Asianism," *Journal of World History* 12, no. 1 (Spring 2001): 108–110; Gi-Wook Shin, "Asianism in Korea's Politics of Identity," *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies* 6, no. 4 (2005): 616–630; Rustom Bharucha, *Another Asia: Rabindranath Tagore and Okakura Tenshin* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2006); Joel S. Kahn, ed. *Southeast Asian Identities: Culture and the Politics of Representation in Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and Thailand* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1998); Kishore Mahbubani, *The New Asian Hemisphere: The Irresistible Shift of Global Power to the East* (New York: Public Affairs, 2008).

22. Sven Saaler, "Pan-Asianism in Modern Japanese History: Overcoming the Nation, Creating a Region, Forging an Empire," in *Pan-Asianism in Modern Japanese History: Colonialism, Regionalism and Borders,* ed. Sven Saaler and J. Victor Koschmann, 1–18 (London: Routledge, 2007).

23. Duara, "The Discourse of Civilization and Pan-Asianism," 108–110.

24. Some of Takeuchi's works have been translated into English and anthologized in *What Is Modernity? Writings of Takeuchi Yoshimi,* trans. Richard F. Calichman (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005).

25. Takeuchi, *What Is Modernity?,* 72–73 [emphases in the original].

26. Koichi Iwabuchi, "Nostalgia for a (Different) Asian Modernity: Media Consumption of 'Asia' in Japan," *positions* 10, no. 3 (2002): 555.

27. Akira Tochigi, "Commercial and Ideological Factors in the 'Asianization' of the Japanese Film Industry," *Asian Cinema* 5, no. 2 (1990): 12–14.

28. Maho Furuya and Junhao Hong, "Power Shift in the Japanese Film Market in the Last Fifteen Years: The Rise and Fall of Foreign Productions and the Implications" (paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Communication Association, Dresden, Germany, June 19–23, 2006), 1–26.

29. Koichi Iwabuchi, *Recentering Globalization: Popular Culture and Japanese Transnationalism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002), 174.

30. Iwabuchi, "Nostalgia for a (Different) Asian Modernity," 548.

31. Reportedly, more Hong Kong stars, including Edison Chen and Sam Lee Chan-Sam, were intended to be cast in *Ichi the Killer.* See Jiang Junao, "*Shashou Ayi:* Baoli beihou de aiqing gushi" [*Ichi the Killer:* The Love Story behind the Violence], *City Entertainment* 600 (April 2002): 50–51.

32. *The Christ of Nanjing* and *Kitchen* have comparatively received most attention from Hong Kong film critics, who unanimously agreed that they are not the best works of their directors. The most commercially successful work mentioned in the text was *Between Calm and Passion,* which grossed HK$3,315,273.00 at the box office, whereas *The City of Lost Souls* did poorly, grossing only HK$15,750.00 (figures taken from Xianggang dianying

piaofang quanjilu [Box office statistics of motion pictures in Hong Kong], [www.angelfire.com/home/bobic/HK_Movies/main.htm]).

33. For further discussion, see Kwai-Cheung Lo, *Excess and Masculinity in Asian Cultural Productions* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2010), especially chapter 1; and "Japanese Manga, Hong Kong Films and the 'Unity' of Asia," *Asia Japan Journal* 4 (March 2009): 67–77.

34. Iwabuchi, *Recentering Globalization,* 196.

35. Quoted in Giorgio Hadi Curti, "The Ghost in the City and a Landscape of Life: A Reading of Difference in Shirow and Oshii's *Ghost in the Shell,*" *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 26, no. 1 (2008): 94.

36. Andy Hui's character is mute. Because he speaks no language, his nationality is never known.

37. Hitchcock, "Transnational Film and the Politics of Becoming," 75.

38. The term *mukokuseki* was first used to refer to an action film genre developed by Japanese filmmakers in the late 1950s by adapting Hollywood and European models to accommodate domestic tastes, such as Eastern westerns featuring Japanese cowboys in Hokkaido. Japanese animation and computer games further de-Japanify even the story and physical appearances of their characters by erasing all racial characteristics and context. See, for example, Iwabuchi, *Recentering Globalization,* 28.

39. Mika Ko, "The Break-up of the National Body: Cosmetic Multiculturalism and Films of Miike Takashi," *New Cinema* 2, no. 1 (2004): 39.

40. Aaron Gerow, "The Homelessness of Style and the Problems of Studying Miike Takashi," *Canadian Journal of Film Studies* 18, no. 1 (Spring 2009): 39.

41. Eiji Oguma, *A Genealogy of Japanese Self-Images,* trans. David Askew (Melbourne: Pacific Press, 2002).

THE EMERGENCE OF THE ASIAN FILM FESTIVAL: COLD WAR ASIA AND JAPAN'S REENTRANCE TO THE REGIONAL FILM INDUSTRY IN THE 1950S

SANGJOON LEE

As the first inter-Asian film organization in the region, the Federation of Motion Picture Producer's Association of Asia (FPA) began in 1953 under the passionate leadership of Japanese film executive Nagata Masaichi, president of Daiei Studio. He went on a tour of Southeast Asia and met regional film executives in Manila, Hong Kong, Singapore, Jakarta, and Kuala Lumpur, which resulted in the formation of FPA in November 1953.[1] As a result of the meeting, Nagata was elected as FPA's first president, with Run Run Shaw of Shaw Brothers in Hong Kong as the vice president. A year later, FPA's annual event, the Southeast Asian Film Festival (AFF)[2] was held in Tokyo on May 8, 1954. The inaugural address was delivered by Otani Takejiro, president of Shochiku Studio. Each of Japan's "big five" studios submitted their latest films: Shochiku's *Onna no sono* (The Garden of Women, Kinoshita Keisuke, 1954), Daiei's *Konjiki yasha* (Golden Demon, Shima Koji, 1954), Shin Toho's *Kusa wo karu musume* (The Grass-Cutters, Nakagawa Nobuo, 1954), Toho's *Yama no oto* (Sound of the Mountain, Naruse Mikio, 1954), and Toei's *Horoki* (Forsaken, Hisamatsu Seiji, 1954). In addition to the Japanese films, twelve features and seventeen "cultural and educational" documentaries from six nation/city-states—Hong Kong, Taiwan, Thailand, the Philippines, and Malaysia—were screened during its twelve-day schedule.[3] Nagata, the de facto influence of the organization, expressed his full confidence during the press conference, as *Jigokumon* (Gate of

Hell, Kinugasa Keinosuke, 1953), the first Eastman color film produced by Daiei, had won the Grand Prix at the Cannes International Film Festival only a week earlier. Nagata proclaimed, "[T]he worth of Japanese cinema has now been recognized…although Europe and America are important markets, Asia also holds a great future for Japanese movies."[4] Indeed, AFF was the first international film event that Japan had initiated and held since the end of the Pacific War. Hosting this cultural event, therefore, brought much attention from the domestic and international circuits.[5] Daiei's *Konjiki Yasha*, as expected, walked away with the best motion picture award, and its producer, Nagata, took the trophy. The Japanese film industry dominated the festival by grabbing five major awards. An editorial in *Kinema Junpo* wrote somewhat ostentatiously, "The quality of Japanese cinema justifies the Japanese film industry's dominion in the festival. To put it bluntly, we are questioning whether the festival still needs any competition categories."[6] After the ceremony, Nagata proclaimed, "I intend to follow the road I have chosen until I become king of the movie world!"[7]

Interestingly enough, while Shima Koji's name as a director has largely disappeared, most local and regional newspapers hailed Nagata and his achievement rather than the artistic accomplishment of the director. The 1950s was the belle époque of Japanese cinema and other film industries in Asia. The weight of the studio executives was far heavier than that of film directors, and the idea of FPA, from its inception, followed in the footsteps of the MPAA (Motion Picture Association of America). AFF was created to emulate the Oscars, and the festival, in the words of Shaw Brothers' monthly film promotion magazine *Nan guo dian ying* (Southern Screen), was referred to as "Oscar" time of the Asian film industry.[8] Moreover, two members of MPAA participated in AFF as "observers" and, at least for the first event, MPAA offered a "special prize" that would be awarded to a significantly improved, formerly underdeveloped national cinema. Frank Borzage, a renowned Hollywood film director, was dispatched to Tokyo to present the prize, a 35-mm Mitchell camera, to the Thailand film industry.[9]

Film historian Poshek Fu notes that the aim of AFF was "to become the Asian equivalent of the Cannes and Venice Film Festivals, a prestigious event at which filmmakers competed and made business deals."[10] Fu's approach to AFF has been shared by other Asian film historians, but this collective perspective overlooks the very presence of FPA, the organization that was instigated by and for the producers in the region. AFF was, at least for the first five years, not a conventional film festival per se and it was, unlike other nation-bound film festivals, to be hosted in neither a single city nor a country. Instead, it adopted a peripatetic system that moved from country to country each year, and no member country was allowed to accommodate the festival for two consecutive years. AFF was a regional alliance summit for film executives of "free Asia," which accompanied the screenings of each participant's annual outputs, a series of forums, film equipment fairs, and exhibitions, as well as a gala costume show. Therefore, public screenings were not considered, and if it had any, a limited number of screenings were open to the general public. Contrary to other postwar film festivals of the period, AFF put more weight on the forum, which was a roundtable discussion among member countries' executives, than on actual film screenings. What Asian film moguls sought was not to

showcase their latest films to the audience but rather to negotiate business contracts and gauge other countries' technical improvements. Li Han-hsiang, a notable director of Mandarin-language cinema during the 1960s, reminisced, "The ulterior motive for organising a festival was to cement connections and help each other sell films. That was exactly how the particular festival was formed, under the arrangement of Daiei's representative Nagata Masaichi, Run Run Shaw, South Korean director Shin Sang-ok and several prominent producers of the Philippines."[11] In light of this, Cindy Hing-Yuk Wong rightly claims that AFF was primarily a "public relations event for the industries."[12]

However, by narrowing the history of AFF to a struggle of a few film magnates, previous studies of AFF overlooked myriad factors that played out in the formation of the festival and ultimately *depoliticized* the significance of the festival, particularly the fact that the festival was an offspring of the Cold War. We should ask why and to what extent Japanese cinema, which once fabricated and exploited an expansive cinema network in the colonized territory under the *Dai-to-a kyoeiken* (Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere), reentered Southeast Asia in 1953, eight years after the end of the Pacific War and only a few months after the South Korean Civil War's ceasefire; and how the region as a whole was subjugated under the hegemony of America, which had ultimately redrawn the imaginary and geographical map of Asia. The U.S. government believed that culture would play an important role in postwar modernization projects in the region. Following this logic, academic and policy experts sought to "create new attitudes in the developing world as well as new social, political, and economic systems."[13]

In this essay I will delineate the cultural, economic, and political logic(s) that gave rise to and modified AFF and the Japanese film industry's involvement in the organization. First, I argue that the Japanese government turned its attention to Southeast Asia, not only because of the country's own stakes but also because of pressures stemming from the decision makers in Washington, in order to consolidate the region as an ideologically bonded "free Asia" bloc for the sake of U.S. interests and to secure markets for the acquisition of raw materials and foods that would boost Japan's economy. The film industry joined the flow in tandem with other political, cultural, and economic sectors in Japan. However, the Japanese film industry had another purpose for initiating, leading, and participating in AFF. By taking control of the regional organization, Japanese cinema would once again successfully secure its position with its technical superiorities and rational studio system. In other words, "the idea of 'movies of the Greater East Asia'" would indeed extend to the 1950s.[14] Then I locate AFF in a broader perspective that observes the flow of geopolitical conversion from the U.S.-led cultural Cold War in Asia to the showcase of developing states, especially South Korea and Taiwan. But along with such state intervention, the map of the regional film industry changed by the early 1960s. Run Run Shaw might have been the least politically engaged producer in the FPA, but his Shaw Brothers Studio probably benefited the most from the AFF. Shaw Brothers used the festival both to promote its annual releases and as a conciliation site for coproductions, firmly seizing control of the industry.

In the following pages, according to this logic, I trace the emergence of the AFF from this perspective: how it was initiated, to what extent it interacted with regional

and transregional politics, who the key players were, and why its significance rapidly receded in the late 1960s. I will begin with Nagata Masaichi, the designer of FPA.

Nagata Masaichi, Postwar Japanese Cinema, and the Beginning of FPA

Yomota Inuhiko called Nagata Masaichi, the designer of FPA, an "idea man." Donald Richie and Joseph Anderson called him a "businessman's businessman." Kido Shiro of Shochiku habitually called Nagata the "smooth-talking opportunist." At the official reception of the third AFF in Hong Kong, Loke Wan-tho gave him the name, "Mr. Motion Picture" of Southeast Asia.[15] This Kyoto-born film executive first entered the film business as a studio guide at Nikkatsu in 1926 and was promoted to a production manager in ten years. He was well known for his Machiavellian instinct to take hold of power when he surreptitiously sided with Kawazura Ryuzo, the chief of the Information Bureau in Japan, and succeeded by persuading the bureau to consolidate the entire film industry into three major conglomerates: Toho, Shochiku, and Daiei. As president of Daiei, he brought Nikkatsu, his former workforce, under the umbrella of Daiei.[16] Nagata's fortune, however, almost ended with Japan's defeat in the war. The hunt for war criminals was a task of the occupation forces led by Douglas MacArthur, even to the entity of the film industry. Nagata was placed on a list of war criminals and was later discharged from the industry for rehabilitation. Nagata as an "idea man" was busy with new projects and ideas.

In 1951, Daiei's medium-budget period drama *Rashomon* (Kurosawa Akira, 1951) was submitted to the Venice International Film Festival and unexpectedly won the Grand Prix. A year later, in May 1952, *Rashomon* grabbed an Oscar, which garnered respect and jealousy simultaneously from other nations in the region.[17] With the unprecedented success of *Rashomon*, Nagata's presence in the Japanese film industry had rapidly been established. As a result, in 1953, Nagata was elected as president of the newly established *Nihon eiga sangyo shinkokai* (Society for the Promotion of Japanese Film Industry), and his primary mission was to boost foreign sales of Japanese cinema. The Japanese film industry finally regained its momentum in the early 1950s. As Hiroshi Kitamura imposingly delineates, the United States operated Central Motion Picture Exchange (CMPE), which had controlled and supervised the occupied territory film production and distribution for nearly seven years and ended its operation on December 31, 1951, and "a new day of business dawned the following day."[18] With the absence of occupation authority and government censorship, the content of Japanese cinema became remarkably diversified. Such tabooed genres as *jidaigeki* (period film) and war pictures were ready to embrace Japan's new generation of audiences. After a long hiatus, Nikkatsu reentered the market in March 1953.[19] The competition among the six major studios—Toho, Shochiku, Daiei, Toei, Shin Toho, and Nikkatsu—was

fierce. The annual outputs of domestic films rose throughout the 1950s and peaked in 1960 at 547. The domestic market was, as a consequence, already saturated in the early 1950s, and, therefore, increasing needs of foreign markets turned the industry's attention to the exportation of films.[20]

After the surprising success of *Rashomon*, the amount of film exports had increased tremendously between 1951 and 1953, and motion pictures rose to prominence among various export goods. In 1953 alone, a total of 675 films valued at US$1,030,000 were exported to various countries, primarily European markets, which was thirty times more than that of 1947. In other words, the Japanese film industry became a "star of Japan's export industry" by the time the first AFF began.[21] As Aaron Gerow argues, the Japanese film industry's "dream of export," which originated in the Pure Film Movement during the 1910s and 1920s, was finally fulfilled.[22] To relieve the state's current dollar shortage, the Japanese film industry was given a new mission: export more films to new destinations, including Southeast Asian countries and, possibly, India. Film executives, including Nagata, considered exporting Japanese movies a "patriotic act of earning foreign currency."[23] By hosting the AFF and leading the FPA, the Japanese film industry thus attempted to expand and diversify its market. The Japanese film industry aimed at introducing popular genre films to audiences in Asia while producing films of high production value for major European film festivals.[24] For example, *Sora no Daikaiju Radon* (Radon, Honda Ishiro, 1956), the monster film from Toho, was the most publicized film of the third AFF in 1956 and Toho hosted a workshop on the latest filming technology during the festival. *Nippon Times* published a four-page special report on AFF and the Japanese film industry's current status, along with another Japanese film, *The Gate of Hell*'s victory at the Cannes International Film Festival. A reporter in the special issue of *Nippon Times* wrote

> The Southeast Asian area being almost completely dominated by films of American origin, the indigenous movie industries were still in a very retarded stage of development. To foster these industries would contribute to a mutual exchange of motion picture culture as well as increase Japanese exports to that area. Therefore, it would be beneficial not only to Japan but also to the countries of Southeast Asia themselves if the Japanese movie industry, which was somewhat more advanced, were to take the lead in developing the film industries in this part of the world.[25]

Three factors should be considered here regarding the Japanese film industry's reentrance to the Southeast Asian market. First, it was Nagata's personal objective. By leading the organization and festival, Nagata could retain manifold compensations and uphold its position in the domestic industry with ties to Asia as well as the West. By screening films with technical superiorities, Nagata and Daiei determinedly positioned themselves as the most modernized company in Asia. Daiei gained profits for exporting film equipment and state-of-the-art techniques such as Eastman color cinematography and its lab processing, synchronous sound recording, and shooting, and special effects that had induced Asian producers to Japan's laboratories for postproduction.[26] Moreover, Daiei could export more genre films from the studio to other Asian

countries by using his solid network with FPA members.[27] Daiei's foreign sales, therefore, particularly to Hong Kong and Taiwan had rapidly increased, from forty in 1954 to seventy-four in 1956.[28]

Second, the Japanese film industry's entrance to Southeast Asia was largely due to the newly formed "free Asia" bloc against the ever-expanding communist alliance. As president of the FPA, Nagata proclaimed in 1956, "We can say proudly, without any other ulterior motives of a political and ideological background, but only through self-reliance, we have overcome insurmountable difficulties in maintaining this project."[29] What Nagata meant by "political and ideological background" was the conflict between capitalism and communism. AFF would remain a politics-free event as long as its films came only from "free Asia." In that sense, AFF can be grouped with the Berlin International Film Festival as a "politically charged institution" and progeny of the U.S.-driven Cold War cultural politics. American authorities contributed financially for at least the first five years of the Berlin festival, from 1951 to 1956, although U.S. involvement was never officially disclosed.[30] As one might expect, the festival therefore became a political front that explicitly placed its political and ideological messages in the spotlight. AFF fit comfortably under the rubric of political institution in its first several years of existence. It can be distinguished from Berlin in a fundamental way because the U.S. government was not directly involved. In place of the United States, Japan led the organization and, curiously, it was not U.S. authorities but individual participants who voluntarily made the festival an ideological battlefield. For instance, one film critic in South Korea expressed in a local newspaper, "The aim and purpose of FPA was to protect 'free Asia' from the invasion of the communist force throughout the cinema."[31] In fact, most participants were ardent pro-American and anticommunist film executives supported, partially or fully, by the American government.[32] Chang Kuo-sin, a Hong Kong delegate and committee treasurer of AFF and president of Asia Pictures, was an ardent pro-United States figure who founded the Asia Press with financial backing from the U.S. government by way of the Asia Foundation. In addition to Chang, Kim Kwan-soo, president of the South Korean Motion Picture Association, Manuel de Leon of the Philippines' LVN Pictures, and the Indonesian film industry were receiving grants or material support from American organizations.[33]

Lastly, the Japanese government was being pressured by Washington policymakers through ECAFE (Economic Commission of Asia and the Far East) and was ready to reenter the region to acquire raw materials and foods while also exporting light industries' products. To send a "goodwill" message, cinema became the most prevailing medium to disseminate the image of the "reformed" precolonizer. In view of this, Glenn Ireton, a Tokyo correspondent for *Far East Film News*, wrote in 1954,

> The motion picture industry of Southeast Asia has succeeded where governments have failed. At the same time, this fact also illustrates one of the strongest arguments for democratic government. For, imagine, if you will the component parts of a commercial activity in six political entities, most of which don't have reciprocal and normal diplomatic relations, being permitted to band together to further common objectives, under other than social and economic system founded upon free enterprise.[34]

In order to clarify this aspect of the political and economic realm, I will thoroughly discuss the geopolitical milieu of the early of 1950s as a major factor that influenced Japan's reentry to the region in the following section. I will also examine how AFF positioned itself in the topography of the rapidly changing regional order.

New Regional Order and Japan's Reentrance to Southeast Asia

As clearly enunciated from the beginning, the aims and objects of FPA were "to promote the motion picture industry in the countries or territories of Southeast Asia; to elevate the artistic standards of motion picture; and to ensure cultural dissemination and interchange through motion pictures in the area, thereby contributing to the development of friendly relations among the participating nations."[35] I stress this declaration because it signified AFF's fundamental difference from other post-WWII European film festivals. AFF was in line with another regional economic organization such as ECAFE, which was inaugurated in 1947. ECAFE was a regional commission of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). Oba Mie summoned the aims and purposes of ECOSOC that served as "an arena wherein member nations could meet on a regular basis to exchange opinions on regional economic and social issues, and to assist in the economic reconstruction and development of Asia."[36]

ECAFE was launched by the strong will of the United States and its desire to seize hegemony in this "new" region, where each former colonizer and newly independent nation's stakes clashed and contradicted. It was, therefore, a "laboratory" for America's new role in the world. In its third session and subsequent meetings, one of the most urgent agendas was to question the trade between ECAFE countries and Japan. E. E. Ward, in *Far Eastern Survey*, argues,

> ECAFE countries should avail themselves of Japan's ability to meet some of their urgent needs, especially in exchange for raw materials, which the ECAFE countries could supply, provided no action taken by ECAFE usurped the functions of the Far Eastern Commission.[37]

P. S. Lokanathan, an Indian economist who was an executive secretary of ECAFE, visited Tokyo in June 1949 and expressed his view that Japan should raise the level of its trade with the rest of Asia, thereby "increasing her ability to buy from non-dollar areas and also enabling the rest of Asia to speed up its recovery and development."[38] The Truman administration, in John W. Dower's words, had identified Japan as "the key to the balance of power in Asia."[39] And as Bruce Cumings claims, the key members of postwar American politics, especially Dean Acheson, George Kennan, and John Foster Dulles, hoped to situate Japan "in a world system shaped by the United States."[40] With Japan, they aimed to construct a "free Asia" bloc, a "great crescent" of anticommunist

containment in Asia, which in the end would be more or less the nonterritorialized colonies of dominant America. With the end of the occupation regime in Japan, which aimed to democratize the society and end the militarism (the Japanese Imperial Army), break up the *zaibatsu* (Japanese financial clique), eliminate rural landlords, and reform education in 1951 in tandem with the San Francisco Peace Treaty, Japan finally reentered the international political system. What was behind the turnaround of the U.S. policy toward Japan was, as Yoshimi Shunya emphasizes, the Chinese revolution. Yoshimi claims, "Japan would have been far less important to American policy if there was still a pro-American government in PRC to act as a bloc against the southward spread of Soviet Power."[41] In fact, W. W. Rostow vigorously called on Washington to rectify its previous policy toward Asia. He claimed that the situation in Asia was more complicated than that in Europe. In Europe, America only needed to solve the crux of West Germany, but in Asia, he stressed, "There is Japan on the one hand and the whole area of Southeast Asia on the other. . . . In Asia the threat would become virtually a reality; either Japan or Southeast Asia would be lost to the Free World."[42] In the early 1950s, having been threatened by the ever-expanding communism over the region, particularly the establishment of PRC, ascending popularities in Indonesia and the Philippines, and the outbreak of the South Korean Civil War, it became necessary for the U.S. government to construct a military bulwark and a "free Asia" bloc in the region. Lazar Kaganovich, in 1954, proclaimed that "if the nineteenth century was a century of capitalism, the twentieth century is a century of the triumph of socialism and communism,"[43] and the influence of the Soviets was spreading out over Asia rapidly from PRC to Indonesia. Okinawa, for that reason, was chosen to be emphasized as the weight of the military forefront to impede the Soviet power.[44] With the outbreak of the South Korean War, the Japanese economy achieved unprecedented growth. As Yoshida put it, "the war in South Korea was an unexpected gift of the gods."[45] Together with America's aid and an ever-flourishing Japanese economy with the help of the currency exchange rate policy, and by the time of the Japan-U.S. peace treaty in 1951, Japan emerged as a leading economic figure in Asia. Yet, as Japan's leading political economist Akira Suehiro notes, Japan, having lost the Chinese market, was urgently in need of alternative markets where Japan could export its manufactured products and import raw materials and food, which were mostly supplied from its "lost" colonies such as South Korea, Taiwan, and Manchuria. Therefore, Japan needed to recuperate its economic alliances with Southeast Asia.[46]

However, one fundamental problem was not fully solved. Japan had to deal with countries where economic nationalism and wariness about a "second Japanese invasion" remained strong. Suehiro argues, concerning this problem and its solution, that Japan made use of its "reparation payments" and "American economic aid to the region."[47] The Yoshida cabinet, through the Japan-U.S. economic partnership, launched a "scheme for the development of Southeast Asia" with high expectations. Riding on America's vast economic aid policy in the region and already operating the Colombo Plan with reparation payments as bait, Japan finally reentered Southeast Asia around 1953. Given that, the year 1953 when Nagata's tour of Southeast Asia began, many sectors of Japan also started to organize goodwill tours of Southeast Asia with the aid of

government officials, Diet members, and entrepreneurs. For instance, in August 1952, a Diet member of the Southeast Asian Economic Mission visited India, Pakistan, Ceylon, Thailand, Hong Kong, and Taiwan with the purpose of strengthening Japan's economic ties with these countries.[48] In accordance with all these economic missions, the *Ajia mondai chosakai* (Asian Affairs Research Society) was initiated and its monthly journal *Ajia mondai* (Asian Affairs) was first published in 1953. Nagata, along with the Japanese government and many different economic, political, and cultural sectors in the country, believed that cinema would become "Japan's cultural emissary," as the film industry, according to Anderson and Richie, "stuck to this concept with the evangelistic zeal of a true missionary."[49]

Prime Minister Kishi Nobusuke stressed that AFF played a "large role in promoting world peace and raising cultural standards," as well as promoting "friendship with Japan through motion pictures."[50] Nagata, in an interview with a foreign press, proudly stated that "there has been an abundant flow of international amenity and *goodwill*, not to mention tangible accomplishments in direct assistance offered and received in joint production, in location facilities, in technical know-how and in production materials."[51] Nagata's statement reaffirms the aim and purpose of AFF and puts forward the event as an archetypical "flying geese" model. As the initiator of FPA, Nagata dreamed of leading the film industries of "free Asia." He aimed to catch two rabbits at once, uplifting the status of Japanese cinema in the region as a technically and artistically superior "brother goose," and exporting more genre films to the region to contribute to the nation's economy. However, neither aim was successfully fulfilled in the end. Nagata failed to decipher the intricate web of interregional politics. AFF gradually transformed its position and identity. The most conspicuous amendment was the intrusion of the state, markedly South Korea and Taiwan, the two representative "developmental states" in the region.[52] With the strong intervention of the state, the map of regional film industry had altered. Moreover, the rise of Shaw Brothers as the new hub of the regional film industry put the Japanese film industry in an even more perplexed state of mind.

AFF FORUM IN 1956: ASIAN CINEMA IN THE 1950S AND THE ROLE OF AFF

In the 1950s, Asian countries were at very different junctures in the configuration of their film industry. The Philippines, after Japan, had the most advanced system and technologies. The Philippines had four vertically integrated studios, commonly referred to as the "Big Four." LVN, Premier, Sampaguita, and Lebran-Movietec had been producing more or less one hundred films per year since the early 1950s. Due to these ever-increasing annual outputs, Philippine film studios were seeking to export their films. Indonesia was the most rickety in terms of its political volatility. Its two film moguls, Djamaludin Malik and Usmar Ismail, were under cumbersome pressures from

both the country's communist party and the government for various reasons. Malaysia, Singapore, and Hong Kong were in the hands of the Shaw family and Loke Wan-tho's MP&GI, and these two companies were keen to acquire up-to-date technologies to fill their enormous theater chains in Southeast Asia. South Korea and Taiwan were in the very early stages in terms of the maturity of the industry. In sum, although these countries had different purposes for attending AFF in the early years, they had shared two goals: to coproduce films and to acquire modern technologies. In the 1950s and 1960s, by collaborating with technically superior Japanese cinema, the rest of the countries were able to grasp the latest filming techniques. Since almost no directors and technicians of the region, except Japan, were allegedly experienced or trained to film color photography or conduct lab processing, working with Japan was a valuable learning opportunity for Asian film personnel. As a cogent instance, during the first AFF, Shaw and Nagata made an agreement to produce *Yokihi* (The Princess Yang Kwei-fei, Mizoguchi Kenji, 1955). Shaw Brothers put up 30 percent of the film's total budget and Mizoguchi directed the film. Nagata Masaichi had been longing for more international film festival fame, and, with more exotic flavor, Nagata was convinced that this new Mizoguchi film would attract the West. But his desire proved to be a failure both commercially and artistically. A year later, Toho went on to coproduce with Shaw the film *Byaku fujin no yoren* (Madame White Snake, Shiro Toyoda, 1956), which was based on a well-known story not only in both markets but also in the Philippines and South Korea. Anderson and Richie denounce the films as "rather dull" and claim that Mizoguchi's and Toyoda's talents were largely "wasted."[53] Daiei and Toho had gradually lost their interest in Hong Kong by the early 1960s, but from the aforementioned coproduction experiences, Shaw gained the necessary know-how of the color photography processing and Japan's rational division of labor system that led to a faster and more reliable operation of film production. The seventh AFF was held in Tokyo in April 1960. Shaw Brothers' *Hou men* (Back Door, Li Han-hsiang, 1959) won the best dramatic film out of twenty-seven entries. It was Shaw's third consecutive victory since 1958. One reporter of *Variety* wrote that "the fact that Japan had to take a comparative back seat this year indicates that with the less developed nations becoming industrialized. . . . the Asian picture is becoming more competitive."[54]

As an apparent example to explore how Japan's interests contradicted those of other Asian executives and what film moguls sought after throughout FPA, the "forum" that was held in the third AFF in 1956, hosted by Hong Kong, is worth scrutinizing here. Co-productions, technical training, exchanging resources, and expanding markets were all noticeably expressed among member countries. Indeed, the major proposal for the forum was to solve the problem of coproduction. Hong Kong, Thailand, Indonesia, Taiwan, Japan, the Philippines, and South Korea attended the forum, and, noticeably, two Americans who were representatives of the MPAA (Motion Picture Association of America) participated as well. The forum began with Ricardo Balabrat, a general manager of Premiere Pictures in the Philippines. He suggested a coproduced omnibus film, which would be composed of five to six short films made by all member countries. He proposed, "It is a sort of co-production that anyone of the member countries of

the Federation may enter into with me or any other film makers in the Philippines on a co-production basis."[55] Balabrat stressed that he had gained confidence through his participation in a coproduction with Japan, which made a sound profit in the Philippines' domestic market the previous year. His proposal, however, soon proved that it was too naïve since most members expressed concerns with regard to the imbalance between the members' standard of filmmaking practices, language problem, and the issue of a "good story." Among them, the question of "good story" led to a heated argument in the board. Takechiyo Kimura, acting secretary general of FPA and executive secretary of Daiei, strongly claimed,

> Japan says that we have had many propositions from the various countries in this area to have a co-production with us, but we think that for a co-production it is more important first to find a good story, for which we have a mutual agreement, before we start a co-production. . . . Without a good story on which we can mutually agree, we cannot say yes to a co-production.[56]

Kimura's bland reaction toward coproduction and his overemphasis on a "good story" should be understood in the context of the Japanese film industry's disappointing experiences, especially of Daiei's and Toho's relationship with Hong Kong. In accordance with Japan's adamant position, William Seiter, a representative of MPAA, demonstrated how America viewed postwar Asia. Chang Kuo-sin, a pro-American intellectual in Hong Kong who was supported by the U.S. government to set up his studio, Asian Pictures, asked Seiter's opinion on the issue of coproduction and "good story." Seiter stressed the need for reeducation. He stated, "We [America] have now developed in three different colleges or universities, a school for motion pictures, which includes courses in writing, cinematography, art direction and editing, and this is a major course in the University of California, and the University of Southern California."[57] By stressing America's brand new university courses on cinema, what Seiter meant was the need of American education for Asian cinema personnel. However, his stance annoyed the participants since they were experts on filmmaking in the region who had at least a couple of decades of experience in the industry. Ismail and Prince Yugala were among the most intimidated by Seiter's proposition, but in line with Seiter, Chang again raised the issue of education and suggested seeking for external help for educating themselves:

> We [FPA] get a travel grant from the state department [the U.S. department], one for each member countries from the area. . . . The grant covers travel expenses and all expenses paid in America for a period of three months. . . . If we get a grant from the colonial office, the colonial department fund, or Colombo development fund, . . . so I suggest we discuss the first resolution first—of getting outside help.

Chang's remarks reaffirm that many participants of FPA, in fact, were directly or indirectly supported by one of myriad U.S. government–financed or –supported organizations, and former British Far Eastern colonies (Malaya, Singapore, and Hong Kong), through the Colombo Plan, were receiving educational grants from either the United States or United Kingdom around that time. Chang, who led the latter half of the forum,

went further. As an ardent supporter of "reeducating Asia," he suggested a mutual schol-arship in the area, primarily targeted to Japan, and asked Kimura whether Japanese film industry would allocate two- to three-month scholarships to acquire modern tech-nologies in Japan for other Asian film technicians, writers, or directors.[58] Kimura again showed a hesitant response and reluctantly stated, "If member countries pay the travel-ling expenses and the staying expenses, then we will help with the other expenses which will be used in Japan. We will give that consideration as much as possible."[59] Then the Philippines, which had a comparatively advanced and modernized film industry, pro-posed two scholarships for its music conservatory for any member country that wished to develop its music and sound technology.[60] The forum ended, and the whole event finished in anticipation of the next festival, which would be held again in Tokyo.

End of the Decade

For those underdeveloped and newly independent countries in Asia, modernizing the industry and rationalizing the system were de facto catchphrases of most film execu-tives of the time. Constructing the state-of-the-art studios, adopting a Fordist-type mass-producing assembly line and an effective management system, and acquiring modern technologies were the participants' ultimate dream. What most Asian film exec-utives faced, however, was political instability, rising sentiment of nationalism that was often incorporated with the fear of communism, and foreign currency regulations that made it difficult to purchase or borrow raw stocks and new and modern film equipment from America. As a result, Indonesian representatives Malik and Ismail closed their stu-dios in 1957 due to the constant conflict with the government. The Philippines cinema also went on to suffer a recession. Chang and his Asian Pictures stopped producing films in 1959 since the U.S. government no longer supported his studio. South Korea and Taiwan became keen festival enthusiasts after their hosts in 1962 and 1964, respectively. With the presence of two developmental states, the identity of AFF changed drastically.

South Korea held its first AFF in May 1962. It was the first international cultural event that the new country, under the regime of a military government, had ever hosted. To celebrate the one-year anniversary of the coup d'état led by major General Park Chung Hee in 1961, the festival was scheduled to be held May 12 to 16. As evi-dence of the unpredictable direction of regional political transformation, however, Indonesia withdrew, becoming involved with the PRC and North Korea in discus-sions for a new Asian film festival that would include the countries outside of the FPA. Thailand also withdrew. Thus, Seoul hosted only five other member countries: Japan, Hong Kong, the Philippines, Singapore/Malaysia, and Taiwan, which together sent approximately eighty delegates, directors, and performers along with twenty-five feature films.[61] At the festival, *Sarangbang Sonnimgwa Eomeoni* (Houseguest and a Mother, Shin Sang-ok, 1961) won the best picture prize. Park, the new president, handed the trophy to Shin Sang-ok, owner of Shin Films, the country's most powerful

studio at the time. The unexpected triumph of *Houseguest and a Mother* caused a nationwide sensation, as it was the first time that a South Korean film had won the best picture award at the international film festival.[62] At this pivotal moment in the nation's film industry, South Korea became a keen festival enthusiast. Two years later, in 1964, Taipei hosted the AFF for the first time. The Taiwanese film industry had blossomed in the 1960s. The state-owned CMPC's new executive, Henry Gong Hong, was the de facto initiator of a film genre called "healthy realism," a type of melodrama "with a strong civic message of conscientiousness, charity, hygiene, and environmentalism."[63] *Ke nu* (Oyster Girl, Hsing Lee and Chia Li, 1964) and *Yang yarenjia* (Beautiful Duckling, Hsing Lee, 1965) are two signature examples of healthy realism. *Oyster Girl* grabbed the best picture award at the Taipei festival, where Henry Gong Hong was chief of the jury.[64] Indonesia and Thailand were again absent, and the AFF had become more or less an East Asian film showcase. However, it was Run Run Shaw and Loke Wan-tho who ultimately survived in the end while the film industries in Taiwan and South South Korea fell under strict controls by the military governments during the mid-1960s.

Shaw Brothers and MP&GI expanded their studios and achieved what we call a "pan-Chinese empire," which dominated vast territories including Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, Taiwan, and Chinese communities in Vietnam, Thailand and Indonesia, not to also mention Chinatowns in major Euro-American cities. Shaw, in Law Kar's words, "utilized festival awards to bolster the company's reputation in Southeast Asia."[65] In a similar vein, Kinnia Yau, by focusing on the role of Daiei and the Shaw Brothers, claims that the history of the festival, especially between 1954 and 1969, demonstrates how the "Shaws established a close tie with the Japan's Big Five and replaced them as the leading studio in Asia."[66] The 1960s' AFF was used for the sake of Hong Kong film studios' self-assurance of their regional power and a marketing tool for their "galaxy of stars." As a result, Southeast Asia became underrepresented at the AFF, which became an arena for what we now call East Asia. Southeast Asia, although AFF initially began there, largely disappeared and most Southeast Asian countries expressed discontent with the FPA and AFF. After South Korea's second hosting, in 1966, when the Shaw Brothers' *Lanyuhei* (*The Blue and the Black*, Doe Ching, Hong Kong, 1966) won the best picture award and South Korea, Taiwan, and Hong Kong shared most of the other major awards, Southeast Asian countries began to consider creating their own event. With the inauguration of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in 1967, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand initiated an ASEAN subcommittee on film. That group staged the first Southeast Asian Film Festival in 1972. And two years later, in 1974, Indonesia led the establishment of the ASEAN Motion Picture Producers Association.[67]

Despite the Japanese film industry's failed involvement with AFF, the American-led system was stabilized. The Japanese government found its position in the system, and, by then, the Japanese film industry had started to decline. The Japanese film industry was incurably wounded by the rising popularity of television. With its glorious studio era in the past, Japanese cinema suffered from a downturn in national audience and

the mass influx of Hollywood cinema. Nikkatsu, as a result, changed the studio's policy in 1971. After ceasing its operations for a while, the studio pronounced that the studio would produce only soft-core pornographic films (*Roman Porno*). Shochiku, on the other hand, was in a slightly better position since it had a stable money earner: the *Tora-san* series. The series released one or two films per year since the first *Tora-san* film came out in 1969. Daiei, the most powerful and influential motion picture studio in Asia during the 1950s, declared bankruptcy in 1971. Nagata, who had initiated FPA, left the studio in the following year. With Nagata's retirement and Daiei's impoverishment, Japan withdrew from the FPA committee completely in 1972. In the year when Japan left FPA, AFF was held in Seoul as a noncompetition event. Japan only sent film prints and no industry personnel attended the festival. During the festival, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and even South Korean producers and executives seriously considered ceasing the festival.

Epilogue

AFF survived and was renamed again in 1982. Since Australia and New Zealand had joined FPA in 1976 and 1977, respectively, AFF had to change its identity once again and became the Asia-Pacific Film Festival. However, the regional film sphere had completely transformed, and Asian cinema entered a new period of film festivals. Ever since 1977, with the inauguration of the Hong Kong International Film Festival, the importance of AFF has rapidly declined in the region. The Japanese government again initiated Japan's own prestigious international film festival during the 1980s. This time, Japan's Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) took the lead. METI had been preparing for Tsukuba Expo, which would be Japan's third world's fair after Expo '70 in Osaka and Expo '75 in Okinawa. In 1985, the Tokyo International Film Festival took off to generate and amplify the synergy. Again, film industry moguls—after Nagata, who had passed away a few months before the festival—took charge of the festival committee as they did for AFF in the 1950s. However, the collective intention of METI and the Japanese film industry was fundamentally different from the past. The Tokyo International Film Festival, from its inception, aimed to project itself as an "international" film festival comparable to Cannes and Venice and did not necessarily limit itself to Asian cinema. Despite its promising start, however, the Tokyo International Film Festival failed to brand itself as "prestigious" and "world class." The status of the festival rapidly faded after the emergence of the Busan International Film Festival in 1996. In the exceedingly competitive arena of regional film festivals, the Busan International Film Festival and the Shanghai International Film Festival have successfully proved their significance since the early 2000s. Although AFF is still, surprisingly, holding its annual event, regional media or film personnel no longer pay attention to AFF since its initial promises and influences over the regional film industry and culture have dissipated.

Acknowledgements

Notes

1. In 1953, with four more film executives in Indonesia (Djamaludin Malik), the Philippines (Manuel de Leon), Thailand (Prince Bhanubandhu Yugala), and Taiwan (Li Yei), FPA was initiated. Among eleven official board members, Japan dominated the board by occupying four seats (including Nagata), the Shaw family held two (Run Run for Malaya/Singapore and Runde for Hong Kong), and Indonesia took two (Malik and Usmar Ismail), while Thailand, Taiwan, and the Philippines each received one seat, respectively. Consequently, from the beginning, FPA was Japan's organization, having two sidekicks, the Shaw family and Malik/Ismail.

2. At the FPA's third festival, Alexander Grantham, governor of Hong Kong, gave the host's welcome speech at the opening reception. Interestingly enough, he remarked that the festival "teaches me some geography, for I had never realised before that Japan was part of Southeast Asia!" Whether or not this comment influenced the decision, the festival was renamed the Asian Film Festival after the Hong Kong event. Throughout this article, I will use AFF for every film festival held under FPA since its inception in 1953 unless otherwise indicated.

3. *Eiga Nenkan* (Tokyo: Kinema Jumpo-sha, 1955), 54–60.

4. "Big Five Film Companies Here Headed by Capable Leaders," *Nippon Times*, May 16, 1954, 7.

5. The reported budget was 30 million yen. Five Japanese major studios shared two thirds of the budget while FPA covered the rest. See Matsuyama Hideo, "Tonan ajia eigasai koki," *Kinema Junpo* (June 1954): 74.

6. "Jihyo: Tonan ajia eigasai no seika," *Kinema Junpo* (June 1954): 21.

7. "Daiei Film *Golden Demon* Judged Best Asia Movie," *Nippon Times*, May 20, 1954, 1.

8. "Oscar Time in Asia: Sixth Asian Film Festival," *Southern Screen* (May 1959), 15.

9. *Nippon Times*, May 20, 1954.

10. Poshek Fu, "The Shaw Brothers Diasporic Cinema," in Poshek Fu (ed.), *China Forever: The Shaw Brothers and Diasporic Cinema* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2008), 11.

11. Grace Ng, "Li Han Hsiang's *Long Men Zhen*," in Wong Ain-Ling (ed.) *Li Han-Hsiang, Storyteller* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Film Archive, 2007), 143.

12. Cindy Hing-Yuk Wong, "Film Festivals and the Global Projection of Hong Kong Cinema," in Gina Marchetti and Tan Se Ka (eds.), *Hong Kong Film, Hollywood and the New Global Cinema: No Film Is an Island* (London: Routledge, 2007), 181.

13. Christina Klein, *Cold War Orientalism: Asia in the Middlebrow Imagination, 1946–1961* (Berkley: University of California Press, 2003), 199.

14. Kinnia Yau Shuk-ting, *Japanese and Hong Kong Film Industries: Understanding the Origins of East Asian Film Networks* (London: Routledge, 2010), 63.

15. Yomota Inuhioko, *Understanding Japanese Cinema*, trans. Park Jeon-yeol (Seoul, South Korea: Hyeonamsa, 2001); Donald Richie and Joseph Anderson, *Japanese Film: Art and Industry* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1982); Peter B. High, *The Imperial Screen: Japanese Film Culture in the Fifteen Year's War, 1931–1945* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2003), 320; *Report on the 3rd Annual Film Festival of Southeast Asia* (Hong Kong, 1956), 38.

16. This intriguing story of Nagata Masaichi's overnight success is well documented in Peter B. High, *The Imperial Screen: Japanese Film Culture in the Fifteen Year's War, 1931–1945* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2003), 314–321.

17. Ho Hyeon-chan, "South Korean Cinema on the Road to the Venice," *Silver Screen* (August 1965): 65; "The Colorful Cannes Film Festival," *Southern Screen* (June 1960): 30–33; "Shaw Brothers into World Market," *Southern Screen* (July 1963): 3–4.

18. Hiroshi Kitamura, *Screening Enlightenment: Hollywood and the Cultural Reconstruction of Defeated Japan* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2010), 177.

19. For more about Nikkatsu's reentrance to the market, see *Eiga Nenkan* (Tokyo: Kinema Jumpo-sha, 1955), 313–315; Mark Schilling, *No Borders No Limits: Nikkatsu Action Cinema* (Farleigh, UK: FAB Press, 2007), 12–29.

20. Mori Iwao of Toho and Kawakita Nagamasa, a head of Towa, were all interested in global outreach of Japanese cinema. As Nagata traveled to Hollywood in January 1952 for possible business contracts, Mori also spent time in Hollywood and Europe from March to May of 1951 and he met Joseph von Sternberg in New York for Kawakita's Japan-America coproduction project *Anatahan* (also known as *Saga of Anatahan*). Accordingly, Mori, Nagata, and Kawakita all tried to reach outside of Japan, and they were indeed the founding members of FPA although Kawakita stepped down at the last moment. After his American tour, on June 19, 1953, Nagata introduced his idea of initiating FPA at the Society for the Promotion of Japanese Film Industry. See *Eiga Nenkan* (Tokyo: Kinema Jumpo-sha, 1955), 54. For more about the production history of *Anatahan*, see Sachiko Mizuno, "*The Saga of Anatahan* and Japan," *Spectator* 29.2 (2009): 9–24.

21. "Success Abroad Bring[s] Boom to Movie Export," *Nippon Times*, May 16, 1954, 6.

22. See Aaron Gerow, "Narrating the Nation-ality of a Cinema: The Case of Japanese Prewar Film," in Alan Talisman (ed.), *The Culture of Japanese Fascism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009), 189; Aaron Gerow, *Visions of Japanese Modernity: Articulations of Cinema, Nation, and Spectatorship, 1895–1925* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), 113–114.

23. Yau, *Japanese and Hong Kong Film Industries: Understanding the Origins of East Asian Film Networks* 64.

24. Richie and Anderson, 232–233.

25. "S. E. Asian Nations Take Part in Film Festival Here," *Nippon Times*, May 16, 1954, 5.

26. *Kinema Junpo* (May 1954), 63–64.

27. As an apparent instance, AFF and the second exhibition of film technologies and facilities were held in Tokyo simultaneously. The exhibition includes a forum, lectures, test shooting sessions, and many other special events. See "The Second Exhibition of Film Technologies and Facilities," *Eiga Nenkan* (1955), 257–258.

28. See *Eiga Nenkan*, 1955, 1956, 1957.

29. *Report on the 3rd Annual Film Festival of Southeast Asia* (Hong Kong, 1956), 11

30. Heide Fehrenbach, *Cinema in Democratizing Germany: Reconstructing National Identity after Hitler* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 236.

31. *Kyeonghyang Sinmun*, June 19, 1956, 6.

32. South Korea's participants in the FPA cooperated with and were supported by the Asia Foundation, a private nonprofit organization. TAF was fully funded by various arms of the U.S. government, particularly the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). The Asia Foundation's CIA connections were not publicly acknowledged until 1967, when the truth was unveiled by a former CIA agent and printed by the leftist magazine *Ramparts* and, subsequently, the *New York Times*. See Wallace Turner, "Asia Foundation got CIA Funds," *New York Times*, March 22, 1967, 17; Sol Stern, "A Short Account of International Student Politics and the Cold War with Particular Reference to the NSA, CIA, etc.," *Ramparts* 5.9 (1967): 29–39. Victor Marchetti argues that the Asia Foundation had the objective "to disseminate throughout Asia a negative vision of Mainland China, North Vietnam, and North Korea." He further writes, "it [TAF] sponsored scholarly research, supported conferences and symposia, and ran an academic exchange program, a CIA subsidy that reached 88 million dollars a year." See Victor Marchetti and John D. Marks, *The CIA and the Cult of Intelligence* (New York: Knopf, 1974), 157.

33. Tony Judt suggests that U.S. foreign cultural programmes "employed 13,000 people and cost US$129 million" by 1953. Although most of this expenditure went to the intellectual elites of Western Europe, Asia had emerged as a new front in the Cold War with the founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1949. See Tony Judt, *Postwar: A History of Europe since 1945* (New York: Penguin Books, 2005), 223.

34. "Bring Outlook for Movie Festival; Better Films, Wider Mart Foreseen," *Nippon Times*, May 16, 1954, 5.

35. *Report on the 3rd Annual Film Festival of Southeast Asia* (Hong Kong, 1956), 12.

36. Oba Mie, "Japan's Entry into ECAFE," in Iokibe Makoto, Caroline Rose, Tomaru Junko, and John Weste (eds.), *Japanese Diplomacy in the 1950s* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 99.

37. E. E. Ward, "The Outlook for ECAFE," *Far Eastern Survey: American Institute of Pacific Relations*, April 6, 1949, 75.

38. *Nippon Times*, June 3, 1949.

39. John W. Dower, *Japan in War and Peace: Selected Essays* (New York: New Press, 1993), 155.

40. Bruce Cumings, "Japan's Position in the World System," in Andrew Gordon (ed.), *Postwar Japan as History* (Berkley: University of California Press, 1993), 34.

41. Yoshimi Shunya, "America as Desire and Violence: Americanization in Postwar Japan and Asia during the Cold War," *Inter-Asian Cultural Studies* 4.3 (2003): 442.

42. W. W. Rostow, *An American Policy in Asia* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1955), 5.

43. Quoted in Zbigniew Brezezinski, "The Politics of Underdevelopment," *World Politics* 9.1 (1956): 55.

44. By dividing Okinawa and the mainland, placing a military camp in the former and concentrating its energy on economic growth for the latter, the Truman administration, represented by George Kennan, pressured the Yoshida cabinet to link it to the markets of Southeast Asia, which, in Yoshimi's words, is an "East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere under an American military aegis" (Yoshimi Shunya, "America as Desire and Violence: Americanization in Postwar Japan and Asia during the Cold War," *Inter-Asian Cultural Studies* 4.3 (2003): 442.).

45. Cited in Dower, 193.

46. Akira Suehiro, "The Road to Economic Re-entry: Japan's Policy toward Southeast Asian Development in the 1950s and 1960s," *Social Science Japan Journal* 2.1 (1999): 87.

47. Ibid., 88.

48. Ibid., 90.

49. Richie and Anderson, 229–30.

50. "Hong Kong's *Back Door*, Yu Ming Cop High Honors at Asian Film Fest," *Variety*, April 19, 1960, 11.

51. Quoted in *Asia-Pacific Film Festival 50th Anniversary Catalogue* (2005), 11–12, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: Ministry of Culture.

52. "developmental state" in this context indicates a term used by a group of international political economy scholars such as Chalmers Johnson, Robert Wade, Alice Amsden, and Meredith Woo. See Alice H. Amsden, *Asia's Next Giant: South Korea and Late Industrialization* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992); Robert Wade, *Governing the Market: Economic Theory and the Role of Government in East Asian Industrialization* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990); Jung-Eun Woo, *Racing to the Swift: State and Finance in South Korean Industrialization* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991); Meredith Woo-Cumings, ed., *The Developmental State* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1999).

53. Richie and Anderson, 248.

54. *Variety,* April 19 (1960): 11.

55. *Report on the 3rd Annual Film Festival of Southeast Asia* 119.

56. Ibid., 120.

57. Ibid., 120–121.

58. Ibid., 123.

59. Ibid., 124.

60. Indeed, educating and training film technicians in Asia were pivotal issues that most film executives in the region shared throughout the 1950s. K. L. Khandpur, senior director of film division in India, proposed two solutions at UNESCO's annual meeting in January 1960. He stated, "Since satisfactory training facilities are not now available in Southeast Asia, technicians of the region can be given adequate instruction (a) by arranging for them to train in western countries, or (b) by setting up comprehensive training schools within the region itself"(5). Khandpur claimed that the latter is more ideal and the two more advanced countries, India and Japan, should act passionately to reeducate the rest of South East Asian film technicians. K. L. Khandpur, "Problems of Training Film Technicians in South East Asia," *UNESCO Meeting on Development of Information Media in South East Asia*, Bangkok, January 18–30, 1960.

61. *Seoul Sinmun*, May 14, 1962.

62. *Donga Ilbo*, May 10, 1962.

63. Emilie Yueh-yu Yeh, "Taiwan: Popular Cinema's Disappearing Act," in Anne Tereska Ciecko (ed.), *Contemporary Asian Cinema: Popular Culture in a Global Frame* (New York: Berg Press, 2006), 161.

64. Loke Wan-tho, president of Cathay Organization (including MP&GI) and a rival of the Shaw family, was killed in a calamitous plane crash during the festival. Taiwan's Long Fang, a director at Taiwan Studio, along with other directors and executives from the Philippines, was killed as well. This tragic accident changed the regional film industry.

The diminishment of MP&GI's film production department contributed to Shaw Brothers' domination in the region.

65. Law Kar and Frank Bren, *Hong Kong Cinema: A Cross Cultural View* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press), 167.

66. Kinnia Yau Shuk-ting, "Shaws' Japanese Collaboration and Competition as Seen through the Asian Film Festival Evolution," in Wong Ain-ling (ed.), *The Shaw Screen: A Preliminary Study* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Film Archive, 2003), 279.

67. *Third Meeting of the ASEAN Sub-Committee on Film: Official Report,* Jakarta, Indonesia, November 1974.

YAMAGATA–ASIA–EUROPE: THE INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL SHORT CIRCUIT

ABÉ MARK NORNES

The "discovery" of Japanese cinema is a hallowed story in film history. A programmer for the Venice International Film Festival saw *Rashomon* (1950), was stunned, selected it against the wishes of studio head Nagata Masaichi, and screened it unbeknownst to the director; the film won the Golden Lion, and suddenly every festival desired a Japanese film in its lineup. This initiated a steady exploration of the riches on offer from a century of Japanese cinema, a journey that—as evidenced by this book—is surely ongoing. Film scholars would like to take credit for much of this work, but in point of fact kudos must first go to programmers like the one from Venice. Film festivals have been the main interface between Japanese cinema and its world audience, an alternative distribution network devoted to enriching film culture that is relatively sheltered from market pressures.[1]

This global response has built careers and shaped the canon. However, beyond this local/global interchange, festivals occasionally operate in something akin to a regional feedback loop, which can be remarkably productive. This chapter explores this dynamic with the example of the Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival (1989–), and we begin with a deceptively simple question:

Which festivals *matter*? What constitutes a so-called A-festival? What qualities prevent an aspiring B, C, or Z festival from rising up the ranks? Perhaps someone, somewhere is maintaining a neatly ordered list, but in any case there is something so automatic about it all.[2] *Naturally,* sites like Cannes, Venice, Berlin, Sundance, and Toronto are the most important venues. Or if one is interested in the documentary form, the list must add a few more: Amsterdam, Nyon, Margaret Mead, and the venerable

Flaherty. These are the toughest festivals to enter. They feature the most premières. Their competitions are where careers are made, and their markets are where deals are made. *Of course,* they are the most important festivals in the world. The ones that *matter*.

At the same time, from a certain perspective on that same world, there is something glaringly obvious about the geography of that list. Does this mean that festivals in other parts of the world don't matter as much, or in the same way? As someone who frequents Asian film festivals, and has even worked on one called Yamagata, I have always been struck by the indifference to—not to mention ignorance of—Asian venues among European and North American filmmakers and critics. (Programmers are another matter altogether, as it is their job to know more about what is going on in the film world than anyone.) Even amid the cosmopolitan glitter of the international film festival, these citizens of the film world can, from a certain perspective, appear quite provincial.

This should hardly be surprising, because the international film festival world is embedded in geopolitical structures and epistemologies that grant Europe the status of subject. It is true that at one very material level, this is about money. Prestige in this arena is deeply linked to a festival's market. However, the marketplaces in regions like Asia are woefully undeveloped and typically hobbled by governmental restriction, in contrast to the private and public subsidies that many European film cultures enjoy. At the same time, decades of critique from orthodox Marxism teaches us that the order and make-up of that A-list cannot be adequately accounted for by the market alone. In fact, we must look to Enlightenment thought itself, with its "first Europe, then elsewhere" structuring that discounts the relevance of non-Western film cultures—not non-Western "festival films," which are highly valued, but rather popular cinema, star systems, local criticism, and film theories, not to mention exhibition sites like festivals.

This is related to the fundamental dynamic underlying the historiographic problem film studies enduringly exhibits, a problematic we might reframe as "first Hollywood, then elsewhere." However, in a discussion of the international film festival circuit, we cannot help noticing that Los Angeles has never managed to stage a festival for the A-grade. The tempering of Hollywood's considerable power is clearly one of the film festival's deep attractions; festivals and their audiences may love visits by glamorous stars, but no festival is complete without a panoply of films from across the world. One reason is that, starting from the art cinema of the 1950s era, film festivals were conceptualized as sites of discovery and rejuvenation. In an eloquent, compact, yet magisterial essay describing the sweep of world cinema history, Dudley Andrew writes about this dynamic:

> Cinematic modernity thus moved forward as a series of waves in a wide ocean of activity, but progress or development was measured in and by the West.... A tired Europe would soon depend on the energy of ideas coming from or involving its former colonies. But how could European intellectuals credit the "peripheral" without rehearsing the centrism that produces colonial thinking in the first place? [European festivals invited] nations from beyond the West's periphery to submit films that might have something essential to contribute, something unavailable to those in the center.... And yet value could properly be assessed only at Western

festivals, and only by Western, specifically Parisian critics. European festivals thus served as a stock market where producers and critics bought and sold ideas of cinema sometimes investing in futures and trading on the margin, with the quotations registered at *Cahiers du Cinéma*.[3]

Asian filmmakers may make great films, but they must ultimately linger in their own national cinemas until the programmers of Europe "discover" them. Make no mistake, the programmers of North American and European film festivals have done an astounding job of selecting and promoting Asian films, especially since the 1980s; however, my point is that a given film or filmmaker achieves an international profile only through the good work of these programmers from Europe and their festivals. And as for festivals outside of Europe, their fate is, to borrow a phrase from Dipesh Chakrabarty, to sit in the waiting room of history. This reality invites us to think about the nature of the ground upon which they operate, the (film) world in which film programmers travel.

Even if festivals outside of Europe adopt all the traditional trappings of the A-list— stars, premières, markets—they will never quite measure up. A cringe-worthy example is the Tokyo International Film Festival. Despite a flush bankroll and an abundance of stars on carpets (promoting films that are already slated for release in subsequent months), Tokyo's festival was never taken seriously. It left the embarrassing spectacle of an ambitious Asian film festival with the means to compete, desperately seeking recognition from our imaginary Europe. One may want to fault anything from the management to the sky-high price of local hotels, but even the patently successful festival in Busan feels regional in the face of Berlin's global prestige. It is as if "A" means something different in countries that don't write with Roman letters.

More fascinating are the subtle inflections of Europe's dominance—and by extension indifference—on the ground. Consider a typical party at a festival in the heart of Europe. Amid the flux of networking filmmakers, distributors, critics, and programmers, it is hard not to notice the Asian visitors forming isolated groups. Language difference is one issue here, but it is also symptomatic of the indifference they meet in Europe. Even at Asian festivals with competitions—spaces the programmers explore with abandon— the competition filmmakers tend to stick together, warily eyeing each other's work, and rarely stray too far into other programs. They tend to learn little to nothing about their host festival, the local filmmakers and their scene.

It is actually this last dynamic that I wish to focus on in the remainder of this chapter—the energies, *the fireworks,* often occurring in the international film festival circuit's "peripheries" (those places relegated to the status of marginality by Europe). The dilemma of Asian film cultures—desiring recognition from the European other and being greeted by indifference—is an old and enduring dynamic that goes back to the silent era. It has even driven film movements in the region as early as the 1910s.[4] It is the reaction of Asian film cultures to this indifference that can be remarkably productive. And in the case of the international film festival circuit, one ends up with a local or regional *short circuit* that transforms an event of even modest scale into a festival that matters.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE ASIA–EUROPE CONDUIT

In the remainder of this chapter I wish to focus on a single example to explore this dynamic. This would be the Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival, which I worked on, or collaborated with, in a variety of capacities since 1990. However, before examining this particular regional short circuit, where Yamagata came to serve as one of many regional nodes, I want to briefly consider how the international circuit has historically measured the quality of Asian film festivals. This is because the festival in Yamagata appeared just as the mechanics of the Asia-Europe relationship began transforming.

Typically, value has been determined by a harsh utilitarian measure: a festival mattered to the degree that it serves the programmers of Europe in the process Andrew described above.[5] The very first international festival in Asia was an attempt to foster regional synergies, distribution routes, and technology exchanges in the face of European indifference. This was the Southeast Asian Film Festival, which was established in 1954. It continues to the present day as the Asian Film Festival, making it one of the oldest festivals in the world; it is certainly the oldest festival no one has ever heard

FIGURE 12.1 Kawakita Kashiko played an enormous role in mediating Japanese and Euro-American filmmaking. Here she stands between Kurosawa Akira and John Ford on the set of *Gideon's Day* (1958). Photograph courtesy of the Kawakita Memorial Film Institute.

of.[6] This has always been a rather clubby affair, run mainly by government film offices and major studios, and is a failure if its reality is judged against its lofty goals. It was probably hobbled by being the pet project of too few people. At the same time, throughout the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, it was one of the few international film events in the Asia-Pacific region.

It would have had a very different stature if European programmers had had a use for it. However, back then festivals were content to rely on the suggestions of government agencies and key local informants on the ground. After all, they only needed a few films from a handful of (usually Indian or Japanese) auteurs. Programmers had no need for the mediation of an Asian film festival. Their modest slates could be satisfied through the recommendations of a select few intermediaries. In the case of Japanese film, the two most important figures would certainly be Kawakita Kashiko and Donald Richie. Kawakita began her career in the 1930s as the spouse of producer Kawakita Nagamasa. Together they forged ties with China and Germany in the wartime era, and after her husband's death she founded the Kawakita Memorial Film Institute. Throughout the postwar era, she was a fixture on the European and North American film festival circuit, buying films for domestic distribution and advising festivals on the latest developments in Japanese cinema. And her institute was (and still is) the most important stop for any foreign programmer, as it not only offers advice but also secure prints for private screenings. Richie was equally visible at the film festivals, and was also a mandatory stop for any visiting programmers; however, instead of a personal institute and screening room, he wielded the powerful platform of his critical and academic writings. Between these two powerful figures, the circuit's modest appetite for Japanese film was suitably satiated.

The situation changed in the 1980s when Western festivals felt compelled to strive for better coverage of Asian cinema. This corresponds to an epochal transition Andrew describes as a shift from the "federated phase" to the "world cinema phase." Programmers from the exhausted modernist cinemas of Europe began to look far beyond Japan and India to discover vibrant film cultures in the most unexpected places, from Korea to the New Taiwan Cinema to the Fifth Generation in the PRC. For the first time, programmers of the West began to value non-Western film festivals because it was there that they could find a more heterogeneous selection than they received from previous informants. It should come as no surprise that this process began on an American outpost halfway to Asia, where the local language was English and no intermediaries were necessary.

By the mid-1980s, the Hawai'i International Film Festival became an important conduit for information about the situation across the breadth of Asia. It was perfectly suited to the role. The festival was established in 1981 by the East-West Center, a research and teaching facility of the American government (the half joke among its students and researchers was that it was essentially a training facility for the CIA). Under the indefatigable leadership of Jeannette Paulson, the festival swiftly grew and took to specializing in Asian cinema. What's more, it enjoyed the expertise of scholars in the East-West Center, such as Paul Clark and Wimal Dissanayake. The Hawai'i programmers traveled

to Asian film centers to create a network of informants and learn the situations on the ground. They also published unusually thick catalogs, gray with informative essays about individual filmmakers, movements, and national cinemas that had rarely been addressed in English-language print. The festival brought together a fair representation of Asia's annual output every December. Many of the festival's key informants were regular visitors to the festival, such as Donald Richie (Japan), Kawakita Kashiko (Japan), Chiao Hsiung-ping (Taiwan), Wong Ain-ling (Hong Kong), Tony Rayns (UK), and Aruna Vasudev (India), and they brought many directors in to talk about their films and meet foreign programmers. The East-West Center even held an academic conference in conjunction with the festival, promoting research into Asian cinema while giving scholars access to the latest crop of films. By the late 1980s, when I served on the festival as an intern, the Hawai'i International Film Festival was an important site for the programmers of Europe to see the best of new Asian cinema, network, and select films for their own festivals.

Yet "waxing and waning" is another structure of the international film festival circuit, and it wasn't long before Hawai'i was displaced by Hong Kong. This process probably began with the sensational splash made by *Yellow Earth* (*Huang tudi,* 1984) at the 1985 Hong Kong International Film Festival (1977–). Word spread swiftly that an amazing new generation of filmmakers had emerged in the PRC. The epicenter for the Fifth Generation's discovery was Hong Kong, but it was still a "discovery" by Western critics and festivals that put them on the map. At Hong Kong, programmers found a much larger selection of Chinese-language films on top of a smart selection of Asian cinema, thanks to programmers like Roger Garcia, Wang Ain-ling, Li Cheuk-to, Stephen Teo, and others. Hong Kong also published a running series of thick, meaty catalogs for their retrospectives on local cinema; it is no exaggeration to say they were, through programming and publication, writing the history of Hong Kong film. It is also largely through Hong Kong that New Taiwan Cinema and then the Hong Kong popular cinema found its global audience.

In the first years of the new century, however, most of the foreign programmers fled Hong Kong for the well-endowed Busan (Pusan) International Film Festival.[7] This remains the most prestigious festival in Asia. At the same time, the film festival world has radically changed, so Busan's place in the system is substantially different in kind from that of its predecessors. Its importance is arguably established by its sheer scale and the success of its market, but not necessarily on its usefulness as a site for European programmers to see as many Asian films as possible in as short a time as possible—a space to network and study. This is to say that the film festival circuit underwent a fundamental transformation at the turn of the century. Before this, Hawai'i and Hong Kong served as *conduits* for Asian films on their way to Europe, because virtually none of the programmers of Europe could speak Asian languages, and few could actually invest in extended trips to the region. Most were dependent on the festivals specializing in Asian fare. Today, however, there are far more programmers with Asian-language skills that can access information and meet people without intermediaries. There are also major festivals like Rotterdam and Udine that built reputations for sophisticated programming

of Asian films. Furthermore, in the age of the Internet, it can be easy to forget how the Hawai'i and Hong Kong catalogs were treasure troves of information one could find nowhere else; now the catalogs of every festival in the world are a click away. Thanks to all these factors, once "important" festivals like Hawai'i, Hong Kong, and Busan—festivals that mattered—appear more like regional or even local affairs.

Sparks Fly: The Case of Yamagata

While the organizers of Hong Kong and Busan festivals may bristle at the idea that they are, from a certain perspective, more regional than international festivals, I assert this is precisely why they matter. Europe will always set the terms for any purported universals, such as the "international" in "international film festival circuit." Ambitious festivals in Asia, Africa, and Latin America place themselves in the circuit, but they will never *matter* in the same way. A screening at Busan, currently the most prestigious of Asian festivals, pales in significance to being selected by any number of events in North America or Europe. At the same time, these Asian festivals' regional and local prominence is probably amplified by European indifference. This is to say, the international film festival circuit is filled with *short circuits*—one of the most thrilling and hopeful aspects of film history.

Consider the case of the Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival, which came out of nowhere in 1989, and is held in what would generally be considered the middle of nowhere. Despite its dangling of serious prize money for the competition, it remains largely unknown among the filmmakers and programmers of Europe. In Asia, however, it has been vastly influential. A close look at Yamagata can teach us much about the film festival short circuit.

Yamagata held its first outing in 1989. It is often attributed to the vision of Ogawa Shinsuke, an important documentary director who moved his collective to the prefecture in the mid-1970s. Actually, it was spearheaded by a local media magnate, Tanaka Satoshi, who persuaded the mayor's office to commit to a ten-year budget as a celebration of the city's one hundredth anniversary (the festival has since gone independent). Tanaka brought Ogawa in to advise the staff and volunteers, all nonprofessionals, holding classes to actually school them in documentary film and its history. They needed those lessons. Yamagata was deep in the northern mountains of Japan, a city of 250,000 sitting at the base of a 6,000-foot volcano. No one had ever seen anything other than television documentary.

Back in the major cities, everyone was surprised to hear about this plan to create an international film festival so far from the cultural capital of Tokyo. They were just as surprised at the results. Foreign guests at the first outing included Jon Jost (United States), Robert Kramer (France/US), Marceline Loridan (France), Nestor Almendros (Cuba/US), Johan van der Keuken (Netherlands), Monica Flaherty (US), and many others. Joris Ivens was to come, but he passed away several months before the festival.

FIGURE 12.2 The 1989 Asia Symposium at Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival. From left to right: Kidlat Tahimik (Philippines), Zarul Albakri (Malaysia), Teddie Co (Philippines), Nick Deocampo (Philippines), Stephen Teo (Malaysia / Hong Kong), Ogawa Shinsuke (Japan), Manop Udomdej (Thailand), Kong Su-Chang (South Korea), "Peggy" Chiao Hsiung-ping (Taiwan), and Tsuchimoto Noriaki (Japan). Photo courtesy of the Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival Network.

In addition to the main competition, the festival held an "Asia Symposium," which was moderated by Ogawa. It was essentially a panel discussion but ended up being the talk of the festival. Panelists included Tsuchimoto Noriaki (Japan), Stephen Teo (Malaysia / Hong Kong), Nick Deocampo (Philippines), Teddie Co (Philippines), Zarul Albakri (Malaysia), "Peggy" Chiao Hsiung-ping (Taiwan), Kong Su-Chang (South Korea), Manop Udomdej (Thailand), and Kidlat Tahimik (Philippines)—with Hong Ki-Seong (South Korea) and Tian Zhuangzhuang (PRC) unable to attend for political reasons. From today's perspective, this fascinating symposium marks a turning point in Asian documentary film. Participants described the conditions they worked under back home, but this was mere background for the main theme, posted as an angry question by Ogawa: Why are there no Asian films in the competition of this, the first documentary film festival in Asia? The symposium left the participants charged up, and discussions about the Asian situation continued throughout the festival. Kidlat Tahimik, who started his film career in Germany, told people about the Oberhausen Manifesto and suggested that the time was ripe for a manifesto of their own. He drafted one, and the symposium participants signed it in an impromptu ceremony / press conference. Here is the text:

> We, the Asian Filmmakers present here, at the Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival '89, call attention to the sad absence of any Asia film in the competition.... We ask then in earnest...why are the documentaries "of quality and of interest" that enter the international exchange of information mainly

in the hands of those countries who have the material resources to realize these films? We note, with regret, that there exist many obstacles to the opportunities for our film visions to be produced and disseminated in the real world dominated by political and market motivations. We acknowledge, with sadness, that these institutional roadblocks originate from a complex mix of third-world realities as well as international imbalances. We accept, with concern, that these cannot be eradicated overnight. But we believe that these obstacles can be overcome only with concerted efforts by ourselves, the Asian filmmakers, for a start . . . with support from the energies generated at international gatherings like YIDFF, committed to the believe that independent social and personal documentaries are invaluable to present and future generations. Therefore, We The Asian Filmmakers present here, declare our commitment to maintain a network of Asian Filmmakers sharing of our visions, as well as our problems and solutions. We dramatize here, our desire to plant the seeds for the renaissance of independent documentary filmmaking in our region. We affirm here with optimism, our determination to seek, develop and implement approaches to deal with the obstacles, so that future international events like YIDFF will not be short of good Asian films. We declare here, the SPIRIT of the independent Asian documentary filmmakers is alive! And will one day, soar with the wind!

The challenges confronting these filmmakers were hardly resolved at the 1989 symposium, but some of the problems were obvious and widely shared. Asian documentary filmmakers enjoyed neither grant opportunities, government support, nor the most rudimentary of distribution networks. Most lived in impoverished economies, where 16mm film was far beyond the reach of anyone working outside television or government propaganda. Some could use video, at least the affordable formats like Betamax, VHS-C, and 8mm. Sony had introduced the Handycam only four years before, and Hi8 was brand new; however, most festivals wouldn't accept documentaries with such poor image and sound quality. To make matters worse, most of the filmmakers suffered under intense censorship apparatuses, and some key countries were under martial law and/or strict dictatorships hostile to topics typical of the independent documentary (in fact, Tian Zhuangzhuang was prevented from leaving China in the wake of that year's Tiananmen Square massacre).

The Asian filmmakers that did attend left excited and determined to return. The manifesto they signed proclaimed they would leave Yamagata and do their all to nurture a documentary film scene in their home countries. Nick Deocampo led the way. He stopped in Yamagata on his way home after several years pursuing a graduate film degree at NYU. He had essentially concluded that the situation in the Philippines was hopeless and he would shift from his Super-8 documentary practice to university teaching. However, he was shocked by the unexpected variety of films in the Yamagata competition, and the broad definition of nonfiction it implied. He left inspired by Ogawa and the symposium. Deocampo was determined to shoot a film for the next festival, and did just that. He returned two years later with the 16mm *Ynang Bayan: To Be a Woman Is to Live in a Time of War* (1991), along with Kidlat Tahimik and the 1991 version of his *I Am Furious Yellow.* . . .

I joined the festival in 1990 when it was transitioning to the larger format it uses to this day. The putative center of the festival was, not surprisingly, the international competition. It was (and remains) a small, and thus intense, competition, because the festival purchased and subtitled 16mm prints. The jurors also lend the competition a measure of prestige; in 1991, for example, they included Jean Douchet, Krzystof Kieslowski, Morisaki Azuma, Trinh T. Minh-ha, Eduardo Coutinho, and Edward Yang. The competition section may have been small, but it was invariably eclectic. Directors as diverse as Yvonne Rainer and Barbara Kopple found themselves in the same program.

There was even more diversity in Yamagata's retrospectives. Heretofore, most retrospective screenings in Japan were mere collections of films, organized by theme, studio, genre, or director. However, Yamagata demonstrated the powerful effects of curation. The pattern was set in 1991 with a sidebar dedicated to the fiftieth anniversary of Pearl Harbor. The topic was sensitive, but the festival secured the collaboration of the national film archives of both Japan and the United States. Programs organized by themes (e.g., race, representations of violence), events (Pearl Harbor, Hiroshima/Nagasaski), and place (Manchuria) showed Japanese and American films back to back. The films worked against each other, in a dialogical fashion, to reveal the competing ideologies underlying the "film war." The program was accompanied by panels featuring major historians and scholars, along with a book-length catalog. Most of these films had not been screened since the war.

Similarly, Yasui Yoshio, an archivist from Osaka, organized a decade-long series of retrospectives covering the history of Japanese documentary. Unlike the rest of Asia, Japan has had a vigorous documentary scene since the talkies era. Yasui unearthed most of the important films of the century. Each festival concentrated on a decade or more of history, many of the prints being pulled from the dark corners of filmmakers' closets. Many films had not been screened since their initial release. In a manner similar to the Hong Kong International Film Festival, Yasui also edited detailed catalogs featuring eclectic reminiscences by directors and analytical pieces by well-known critics.

Other Yamagata programs centered on directors like Joris Ivens, Kamei Fumio, and Robert Kramer. One program showed films on Okinawa under the rubric of "island films." Another featured First Nations filmmaking, inverting the center-periphery structure of film festivals (i.e., competition-sidebars) with the spectacle of a temporary theater built and then dismantled in a parking lot, as well as the infiltration of First Nations works and filmmakers into every section of the festival. Another program screened dozens of canonical and obscure films for the cinema centenary.

These sidebars were *curated*. The films were carefully organized into complex structures, and contextualized by hefty catalogs, panels, and guest speakers. This hadn't really been seen in Japan to that point, and critics took to comparing Yamagata's thoughtfulness with Tokyo International Film Festival's crass market orientation. They could hardly help themselves, since both festivals took place in October. Tokyo had started roughly the same time (biennially from 1985, and annually from 1992). Both had deep connections to their respective city halls, and the irony of pitting rural Yamagata against the capital was evident to everyone. Tokyo was an agglomeration of the Tokyo

FIGURE 12.3 Award winners onstage at the 1993 Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival. From left to right: Bob Connelly, Robin Anderson, Frederick Wiseman, Sato Makoto, Ulrich Seidl, Aleksandr Sokurov, Wu Wenguang, and Anand Patwardhan. Wu's personal encounter with Wiseman and his cinema changed the course of Chinese documentary. Photo courtesy of the Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival Network.

Metropolitan Government, the Japanese Association for International Promotion of the Moving Image (UNIJAPAN), the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, and the Agency for Cultural Affairs. It always showed major art films, but the energy put into red carpet affairs and exclusive parties drew attention to the preponderance of Hollywood films weeks or months away from their Japanese bows. It did have retrospectives, but was notorious for failing to provide translation—causing critics to call for scare quotes around the "international" in its name.

Indeed, the Tokyo International Film Festival left the impression of a major government subsidy to the Hollywood industry and its domestic distributors. In contrast, Yamagata ran on a shoestring budget and smart programming, and its orientation was distinctly regional at a moment when transnational energies were shifting from the US-Japan bilateral relationship to something far more pan-Asian. This brings me to the event that set Yamagata apart from its counterparts and was a direct result of the 1989 Asia Symposium and its manifesto: New Asia Currents.

This running sidebar competed with the competition for attention and prestige, and was the site of what I will call the Asian short circuit. After the 1989 Asia Symposium, Yamagata decided to devote one venue to new work from Asian producers, striving both for coverage and quality, putting aside their prejudice for 16mm to allow a space for amateur video, and hoping to nurture new talent. It was initially programmed by a series of young film scholars—Darrel Davis, Aaron Gerow, and Stephen Teo—before the program really came into its own under the leadership of Fujioka Asako. It is now renamed New Asian Currents and is organized by Wakai Makiko now that Fujioka is the festival director.[8] These programmers traveled across Asia, building a deep network of filmmakers and critics that grew year by year.

Looking back, it is strikingly obvious that Yamagata enjoyed the most perfect of timing. In the course of the 1990s, VHS and Super-8 video were displaced by Hi8, which finally gave way to DV's beautiful sound and image. The festival displayed an Avid system in 1991, but it was far beyond the reach of the Asia Program directors. However, it wasn't long before PC prices dropped dramatically and the cheaper Adobe Premiere (1992) and Final Cut Pro (1999) appeared. By the end of the decade, all the Asian filmmakers were using nonlinear software to edit their DV projects on home computers—even Kidlat Tahimik, who regularly reappeared at Yamagata to show the latest version of his homage to "16mm spaghetti," *I Am Furious Yellow. . . .* At this very same time, oppressive regimes fell or martial law ended in countries like Taiwan (1989), the Philippines (1986), and South Korea (1987), and the PRC steadily relaxed its grip on filmmakers; independent documentarists could increasingly make films on subjects that were previously taboo. All of them aspired to screen at Yamagata, where they were greeted with a hearty embrace—anything but indifference.

The Asia Program grew in size and quality with every edition. There was even a noticeable difference between 1989 and 1991, which featured twenty-one films including Kim Dong-won's *Sanggye-dong Olympics* (South Korea, 1988), Wu Yii-feng's *Moon Children* (Taiwan, 1991), and Wu Wenguang's *Bumming in Beijing—the Last Dreamers* (China, 1990). By 2011, there were 705 entries from sixty-three countries or areas for only twenty-four slots. To ensure participation by as many of the producers as possible, the festival arranged special accommodations for Asian visitors, establishing "Asia House"; this was essentially a flophouse where large numbers of poor Asian filmmakers could stay for next to nothing, although their famous all-night drinking and discussion sessions made sleep difficult. The Asia Program filmmakers networked, learned from each other, shared their work with each other, and at the festival retrospectives they saw canonical documentaries they read about in Erik Barnouw's book, but could not access in the days before DVD and Internet piracy. They left inspired and often came back with new work.

An excellent example of this phenomenon comes from the 1993 festival, as related by scholar Akiyama Tamako—a regular Chinese interpreter for the festival. In 1993, Akiyama interpreted for Chinese filmmakers Wu Wenguang, Duan Jinchuan, and Hao Zhiqiang, who were showing work in the Asia Program. Akiyama vividly recalls accompanying the three to Frederick Wiseman's *Zoo* (1993), which was in the competition. None of them had any idea who Wiseman was, but they were soaking up every film they could. *Zoo* delivered quite a shock. Akiyama recalls their reaction:

> No sooner had the lights gone up than someone behind me suddenly began shaking my shoulder. "Oi! Tamako! Did you see that!?" Wu, speaking faster than ever, raised his voice in excitement. Slightly taken aback, I mustered my best Chinese and said, "Um, well, it was a strange film. It's a zoo, with nothing out of the ordinary. Yet both the people and the animals feel like they are part of a single system…." This drew a winking smile from Wu. "Oh, you were watching closely, weren't you? I wondered if you were sleeping," he said with an air of satisfaction, and then stood up. When we

FIGURE 12.4 Akiyama Tamako interprets a late-evening toast by Wu Wenguang. Duan Jinchuan sits next to her on the left; Japanese documentary filmmaker Sato Makoto watches from the far right. Photo courtesy of the Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival Network.

left the confusion of spectators in the theater, it was dark out. Rejoining each other on the street outside the theater, the three Chinese directors were itching to talk about the film they had just seen. The evening air of Yamagata had started to feel chilly, but their faces were flush and slightly sweaty. Wu Wenguang, Duan Jinchuan and Hao Zhiqiang stepped on each other's sentences in excitement, striding through the evening darkness like a herd of buffalo—me chasing behind them, trying to keep up. After that screening, Chinese documentary filmmakers came to line up Frederick Wiseman next to Ogawa Shinsuke when they spoke of the directors they particularly admired.[9]

This is because Wu went home with an armful of tapes of documentaries by Wiseman and others. He held court in his apartment, showing the films to small groups of friends. Two years later, Duan returned to Yamagata with the direct-cinema style *The Square* (co-directed with Zhang Yuan, who also attended Wu's informal screenings, *Guangchang,* 1994) and took home the competition's FIPRESCI Prize. From this moment on, the primary style of Chinese documentary was direct cinema, a perfect counterpoint to the government's loud propaganda. And as the independent scene grew, so did the Chinese contingent at Yamagata. Western festivals took notice and began issuing invitations, but the Chinese filmmakers all aspired to go to Yamagata. Wu Wenguang explains the difference:

My first experience at Yamagata was eye-opening. When I arrived I knew nothing about documentary, but I watched thirty or forty films. Every day I sat in the theater watching films. It gave me courage. I left thinking this is something I could do for

my entire life. But it's been very good for Chinese documentary in general. If you are invited to a European or American film festival, your film is just kind of strange for the audiences. Basically, you feel like a guest. But Yamagata is totally different. It's like a home for me, and Chinese filmmakers who are invited year after year feel the same way.[10]

In similar fashion, government officials and programmers from other parts of Asia visited Yamagata to study its chemistry. They too returned to their countries and cooked up new documentary film festivals, from Taiwan to Korea to India. Programmers from Nyon, Amsterdam, and other documentary film festivals regularly came to Yamagata for the New Asian Currents, searching for Asian documentaries for their own slates. However, this felt different from the scenes at Hawai'i or Hong Kong. Ultimately, the Asia Program was more for the filmmakers than programmers or even audiences. This was the heady scene of an emergent and very exciting regional film culture. Every year, many of the same faces would appear with new films. New documentarists in Japan, such as Kawase Naomi, made some of their first public appearances at Yamagata. The ones that taught filmmaking regularly showed up at Yamagata with a gaggle of students—all aspiring filmmakers—trailing them to the theaters. The work in the New Asian Currents became noticeably better with each outing, and soon the competition invariably featured works from Asia. When Wang Bing captured the Robert and Frances Flaherty Grand Prize for *Tie Xi Qu: West of the Tracks* (*Tiexi Qu,* 2003) we could only look back in wonder at the distance covered since 1989.

Not surprisingly, the competition filmmakers from Europe mistakenly thought they were the center of attention this entire time, oblivious of the sparks flying in the New Asian Currents theater.

The International Film Festival Short Circuit

The metaphor of sparks in that last sentence brings me to the originary image that generated this chapter: the short circuit. The international film festival "circuit"—a phrase that came into parlance in the late 1950s[11]—always struck me as misleading. Its root implies a kind of free circulation, an open system of film prints moving effortlessly around the earth. They alight at one node or another for projection and enjoyment, before returning on their circuitous path home. Indeed, festival organizers are privy to a palpable sense for this circulation because they must manage the shipping in and out of every print—often prints hop from one festival to another without returning to their distributor.

At the same time, the circuit metaphor is deeply wrong. As I asserted at the beginning of this chapter, the international film festival system is anything but open and free. It is more like a playing field on an incline. Programmers at the top of the hill, the A-festivals

of Europe and North America, work hard to spread out across the world and push up heavy prints of great film art to their prestigious festivals—events with elaborate systems of passes that restrict access to the inner sanctums to a select few. After they are over, the films are launched down the hill, hitting other lesser festivals as they roll their way back home.

This image of the incline is also dissatisfying, even if it foregrounds the power raking this global system of film festivals. For one thing, it does not leave room for the intense pleasures that film festivals offer up, particularly the opportunity to see films with their makers present in the theater. Or the productive contributions they can make to the promotion of and access to great films that would otherwise never leave their domestic markets, a remarkably important role before the age of home video. The trope of the incline is also increasingly inadequate, thanks to the proliferation of film festivals. The smaller festivals may not compete with the A-list for prestige, but they can spectacularly excel in programming niches. In the case of Asian film, one thinks of the undeniable importance of post-2000 events like International Film Festival Rotterdam, Frankfurt's Nippon Connection, or Udine's Far East Film Festival. In fact, Venice and Cannes show far fewer Asian films, so if we extract PR value from the equation, it becomes impossible to place all these festivals on an incline representing the world of international film festivals.

No, I think "circuit" works quite well, providing it is playfully finessed with some other tropes. I have already done this above by suggesting that the routes of the film festival circuit run through a *conduit*. There is no such thing as free, nondirectional circulation. This may not apply for a festival's home base, where information circulates so effortlessly thanks to media saturation in a single language. However, when geographical distance and linguistic difference come into play, programmers inevitably find themselves dependent on informants. In the case of Asian cinema, figures like Kawakita Kashiko, Donald Richie, and Tony Rayns wielded enormous power over what Asian films were inserted into the festival circuit before year 2000. They were the conduits through which films left Asia and moved to Europe and beyond. Thankfully, in the case of Asian cinema, those informants had wonderfully eclectic taste.

The trope of conduit can still accommodate the present situation, where figures like Rayns or festivals like Hawai'i have become diminutive with the proliferation of information sources. Before the turn of the century, the schematic of the circuit's conduit was clear and simple: filmmakers→informant→programmer→festival (→distributor→audience). Today, the situation is exceedingly complex. Filmmakers can apply to festivals with a one-dollar DVD-R instead of a heavy, expensive film print (thus swamping festivals with entries). When I worked on the Hawai'i International Film Festival in the late 1980s, the festival's catalogs were treasure troves of information, and we marveled at the speed of communication made possible by fax machines. However, I glimpsed the future there as well. As a federal institution, the East-West Center enjoyed access to the ARPANET, the precursor to the Internet. I used it to write to my scientist father across the Pacific, wishing all the while I could use it to communicate with filmmakers and distributors. It was clearly the future tool of film festivals, I thought, though could hardly imagine the astounding resources enjoyed by today's programmers,

including e-mail, web sites, blogs, online-zines, IMDB, Film Business Asia, digital press kits, YouTube, Vimeo, bit-torrents, and Dropbox, not to mention the online catalogs of every film festival on the planet.

Thanks to this, the conduits of the international film festival circuit have elaborated themselves into a bewildering capillary-like system. Berlin may feature two or three major films from a place like Japan, but the singularity of those works looks different from the days of *Rashomon* at Venice. Today, a few months later and only three hundred miles away, Frankfurt's Nippon Connection shows those films plus 150 others. In contrast to the art cinema of the 1950s, every kind of Japanese moving image circulates through the capillaries of the global distribution system.

This brings me to the last crucial tweak of the circuit trope, the phenomenon of the *short*. We typically think of a short circuit as an abnormality or a malfunction. Strictly speaking, it merely refers to an unintended connection between two nodes of an electrical circuit, usually with differing voltages; it is a pathway that current follows swiftly and unimpeded. A simple example of this kind of high circuit with no resistance would be a wire connecting the positive and negative terminals on a car battery. Anyone who has jumped a dead car knows what happens when the black clip accidentally touches the red: sparks fly. This is the by-product of the short circuit: heat, sparks, and sometimes fire. I ran this playful trope past Fujioka Asako, the force behind Yamagata's New Asian Currents and now the festival director. She responded,

> The metaphor is beautiful. I do like to think of Yamagata as being the source of leaping flames and flying sparks jumping to other locations. After all, the Taiwan documentary festival modeled themselves after us, and Yunfest's first catalogs and programs were modeled after ours, too. And, of course, we've watched the filmmakers go back to their respective countries with renewed vigor and courage. This short-circuiting is unpredictable, and that's its beauty—I suspect it is something the official conduits don't allow.[12]

The festival circuit was built by Europe, and, on the face of it, the circuit serves the select roll of festivals enjoying the status of the Roman letter *A*. Yet, since the elaboration of the film festival circuit in the 1960s, there have always been short circuits in the system. For some early, spectacular examples, recall that an Italian Film Week in Spain led directly to the proclamations "Spanish cinema is dead; long live Spanish cinema" at the 1955 Salamanca Congress, which in turn inspired an efflorescence of great Spanish neorealist films. Or think of the chant "Papa's cinema is dead" and the delivery of the Oberhausen Manifesto ("The old cinema is dead. We believe in the new cinema") at the International Short Film Festival Oberhausen in 1962, an important forerunner to the New German Cinema. We may also think of the continental short circuiting between Les Journés Cinématographiques de Carthage and Panafricain du cinéma et de la Télévision de Ougadougou, which take place in alternating years. In these instances, some of the current in the festival circuit forms a short, disregarding the pathways between the prestige festivals and the rest of the world. Sometimes these shorts burn out fast; other times they heat up, spark, and start durable fires.

This is precisely what happened in Yamagata. It appeared—out of nowhere, in the middle of nowhere—in 1989, and over two decades later it remains relatively unknown in many regions of the international circuit. However, thanks to the propitious convergence of the toppling of dictatorships, burgeoning middle classes, the invention of digital video, and the ubiquity of the PC, a short occurred in the system. Asian documentary filmmakers circulated unimpeded between Yamagata and home. Things got hot. Sparks flew. And now there are documentary filmmakers—and festivals—in every part of Asia.

Notes

1. A number of people have written about the festival as alternative distribution route, most notably Kenneth Turan, *Sundance to Sarajevo: Film Festivals and the World They Made* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002); Thomas Elsaesser, "Film Festival Networks: The New Topographies of Cinema in Europe," in *European Cinema: Face to Face with Hollywood* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2005), 82–107; and Julian Stringer, "Neither One Thing nor the Other: Blockbusters at Film Festivals," in *Movie Blockbusters*, ed. Julian Stringer (New York: Routledge, 2006), 202–213.

2. For the purposes of this chapter I am referring to the more informal sense that most people invoke when they call an event an "A-festival." Actually, there is a formal list: Berlin, Mar del Plata, Locarno, Karlovy Vary, Cannes, Shanghai, Moscow, Tokyo, Cairo, San Sebastian, Montreal, and Venice. It is administered by an organization called the International Federation of Film Producers Association, or FIAPF. Joining this select list requires fourteen world premières per festival and a bankroll to pay for the hefty accreditation fee. And because the world premières don't have to be difficult-to-acquire "A" films, this means the accreditation is essentially for sale. This explains why festivals like Cairo and Tokyo are listed as "A," but not Rotterdam, Sundance, or Toronto. For a short but splendid critique of the A-festival system, see Mark Cousins, "Widescreen on Film Festivals," in *Film Festival Yearbook 1: The Festival Circuit*, ed. Dina Iordanova with Ragan Rhyne (St. Andrews: St. Andrews Film Studies, 2009), 155–158.

3. Dudley Andrew, "Time Zones and Jet Lag—the Flows and Phases of World Cinema," in *World Cinemas, Transnational Perspectives*, ed. Nataša Durovicová and Kathleen E. Newman (New York: Routledge, 2009), 74.

4. For a prototypical and complex example, see the elegant discussion of Japan's silent-era Pure Film movement in Aaron A. Gerow, *Visions of Modernity: Articulations of Cinema, Nation, and Spectatorship* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010).

5. A caveat: in this chapter I am primarily concerned with those festivals Mark Peranson has called "audience festivals," in contrast to "business festivals," which serve first and foremost as nodes where producers and distributors make contact and contracts. See Mark Peranson, "First You Get the Power, Then You Get the Money: Two Models for Film Festivals," *Cineaste* 33, no. 3 (June 2008): 37–43.

6. Information about the festival is hard to come by, although this has been remedied by a newly published dissertation: Sangjoon Lee, "The Transnational Asian Studio System: Cinema, Nation-State, and Globalization in Cold War Asia" (PhD diss., New York University, 2011).

7. This was about the time that the Hong Kong International Film Festival lost most of its public support and underwent a process of corporatization. It is unclear if the dislodging

of the festival from its perch is connected to this privatization. For a strong description of this situation, see Ruby Cheung, "Corporatising a Film Festival: Hong Kong," in Iordanova, with Rhyne, *Film Festival Yearbook 1,* 99–115; and Ruby Cheung, "We Believe in 'Film as Art': An Interview with Li Cheuk-to, Artistic Director of the Hong Kong International Film Festival (HKIFF)," in *Film Festival Yearbook 3: Film Festivals and East Asia*, ed. Dina Iordanova and Ruby Cheung (St. Andrews: St. Andrews Film Studies, 2011), 196–207.

8. To be specific, Fujioka is the director of the Tokyo office. Yamagata's organization is bifurcated, with Tokyo and Yamagata offices splitting the work. Yamagata has usually managed the competition selection and all the local venue preparation. Tokyo has taken primary responsibility for programming. It is a collaborative effort made necessary by the overwhelming centrality of Tokyo when it comes to any cultural programming.

9. Correspondence with Akiyama Tamako, May 15, 2011.

10. Author interview with Wu Wenguang, May 8, 2012.

11. It begins popping up in Google Book and other database searches in 1959.

12. Correspondence with Fujioka Asako, May 5, 2011. Yunfest is the documentary film festival in Yunnan, China.

WHAT JAPANESE CINEMA IS!: JAPANESE CINEMA AND THE INTERMEDIAL PRACTICES

NITRATE FILM PRODUCTION IN JAPAN: A HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE EARLY DAYS

HIDENORI OKADA
(Translated by AYAKO SAITO AND DAISUKE MIYAO)

IN 2012, there are only two countries that still produce raw films for motion pictures: the United States and Japan. Production of raw films for motion pictures needs extremely sophisticated technology so that it is not surprising to see such a situation of oligopoly, but why Japan, in addition to the United States? In this chapter, I am going to go back to the period when the first nitrate film was produced in Japan and examine the complicated relationship between the raw film industry and the filmmaking industry. In other words, this essay is an attempt to depict the fluid environment around Japanese cinema of the 1930s from a materialistic viewpoint.

Originally, in Japan, cinema was an "imported" object from abroad. Cinema arrived in Japan from Europe and the United States, the countries that invented it. During the period of early cinema, the raw film industry developed in parallel with the increase of film production. The United States had the big Eastman Kodak. In France, Pathé became the First Empire of Cinema. By comparison, Japanese cinema didn't develop until the 1930s without the raw film industry. It did not have a backbone for the needed materials. The main theme of this chapter is to explore this less known fact behind the so-called first golden age of Japanese cinema.

Fuji Photo Film Co., Ltd. released their 35mm film Fuji Positive Film (type 150)[1] on the market in April 1934. This product, the first genuine domestic film in reality and in name, marked the first step for Fuji, and a process of development that continues to this day. I will call the year 1934 the birth of domestic motion picture film in Japan because,

as mentioned later, it was in 1934 that Konishiroku also put their first motion picture film product on sale. First, however, I will define what the term *domestic film* meant at that time and explain the various conditions pertaining to the manufacture of domestic film products.

In those days, cellulose nitrate film base was generally used for 35mm commercial films, and diacetate (diacetic acid cellulose) film base, which was developed after cellulose nitrate, was used for 16mm and 9.5mm noncommercial/amateur/private films. Konishiroku (now Konica Minolta, Inc.) was, at that time, trying to develop the 16mm/9.5mm amateur film manufacturing business. In April 1934, the same month that Fuji released Fuji Positive Film (type 150), the manufacturing department of Konishiroku, Rokuosha, released their first motion picture film Sakura 16mm Cine Film (reversal). This Konishiroku product, however, was made from imported diacetate film base applied with domestic emulsion. In those days, the Japanese photo industry, which had just begun to explore the technological possibilities of producing nitrate film, was not yet capable of manufacturing domestic diacetate base for 16mm film. Immediately after the release of Sakura 16mm Cine Film, Konishiroku embarked on developing their own film base, but it was not until December 1938 when Konishiroku, after many trials and errors at their Hino factory (Tokyo), succeeded in mass producing nitrate film, and diacetate film in 1940. Therefore, all Konishiroku film products before these dates were only half domestic.[2] Given that Konishiroku used nitrate base mainly for roll films for photography and x-ray films and that they began the sale of black and white 35mm motion picture film as late as postwar 1952, Konishiroku was not one of the central players in the history of nitrate film manufacturing in Japan, despite its leading role in the development of 16mm/9.5mm amateur films. Although both Fuji and Konishiroku were to become long-standing rivals in the industry, especially during the development of color film technology in later years, the two companies seem, in retrospect, to have tacitly chosen divergent development plans: the production of 35mm film and non-35mm film, respectively.

A Brief History of Celluloid in Japan

In order to discuss nitrate film, which was variously called inflammable film, celluloid film, and nitro film, I will first consider celluloid, which is the basis of nitrate film, focusing on both its manufacturing process and its prewar industrial history.

The primary raw materials for celluloid are cellulose, nitric acid, sulfuric acid, camphor, and alcohol. The chemical process of making celluloid was discovered in England in 1868: nitrate cellulose, made from the chemical action of cellulose, mixed with a liquid soup of strong nitric acid and sulfuric acid, and added to camphor, which generates an elastic material; this material, when heated up, becomes soft, yielding a plastic material—that is, celluloid. For industrial purposes, tissue paper and linter were used

to extract cellulose, and alcohol was used to remove moisture after the addition of the mixed acid soup.

Camphor is made from the refined wooden tips of camphor trees, mainly found on the Pacific coast of Asia. Especially, Taiwanese camphor was famous for its excellent quality, and its abundance. After the Sino-Japanese War (1894–1895), in which Taiwan became a Japanese possession, Japan became the leading producer of camphor. However, facing the reality of obtaining 100 percent of its celluloid from imports, Japanese industrialists strongly felt the necessity for the development of domestic manufacturing of celluloid, primarily in consideration of the potential export market, especially since they "have seen the present situation that half of the world demand of camphor, a raw material of celluloid is provided by Taiwan."[3] Because, by 1903 the camphor trade had been controlled by the Monopoly Bureau following the Camphor Monopoly Law, one can understand that celluloid was a typical colonial industrial product, which appeared in the middle of the modernization process of Japan (see Table 13.1, Import and Export of Celluloid Material and Processed Products in Japan).

Two *zaibatsu* (plutocrats), Mitsui and Mitsubishi, studied this situation, and recognized its business potential. In 1908, the Mitsui family founded Sakai Celluloid in Sakai City, Osaka Prefecture, while a Mitsubishi affiliate company, Nippon Celluloid Jinzo Kenshi, was founded in the same year. The latter built a factory in Aboshi in Hyogo Prefecture, though Mitsubishi later withdrew from the company's management. These two would become representative companies in the celluloid business. However, around that time, there emerged a flood of new celluloid manufacturing companies, although they were as yet unable to produce superior celluloid products leveled at export, partly because of the inferior quality of domestic cellulose material. Nonetheless, they competed against each other in the immature domestic market, only to find themselves in critical financial straits. Although new demands for explosives during World War I eased their financial difficulties, the haphazard deforestation of camphor in Taiwan created a situation dire enough for the intervention of the Monopoly Bureau in establishing a firmer control of the camphor supply.

In order to settle the resulting confusion, in 1919, Dai Nippon Celluloid (Daicel), a monopolistic enterprise was founded, which integrated all eight previously existing domestic celluloid manufacturers in Japan. Mokichi Morita from Sakai Celluloid was elected first president with the strong support of the Mitsui family. It was Morita who ordered Daicel's engineers to research and develop motion picture film as early as 1920. Although Japan was exporting a great deal of celluloid products at the time, motion picture film processed from celluloid in Japan was made completely from imported film base. In 1924 a 100 percent luxury tax was imposed on imported photographic raw materials, but this taxation did not halt the increasing importation of raw materials. As for motion picture film, which was not even classified as a luxury item for tax purposes, the reality was that imports were rising with incredible rapidity. Therefore, the domestic manufacture of motion picture film was in urgent demand. The causes of such a situation were twofold. First, motion picture film is a product of

Table 13.1 Import and Export of Celluloid Material and Processed Products in Japan (yen)

Year	Import	Export	
		Material	Processed Products
1897	174,554		
1907	336,483		
1910	653,361		
1911	674,746		
1912	496,989		
1913	210,649		
1914	31,814		
1915	11,398	194,920	
1916	257	421,175	
1917	60	1,091,936	3,196,922
1918	284	1,679,179	6,640,980
1919	298	2,215,576	7,290,836
1920		1,185,991	8,643,983
1921		281,651	2,969,369
1922		353,449	4,931,382
1923		368,050	6,792,470
1924		371,942	7,088,912
1925		399,929	9,390,470
1926		168,900	10,013,738
1927		208,957	9,259,976
1928		249,639	10,272,083
1929		396,822	13,428,255
1930		298,759	6,322,859
1931		504,934	4,725,566
1932		876,482	5,490,068
1933		2,363,013	8,635,203
1934		3,305,324	12,017,549

Source: *Thirty Years History of Dai Nippon Celluloid* (Dai Nippon Celluloid, 1952), 33.

highly centralized technology; that is to say, it is not at all easy to produce film even if all its components are available. In sum, extremely complex technology is necessary for manufacturing motion picture film. Second, precisely because of this technological sophistication, all the established companies concealed their manufacturing technologies and processes from newcomers. There are, indeed, a great number of

different manufacturing businesses, but not many companies that, from their inception to production, have had to face total isolation, no technological guidance, and no support from their precursors within the industry. This extremely secretive nature of motion picture film manufacturing business still characterizes this industry to this day.

The number of industrial products for export was limited in Japan in those days, and the celluloid industry was regarded as one of the flourishing star industries. Since the 1920s a primary market for the export of celluloid was Sheffield, England, where knives with celluloid grips were manufactured. In the 1930s when there was a world-wide increase in demand for exports of celluloid thanks to the expansion of varied celluloid use, moreover, celluloid factories in both Sakai and Aboshi were in full operation. Japan was the leading celluloid exporter (see Table 13.2 Celluloid Manufacturing in the World) then. However, because many countries had managed to produce artificial nitric acid without depending on imported potassium nitrate, Japan's top status entirely depended on camphor from Taiwan.

In 1924 Daicel offered Eastman Kodak a technical tie-up, but the negotiations ended in failure. Consequently, Daicel opened a special laboratory for motion picture film in the suburbs of Tokyo in 1928, and under the supervision of factory manager, Sakae Haruki, embarked on the development of nitrate film base. From 1930, it started to develop emulsion as well, obtaining technical support from Toyo Kanpan. However, since there was no technical information available from foreign manufacturers, Daicel had to start from scratch in the domestic manufacturing business, depending solely on completed products as reference. Such motion picture film products as Eastman Kodak (both positive/negative), Dupont (negative), Agfa (positive), Pathé (positive), Gevaert (positive), were listed in the "raw film stock commercially available for research."[4] This list probably reflects the market share of imported film products around that time. On the other hand, as for the development of raw material for photography, which started around the same period as motion picture film, commercial domestic products served as a reference, even if

Table 13.2 Celluloid Manufacturing in the World (ton)

Year	Japan	USA	Germany	UK	France	Others	Total
1932	7,500	5,600	5,500	2,500	1,400	2,250	24,750
1933	9,000	5,300	4,800	2,400	1,500	1,560	24,560
1934	10,000	5,800	5,000	2,400	1,500	1,560	26,260
1935	11,000	6,000	4,000	2,500	1,500	1,400	26,400
1936	12,000	7,000	5,000	2,000	1,500	1,430	29,230
1937	12,760	7,500	5,500	2,500	1,500	1,800	31,560
1938	10,950	7,500	6,500	1,500	1,000	1,000	28,450

Source: *Sixty Years History of Daicel Chemistry Industries* (Daicel Chemistry Industries, 1981), 164.

they were only half-domestic because of imported film base. These domestic products were, for roll films, Kiku Film (released in 1927), manufactured by Asahi Photo Industry (founded in 1925 located in Hamamatsu City); Sakura Film, manufactured by Rokuosha as mentioned earlier; and for dry plates, products manufactured by Oriental Photo Industrial Co., Ltd. (now Cyber Graphics). Thus, because of the difference in technological difficulties, photography technology was a step ahead of motion picture technology.

Nitrate Film as National Policy (*Kokusaku*)

Although the celluloid industry had been monopolized by *zaibatsu* for years, in February 1933 when a Diet member Ryo Iwase submitted a proposition to the House of Representatives for the Establishment of National Policy (*kokusaku*) on Film, it became apparent that the development of motion picture film, albeit still in progress, was subject to *kokusaku*. The proposition designed to implement state control over the entire film world was soon to grow into an organization initiated by the home ministry. The organization founded in April 1934, the year when Fuji Positive Film (type 150) was put on sale, was the National Film Control Committee, which stated that "the establishment of domestic motion picture film manufacturing" was an issue to be discussed. Oddly enough, both national policy on film and domestic film were born in the same year.

One should note that what was behind the situation during the period was the attempts of Kodak and Gevaert to advance into the Japanese market. In 1929, Mitsui Products Company, Daicel's parent company, invited a trade mission from Kodak to Japan; however, Kodak's offer to partner with Daicel to found a new company was turned down because of the latter's decision to seek independent research and development. Soon, Kodak sought a chance to open a factory in Hashimoto town in Kanagawa Prefecture, but it had to abandon the plan. Similarly, Gevaert's 1932 offer for a technical tie-up with Daicel was turned down. At this point, Japan, then regarded as a huge potential market from abroad, made a decision to compete with the foreign powers.

A rise in prices of imported film materials as a consequence of exchange-rate fluctuation and increased tariffs was another factor in the government's decision to advance the domestic manufacturing of film materials (see Table 13.3, Import Sales of Raw Film). There was an article in a trade paper on September 30, 1933, the *Nikkan Kogyo Shimbun,* with headlines that read, "an unofficial decision for subsidy for Photo Industry: 200,000 yen budget to Dai Nippon Celluloid this year." The main points of the article were as follows: given that, in 1932, the import of raw film amounted to 4,342,000 yen, of which 3,530,000 yen was for motion picture film, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry had decided to subsidize Dai Nippon Celluloid with the

Table 13.3 Import Sales of Raw Film (kin*/yen)

Year	For Motion Picture Use		For Photos Use		Total	
	Quantity	Price	Quantity	Price	Quantity	Price
1928	321,884	2,102,472	233,372	956,454	555,256	3,058,926
1929	331,623	2,206,542	202,075	769,475	533,698	2,976,017
1930	351,734	2,146,993	256,257	779,583	607,991	2,926,576
1931	332,402	1,985,992	291,334	783,635	623,736	2,769,627
1932	296,998	2,905,861	195,231	810,964	492,229	3,716,825
1933	262,369	3,184,340	159,830	832,885	422,199	3,981,225

*A *kin* equals a pound.
Source: *Showa 9 International Film Almanac* (Kokusai Eiga Tsushin-Sha, 1934), 313. As for film use, by 1931 one kin cost about 6 yen, but in 1932 it rapidly rose to about 10 yen, and in 1933 to 12 yen per 1 kin.

amount of 1,200,000 yen in the next four years until 1936 in order to promote domestic motion picture film manufacturing.

The 1,200,000-yen subsidy was not granted unconditionally, however. Products had to pass strict standards inspection to be eligible; extremely high standards existed for motion picture film but were never applied to regular celluloid products: millions of feet of film have a uniformly flat plane. When looking back on those years, Sakae Haruki, then chief laboratory engineer who later served many terms as president of Fuji, recounted his distress at the situation: "1,200,000 yen in those days was a tremendous amount of money. Without having made even a sample, a new factory was built just like that. It was nothing but a reckless attempt."[5] The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (the head of the industry policy section was Nobusuke Kishi at the time, who later became prime minister) was pressuring film laboratories to speed up the development of domestic manufacturing. It was indeed a mission involving both industry and government.

Domestic Products Are not Ready for Use Yet

In January 1934, Fuji Photo Film Co. Ltd., a new company with a specialization in film manufacturing, was founded, taking over the entire photo-film department of Daicel. This company, which had a factory in Minami Ashigara in Kanagawa prefecture, was distinctive in comparison to other preceding companies such as Konishiroku, Oriental

Photo Industrial Co. Ltd., and Asahi Photo Industry. Whereas the latter three companies started with photographic paper and plates and then moved into the manufacturing of motion picture film materials, Fuji from the beginning focused on the production of motion picture film, in what might be considered an unnatural or forced way. Among these three companies, the business ideas of Konishiroku were basically taken from the photography industry, and thus the company tried to continue this tradition, identifying itself as a "film manufacturer supported by a wide variety of amateur photographers." On the other hand, Fuji, which had from the planning stage been granted research bounties and industrial subsidies from the government, was generally committed to producing film products for professional use. Given that these bounties and subsidies were provided exclusively for film products, one can see that something else beyond its own company policies controlled Fuji. In fact, the aforementioned 1,200,000 yen subsidy occupied 40 percent of the company's 3 million yen capital. Therefore, when Kodak and Agfa attempted a large-scale retail price reduction in February of the same year, their intentions must have been calculated. Considering that both companies had raised prices many times in the past in order to adjust to the depreciation of yen and increased tariffs, their strategic shift toward price reduction may well be read as not only their taking business countermeasures but also their sensitive and acute reaction to national policy.

However, what were really at stake then were, perhaps, internal problems rather than external threats. On February 4, 1934, the Dai Nippon Motion Picture Association consisting of major film production companies (which will be discussed in more detail in a moment) issued a statement—which Fuji called "a bombshell statement." This summarizes the rather lengthy statement:

> Judging from test samples of motion picture film manufactured by Dai Nippon Celluloid, the durability of forthcoming products of this new company (i.e., Fuji) won't be half as strong as those of Eastman Kodak products. Therefore, even if the price of raw film itself drops, we would probably have to increase the number of prints, and this means that domestic products, which are cheaper but less durable, are in the long run more expensive to use than Eastman products. The increased cost will inevitably cause the increase of admission fees, creating a large obstacle to the expansion of the film industry. All things considered, while we hope to see a finished domestic motion picture film product in the near future, we would not approve of the untimely release of yet-to-be-finished domestic products. The release should be delayed until the completion of a satisfactory product which manufacturers, after trials and tests, are fully confident in presenting. At the same time, one must realize that it would be counterproductive if the price of domestic motion picture film were much lower than that of imported products.[6]

This declaration also appeared in a newspaper article on February 5; the headlines proclaim, "domestic products are not ready for use: the Dai Nippon Motion Picture Association made a statement against the release of domestic motion picture film."

The article underlines the demanding attitude of the Association about the issue, as it concludes:

> From this point of view, although the Association should definitely discontinue the old sales practice of having retailers between production companies and manufacturers, in order to decrease the motion picture film price, if the request for postponing the premature release of domestic product is not accepted, the Association would have no other choice than to take strong measures such as a unified boycott of domestic products.[7]

The Dai Nippon Motion Picture Association consisted mainly of four major production companies (Nikkatsu, Shochiku, Shinko Kinema, and Daito), formed with the purpose of consolidating the industry as well as facilitating negotiations for the interest of production companies. Although it had already been active in protecting the interest of the industry by campaigning for the abolishment of value added tariffs to imported raw film,[8] the Association was most known for its protest in 1937 against the launch of the so-called Toho Block, which was initiated by minor production companies such as Photo Chemical Laboratory (P.C.L.) and J.O. Talkie Studio, by rejecting the exhibition of films made by the Toho Block production companies from nationwide theaters. In any event, the boycott by the four companies of the Association forced the newly established Fuji into a tight corner.

What is most interesting about the statement was that it drew an extreme conclusion based on a hypothesis unsupported by evidence about the yet-to-be released film products: there is actually no record that indicates the Association performed any life tests on Fuji's products. The Fuji company had just been founded, and although their apprehension about Fuji's products is quite understandable, the durability of the products at issue in this statement applied merely to the test samples made by the former body of Fuji, that is, Daicel. Moreover, it was Kawai Kinema, an Association member of Daito's former body, that willingly supported and used Daicel's test samples, and both Shochiku (Kamata Studio) and Shinko Kinema were said to have promised to use Daicel's film products when Daicel succeeded in mass producing them.[9] Therefore, it seems clear that what was really at stake in the Association's attack on Fuji was not the question of quality or durability of Fuji products, as they claimed, but something else. Before they had a chance to demonstrate the scientific evidence on which they based their criticism of Fuji products, the Association decided to attack this newly founded company, Fuji, using Fuji products as an alibi.

In November 1933, only two months before the inauguration of Fuji Photo Film in January 1934, the *Houchi Shimbun* reported in an article about the "the forthcoming self-sufficiency of domestic manufacturing of motion picture film," that both Oriental Photo Industrial and Asahi Photo Industry, in addition to Daicel, had launched into manufacturing motion picture film. There was another small article following this one, with headlines that read "antagonism between the production companies surrounding the issue of raw materials." It reports

> that there was a strong antagonism between Oriental and Daicel because Oriental's initial expectation of raw film material supplies from Daicel was betrayed. Oriental

insisted that it was natural that Daicel, which was granted governmental subsidies, sell raw film material to Oriental, whereas Daicel implied their intention of distributing sales to Asahi. Because the Dai Nippon Motion Picture Association expressed their sympathies with Oriental, criticizing Daicel's tightfisted attitude, the situation drew much attention.[10]

Visionary Oriental

Precisely speaking, a movie had been made with domestic motion picture film before the birth of domestic motion picture film in 1934. In October 1933, a year before Fuji introduced its first film product into the market, P.C.L. (the predecessor of Toho Company) for the first time used a positive made by Oriental Photo Industry for the viewing print of their second feature, *Junjo no Miyako* (directed by Sotoji Kimura). On October 26, a closed prescreening was held; on November 24, a big open prescreening event was held mainly for the press. Oriental celebrated the event as "epoch making in the history of motion picture development."[11]

Moreover, as for the first feature made by P.C.L., *Horoyoi Jinsei* (directed by Sotoji Kimura, 1933), Oriental claimed, "on September 11, 1933, P.C.L. used our [Oriental's] test positive for their talkie *Horoyoi Jinsei* with great success."[12] In addition, there is another mention that "Newsreels produced by Asahi Shimbun [a national newspaper company] often used our test products."[13] From these descriptions, one may conclude that there was indeed a time that Oriental's test products were actually experimented with for use in production. However, their test film was, in reality, half-domestic; that is to say, although it used a highly regarded Oriental emulsion, it was nonetheless made from imported Kodak film base. Let's look at a brief history of Oriental, a company that *could have been* a film manufacturing company.

Toyo Kikuchi, previously an active photographer in New York, who had the ambition of advancing the Japanese Photo Industry, founded Oriental Photo Industrial in Tokyo. The company is famous for its photographic papers and plates, and has made various achievements in the field of photography, including the development of the first domestic color negative for photography, "Oriental Color Negative Film," in 1953. It is not clear exactly when Oriental began developing motion picture film, but at least in 1927 they had a motion picture department in one of their factories.

Besides their industrial activities, Oriental marked two significant milestones in the history of photography in Japan: the launch of a photography journal in 1924, *Photo Times,* and the opening of the Oriental Photo School in 1929. A guiding force for promoting the "Emerging Photography Movement" in Japan by actively introducing new trends in photography movements over the world, *Photo Times,* until it ceased publication in 1940, demonstrated a great interest in cinema devoting some pages for introductory reviews of new, mainly foreign, films. On the other hand,

Oriental Photo School, founded for promotion of products as well as the development of a photography culture in Japan by nurturing new talents in the field produced many photographers and photographic experts. In the history of Japanese cinema, it is a well-known fact that Keisuke Kinoshita, one of the most famous Japanese directors, entered the school and studied there, immediately after joining the Shochiku Kamata Studio. In April 1932, Kikuchi built a cinema studio in their second factory. This act was rather remarkable because Kikuchi had actually built a studio at an early stage when the company hadn't even manufactured motion picture film, clearly indicating Oriental's overall commitment to the film industry and the strength of Kikuchi's ambition for entering the motion picture business. In fact, Kikuchi's maneuver to build a studio is somewhat similar to Fuji's, which, soon after its founding, built a location studio, Fuji Studio, in the suburbs of Tokyo. Fuji was influenced by the bombshell statement, "the company's sales of motion picture film heavily declined, forcing it to enter the movie making business so as to find a way of consuming its own motion picture film products."[14] Therefore, the Fuji Studio was designed not only to produce films but also to serve as a kind of technical service center, to operate as a more practical facility for implementing quality control and testing of raw film materials, film development, sound recording, and so on. However, history tells us that Fuji's idea of connecting film manufacturing and production actually had a great predecessor.

A Battle over Celluloid

Both *Thirty Years of Oriental Photo Industry* (1950) and *Seventy Years of Oriental Photo Industry* (1970) leave only fragmentary descriptions about cinema, because, as this chapter describes, Daicel's decision not to supply raw film material to Oriental virtually closed the door on Oriental's ambition for the mass manufacture of motion picture nitrate film. The company's primary capital came from the company chairman Sumisaburo Uemura, who was also an executive director of Dai Nippon Beer, and Uemura's son, Taiji Uemura, who was Oriental's executive director, and later the first president of P.C.L. Therefore, it was quite natural that P.C.L. used Oriental products for their monumental features. However, in the face of firm solidarity of Mitsui-Daicel-Fuji, Oriental was forced to forgo their ambition. Daicel, on the other hand, had no other choice but to concentrate on supporting the clearly tangential trajectory of its subsidiary company, Fuji.

However, after opening its independent production department, P.C.L., albeit a new force with a rather small production, soon came to strengthen its relationship with Fuji, in perfect harmony with the *kokusaku* [national policy], which promoted domestic products. After all, the product released by Oriental in August 1934, "the birth of domestic motion picture film," was only 16mm reverse positive film, exactly the same as

Konishiroku's. The film base of this product was imported diacetate. One of the contemporary news articles reported that Oriental was also "in the middle of developing negatives as well, to be completed by next spring."[15] In fact, there was actually Oriental 35mm negative, the name of which was found in a list provided by the Nippon Photography Materials Association as of May 1942 of "product brands of photo-film material." Oriental, however, withdrew completely from the motion picture film business with the defeat in the Pacific War, and its attempt at manufacturing motion picture film (except for a celebratory comment about *Junjo No Miyako*) was almost completely erased from the official history of the company.[16]

Although the photography industry served as the initial background and impetus to both Konishiroku and Oriental, Oriental's approach was distinctively different in its orientation to professional filmmaking, as opposed to Konishiroku's wooing of a broad customer base. This also meant that Oriental was the only force in the industry that attempted to break Fuji's monopoly, stepping over the demarcation of products and markets tacitly drawn between Fuji and other companies. There was a feature article in 1934 *International Film Almanac (Showa 9)* issued in March that year about "Film Japan's New Movements and Their Cultural Missions," with "manufacturing of domestic motion picture film" being one of them, introducing both Fuji and Oriental as representative Japanese film manufacturers. At the end of the reference to Oriental in the article, it says that "Oriental is quite confident that their development of film base has reached the level of practical manufacturing,"[17] suggesting the possibility of manufacturing 100 percent domestic motion picture film. Additionally, there is another article that mentions Oriental's plan for embarking on manufacturing celluloid material for motion picture film.[18] Yet, even if Oriental did actually manage to manufacture celluloid in whatever way, in reality, Oriental was no rival to Fuji, a company with full *kokusaku* back up.

Oriental was not the only firm that suffered heavily from Daicel's decision not to supply celluloid material. Konishiroku (Rokuosha), a leading company in the amateur film market, launched a protest campaign against the Monopoly Bureau's exclusive camphor sales to Fuji. As a result of three years of persistent campaigns, Konishiroku managed to acquire camphor from the Bureau, and in 1938 succeeded in self-supplying nitrate film base. It eventually ceased to obtain celluloid from Daicel, and, instead, negotiated celluloid supply from a different company, Nitchitsu Kayaku, a manufacturer of explosives. Considering that a major company like Konishiroku had to go through such an ordeal, it must have been extremely difficult for a newcomer like Oriental to be able to manufacture its own celluloid material. As for Asahi, to which Daicel implied its intention of distributing sales of camphor, the company eventually did not enter into the nitrate film market. Konishiroku, left with no other choice but to concentrate on the non-35mm amateur film market, developed 9.5mm film made from imported diacetate base as its major product, attracting many Pathé Baby fans. For reference, Table 13.4, Market Share of Photochemical Materials in Showa 15 (1940), shows the absolute monopoly of motion picture film by Fuji in 1940.

Table 13.4 Market Share of Photochemical Materials in Showa 15 (1940) (%)

Products	Film					Dry plates	Printing Paper
Companies	X rays	Motion Picture	General	Aviation	Total		
Asahi	1.0	0.4	9.8		3.1		0.3
Oriental	4.5	0.9	13.8		5.0	36.7	21.5
Kyoto							4.5
Konishiroku	49.0	1.6	47.7	56.8	21.7		19.4
Shashin Kagaku							11.3
Showa						7.1	23.5
Fuji	45.5	97.1	28.7	41.4	70.2	50.2	19.5
Mizuno						6.0	
Total	100	100		100	100	100	100

Source: Seiichi Oba, "Dawn of Japanese Photo Industry" in *Society of Photographic Science and Technology of Japan,* No. 52, Vol. 6, 1989, 601.

Effect of and Reaction to the Bombshell Statement

As Fuji's official history book emphasizes, because of the boycott by the Association, Fuji and all concerned made every effort, approached all possible quarters, to request the use of Fuji products. What kind of effect did the bombshell statement actually have?

The critical attitude of *International Film Almanac* (Showa 9), published soon after the statement, toward the major production companies is clearly expressed in the sentences under the entry, "Policy of Manufacturing Domestic Raw Film." It says:

> Film production companies should realize the great importance of employing domestic film material, and change the indifferent attitude which accepts products only because of low cost. Indeed, isn't it a duty for them to use these products willingly to help enable themselves to be self-sufficient as soon as possible? ... That's why we would strongly recommend that the Dai Nippon Motion Picture Association take this matter into consideration.[19]

However, there is no record that the Association actually took any measures at this stage. It was Asahi newsreel that first used Fuji Positive Film (type 150) in April 1934.[20] According to *Reflections on Forty Years of Film Manufacturing,* confronting Asahi Shimbun's relentless criticism about the quality and efficiency of their products, Fuji

made every effort to improve their product quality. Kohei Omiya, a then Fuji engineer, recalls the days with *Asahi News*:

> In those days, things were different. Because we could not manufacture film with identically applied emulsion, nor did we manage to apply emulsion successively, every time the emulsion number changed, the sensitivity and tone were different. The application technique was also rather poor. Every time we made a print, it was different; some were lighter, and some were darker. . . . In order to respond to Asahi News's complaints about the products with uneven sensitivity, there was only one solution: we had to select, before shipping, prints with the same emulsion number developed from the same negative.[21]

In fact, once Asahi actually used Fuji products, Asahi's complaints were more about emulsion than about the film base itself. Although it is not possible to perform durability tests of film base in a short period of time, at least in terms of the emulsion quality, one cannot find in the bombshell statement any sense of evaluation, either positive or negative. This also suggests that the argument of the statement was not supported by scientific evidence but motivated more by the Association's political considerations. The Association used Kawai Kinema's use of Daicel's test product as a basis for their statement while neglecting to note that, in reality, Kawai Kinema had not merely tried the product but had leapt at the opportunity to have access to the product and thereby the opportunity to comment on it.

Moreover, the exhibitions of Asahi newsreels were from the beginning arranged with Toho theater chains, and printing was done in a P.C.L. branch located in Ginza quite close to Asahi Shimbun Headquarters building. This indicates that P.C.L., then bringing a fresh current in the world of Japanese cinema, had quickly changed its strategy of approach to Fuji, after Oriental's aborted entry into the film manufacturing business, thereby clearly indicating P.C.L.'s decision to abandon its parent company, Oriental. In fact, the Uemura family withdrew entirely from the management of Oriental in 1936. This decision by P.C.L. probably resulted from its rational judgment to maintain some distance from the Dai Nippon Motion Picture Association, which had avoided Fuji, an attitude that would have been carried over to the discord between the Association and the "Toho Block" from 1937.

In the meantime, the first feature film that used Fuji Positive Film (type 150) was *Karisome no Kuchibeni,* the first talkie produced by Irie Production, shot in October 1934 at Fuji Studio, directed by Shigeyoshi Suzuki, photographed by Mitsuo Miura, and premiered on November 22, the same year. Uneven tones and foams caused by developing were said to be conspicuous, but with improvement, in December 1934, the positive film would be used again for *Teiso Mondo* (directed by Shigeyoshi Suzuki), co-produced by Shinko Kinema and Irie Production. The price of the product was 40 sen [one hundredth of a yen] per foot (as of September 1934), not really competitive with imports, and Fuji would, in July 1935, "reduce the price of positive film by 7 rin [one tenth of a sen] per foot in order to rival both Eastman and Agfa."[22] In 1935, only a year after its foundation, Fuji, burdened by a huge deficit and on the brink of bankruptcy, appealed to

its parent company, Daicel, for aid in capital investment to survive this crisis caused by the boycott.

Sakae Haruki, the then manager of Fuji's Ashigara Factory, lists Shinko Kinema as their top customer aside from Asahi Shimbun.[23] Although the production companies probably didn't perform durability tests on Fuji products, it seems that in less than a year and a half the "bombshell statement" was already a bombshell in name only. As Masaichi Nagata (future president of Daei Studio), who became president of Shinko Kinema Kyoto Studios in October 1936, once recalled:

> As I thought it was an obligation of the people to use domestic products, I went ahead and used them despite strong objections.... The public sentiment then was that only second-rate companies used domestic products. All the more for this sentiment, it was a daring decision for me to use their products.[24]

In reality, as mentioned earlier, Shinko Kinema (Kyoto) began using Fuji positives in 1934, two years before Nagata's took up presidency. In July 1935, Nikkatsu Uzumasa Studios (Kyoto) rather willingly "approved of the improved quality of Fuji film and made a decision to use their products."[25] Nikkatsu's decision was soon followed by Daito and Shochiku Shimogamo Studios (Kyoto), who were both formerly central players in the bombshell statement. Although it is true that a national policy promoting domestic products and the support of public opinion in favor of the use of domestic products were surely behind their decisions, that members of the Association unreservedly overturned their decisions and approved of Fuji products reveals the true nature of the bombshell statement; it was not meant to be a substantial, but rather a punitive, disciplinary action. In other words, the statement was actually the Association's protest against the government-*zaibatsu*'s attempt to monopolize the basic foundation of the film manufacturing business by discouraging competition in the domestic film market. This incident was, in fact, a conflict that arose from the reality that production companies had to face: Although they were the producers of works of film, in terms of film material they were mere consumers, just like anyone else.

After having been accepted by the movie industry, Fuji gradually managed to eliminate accumulated deficits. In April 1936, it released its first motion picture film negative, Fuji Negative Film (type 100) (clear base). This negative was used for filming the anniversary celebration of the birth of the founder of Tenrikyo that fell in the same year. The first feature film made with this negative was *Akatsuki no Bakuon,* the shooting of which began in Fuji Studios in March 1936, produced by Takada Production, directed by Jun Murakami, photographed by Minoru Kuribayashi, and released on April 29. It is apparent that major studios still avoided taking the initiative to use domestic products. On the other hand, we could detect an underlying special relationship between Fuji and small-star production companies that quickly used Fuji products: both Minoru Takada, owner of Takada Production, and Shigeyoshi Suzuki, director of *Karisome no Kuchibeni* and *Teiso Mondo,* belonged to Fuji Eiga Production, a company that had sold its studio lot to Fuji Photo Film. At any rate, *Akatsuki no Bakuon,* the first feature film that used both negative and positive Fuji film, marked, indeed, the birth of Japanese cinema.

ANOTHER BOMBSHELL

In 1936, the year when Fuji Photo Film released Fuji Negative Film (type 100), and three years after the birth of domestic motion picture film, the Japanese motion picture film manufacturing business got off the ground.

However, the Sino-Japanese War [the China Incident] broke out the following year, pressuring the industrial world to meet an upsurge of war demands. Japan's imposition of import control in order to curb a trade imbalance caused by a mass import of war munitions resulted in the unavailability of raw film material from Eastman Kodak. Furthermore, in 1939 when the Pacific War broke out, it became impossible to import products from Agfa, though both Germany and Japan were members of the Axis. Thus, within a mere six years after the birth of domestic motion picture film, Japan was obliged to supply all demands of raw film through its own domestic products (see Table 13.5, A Statistical Yearbook of Raw Film Import by Customhouse). By this time, the entire industry had already entered into

Table 13.5 A Statistical Yearbook of Raw Film Import by Customhouse (meter)

			1937	1938	1939
Yokohama	Positive	35mm	–	–	39,882
		16mm	–	–	528,657
		9.5mm	–	–	26,152
	subtotal		–	–	594,691
	Negative 35mm		–	–	340,910
		16mm	–	–	29,566
		8mm	–	–	38
	subtotal		108,957*	732,212*	370,515
Kobe	Positive	35mm	13,392,091	2,171,651	1,051,837
		16mm	2,199,534	337,292	650,443
		9.5mm	125,100	–	–
	subtotal		15,716,725	2,508,943	1,702,280
	Negative	35mm	3,753,578	593,751	444,249
		16mm	26,760	–	30,480
		9.5mm	150,615	190,458	914
		8mm	49,500	1,372	–
	subtotal		3,980,453	785,581	475,643
Osaka	Positive	35mm	2,134	–	21,747
		16mm	–	–	120,700

(*Continued*)

Table 13.5 (Continued)

		1937	1938	1939
	9.5mm	-	-	1,875
	8mm	-	-	3,657
	subtotal	2,134	10,729*	157,961
Negative	35mm	-	-	240
	16mm	-	-	9,266
	subtotal	-	514,894**	9,506
Total	Positive	35mm	-	-	1,113,466
	16mm	-	-	1,299,000
	9.5mm	-	-	38,009
	8mm	-	-	3,657
	total	-	-	2,454,932
Negative	35mm	-	-	785,399
	16mm	-	-	69,312
	9.5mm	-	-	914
	8mm	-	-	38
Total		-	-	855,663
	35mm	-	-	1,898,865
	16mm	-	-	1,369,112
	9.5mm	-	-	38,923
	8mm	-	-	3,695
Grand total		19,699,312	3,251,789	3,310,595

Source: *Showa 16 Nippon Film Almanac* (Daido Sha, 1941), 48–49.
* Indicates numbers with format breakdown unknown.
 ** Indicates numbers with the description "small-size films."

a completely different era from the days of the Dai Nippon Motion Picture Association's bombshell statement. In fact, compared with the current drastic change, the earlier bombshell statement itself must have already seemed innocuous.

At the same time, however, for Fuji, 1937 was the year of breakthrough: with its release of Fuji Sound Recording Film (type 250) the same year, Fuji had grown large enough to supply the motion picture industry with three kinds of film, positive, negative, and sound. Between 1937 and 1939, Fuji doubled its production (see Table 13.6, A Statistical Yearbook of Production Capacity of Domestic Film), and made such a profit that it increased the stockholder's profit share by 10 percent. The quantity of imported film still exceeded that of domestic film in 1937, but in the following year, the number of imports drastically decreased; by 1939, the market share of imported film dropped to 6.5 percent.

Table 13.6 A Statistical Yearbook of Production Capacity of Domestic Film (meter)

	Year		1937	1938	1939
Fuji	Positive	35mm	16,911,681	31,800,000	37,979,255
	Negative 35mm		465,661	2,510,000	3,714,024
	Sound N	35mm		1,121,000	3,292,328
	Total		17,377,342	35,431,000	45,003,607
Asahi	Positive	35mm	-	12,000	115,362
		16mm	-	8,000	73,172
		9.5mm	-	9,000	66,821
	Positive subtotal		-		255,355
	Negative	35mm	-	7,000	65,199
		16mm	-	4,500	66,440
		9.5mm	-	20,000	112,547
	Negative subtotal		-		244,186
		Total	-	61,300	499,541
Konishiroku	Negative	16mm	-	613,000	555,857
		8mm	-	454,535	783,512
	Negative	subtotal	-		1,339,369
	Positive	16mm	-	409,190	411,904
	Total		-	1,476,725	1,751,273
Oriental	Negative	35mm	-		5,895
	Reverse Negative	16mm	-		123,951
	Positive	16mm	-	1,395,770	443,195
	Total		-	1,395,770	573,041
Total	Positive	35mm	-	31,812,000	38,112,617
		16mm	-	1,812,960	928,271
		9.5mm	-	9,800	66,821
	subtotal		-	33,634,860	39,107,709
	Negative	35mm	-	2,517,000	3,785,118
		16mm	-	617,500	622,297
		9.5mm	-	20,000	112,547
		8mm	-	454,535	783,512

(*Continued*)

Table 13.6 (Continued)

	Year		1937	1938	1939
	subtotal		–	1,092,035	5,303,474
	Sound Negative	35mm	–	–	3,292,328
	Rev	16mm	–	–	123,951
Total		35mm	–	–	45,190,062
		16mm	–	–	1,674,519
		9.5mm	–	–	179,368
		8mm	–	–	783,512
Grand Total			17,377,342	38,364,795	47,827,462

Source: *Nippon Film Almanac* (Showa 16), (Daido Sha, 1941), 46–47.
Note: Although no production number is listed in 1937, in reality, each company produced 16mm products. Some obvious errors in the original documentation were corrected; other figures remain as in the original.

As the Japanese invasion to China began to escalate, moreover, a great deal of nitrocellulose supply began to be diverted to munitions, because nitrocellulose was used for explosives as well as for celluloid. As noted earlier, from as early as 1936 conferences for celluloid controls had been held under the auspices of the Monopoly Bureau, and the annual production and sale price for each manufacturer of celluloid was determined by an agreement: Daicel's production was agreed to occupy 64 percent of the total amount, for example. Thus, import reduction and production control would soon work as two sides of the same coin in a closely intertwined strategic movement because the Celluloid Control Company was formed in November 1941. Perhaps the summer of 1941 marked a turning point for this strategic movement of the celluloid industry—a change in the government's policy about the distribution of nitric acid jolted the entire movie world. Daicel's official story tells us:

> As for nitric acid, following a sudden change made to its distribution policy according to an order issued on July 29, 1941 under the Extraordinary Measure Bill on Trade Items, the supply of nitric acid [to Daicel] in August and September was ruled out by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. Although the Aboshi Factory had already requested the Second Army Arsenal to increase the amount of military nitrocellulose, there was no chance of rapid increase in amount because of worsening availability of raw material, [Daicel] was forced to reduce celluloid to about 200,000 kilograms of and nitrocellulose to about 40,000 kilograms.[26]

The immediate effect on Fuji of this July 29 notice of zero supply of nitric acid to Daicel was apparent: Fuji issued a report on August 1 claiming that it would no longer be capable of producing film. But this was only the beginning. On August 16, Ryuzo Kawazura, chief of Division Five of the Cabinet Information Bureau of the Home

Ministry, summoned leading figures of the movie world and gave a legendary bomb-shell notification:

> On an extraordinary war footing, every necessary material that could be used for munitions will no longer be available to the non-government sectors. Motion picture film is of course included, and this means that not a foot of film will be available. I trust that the motion picture industry will do their part in dealing with this circumstance.

 Because of this notification, the wartime restructuring of the industry into the so-called three-studios system would soon speed up: The feature film production structure, previously consisting of more than 10 big and small companies, was channeled into three big studios, Shochiku, Toho, and a newly integrated studio, Daiei. However, the real trigger of these changes was, in fact, the zero supply notice of nitric acid. Suketoshi Fuwa, working under Kawazura in the Cabinet Information Bureau and directly involved in making drafts of the 1939 Film Law, recalled that this decision was made because of the Imperial Navy's huge demands of nitric acid.[27]

It would be worthwhile to note, at this point, the situation regarding camphor. In 1940, the jurisdiction of the camphor trade was moved from the Monopoly Bureau to the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, and, thus, the raw material was controlled entirely by the Ministry. According to Fuwa, this transfer was probably a result of the Ministry's involvement in granting subsidies to the camphor industry. Therefore, in addition to nitric acid, camphor, another primary raw material for the film manufacturing business, also became unavailable. The photography industry, which also used nitrate roll film, was "stunned by the sudden halt in April 1940 of celluloid camphor supply, sixty percent of which was from import, forty percent domestic."[28] Following the advice of the Monopoly Bureau, Daicel launched a project for harvesting camphor in Nagasaki Prefecture, and furthermore, established a facility in the premises of its Sakai Factory for manufacturing phthalic anhydride as a substitute for camphor. The time had come to seek substitutes for raw film material. As for the supply of cellulose material, because of the prohibition of 100 percent domestic cotton textile manufacturing, torn pieces of cotton cloth collected from China were acquired for the purpose. In sum, this was a period, for the first time since the movie industry was born in Japan, when every section of the motion picture business was forced to adjust to the severe shortages and restrictions.

Enforced Increased Production
and Retrenchment

Although the aforementioned situation was a result of national strategy, Fuji's role became that of a tightrope walker negotiating its obligations to meet the demands of the entire film industry within the realities of its political constraints. The good old days

Table 13.7 Total Output of Celluloid Production, and Motion Picture Film Production Output of Fuji Photo Film during the War Years

Year	Celluloid Production Output	35mmB/W Positive Production Output
1940	100	100
1941	–	62.3
1942	42	69.5
1943	34	65.4
1944	29	26.7
1945	14	–

*Numbers are calculated by counting 1940 as 100.
Source: *Sixty Years History of Daicel Chemistry Industries* (Daicel Chemistry Industries, 1981), 46; *Reflections On Forty Years of Film Manufacturing* (Fuji Photo Film, 1975), 153.

when the industry could afford to reject domestic film, using complaints about durability as an excuse, were gone in the blink of an eye.

However, the unimaginable intensity of the decrease in celluloid productivity after the outbreak of war was all the more shocking (see Table 13.7 Total Output of Celluloid Production, and Motion Picture Film Production Output of Fuji Photo Film during the War Years). Faced with the reality, the industry would soon be more concerned with how to economize, than how to increase production of raw film.[29] Since December 1940 a quota system of raw film had been implemented by the Motion Picture Raw Film Control Counsel formed in the Cabinet Information Bureau. As for distribution, an integrated distribution company formed in 1942 reorganized every movie theater in the country into two groups—red and white, a system designed for the maximized use of the minimum amount of film material. A journal for exhibitors issued by this distribution company, *Eiga Haikyusha-ho* [Movie Distribution Company Report], would soon start campaigning for economizing raw film, often reporting projection accidents at the theaters all over Japan. By this time, domestic film was already at a minimum.

The flourishing of Japanese cinema in the late 1930s together with the rapid increase in the number of films produced went hand in hand with the process of manufacturing domestic motion picture film. Ironically, however, it was in the heyday of this process when factories were ordered to stop their operation. Although the industry would, sooner or later, have to confront this paradox from the perspective of mobilization of materials, it also indicated the instability of the Japanese movie industry in those days—in terms of materials, it was like a little ship just beginning its journey into rough seas. If we consider how the *kokusaku* [national policy] developed, as history tells us, the issue was primarily the political dynamics between the cinema and the nation. Domestic motion picture film, an earnest wish of the movie industry would persevere through the hard times, however, and before seeing the defeat of the war, the industry would enter a new era of the development of color film.

Notes

1. 35mm, black and white. The label on the product says "positive film."
2. Konishiroku, ed., *A Hundred Years of Photography,* 561. According to the information provided on p. 407, the film base for their nitrate and diacetate were imported from Dupont (USA) and Gevaert (Germany)
3. *Thirty-Year History of Dai Nippon Celluloid,* Dai Nippon Celluloid, Sakai, 1952, 18.
4. *The First 25 Years,* Fuji Photo Film, Tokyo, 1960, 12. The import market share around that time was "Eastman Kodak (US)—80%, Agfa (Germany)—15%, Gevaert (Belgium)—5%" (*Kinema Shuho* [Weekly], no. 214, October 12, 1934; 10); therefore, one can assume that imports from other companies were insignificant.
5. "Interview with Honorable members: 1) Mr. Kenjiro Takayanagi and Mr. Sakae Haruki," *Motion Picture and Television Engineering* no. 433 (September 1988), 66. Interviewer, Nobutada Yagi, recorded on November 25, 1987.
6. *The First 25 Years,* 66.
7. Ibid.
8. *Kinema Shuho,* no. 124, September 2, 1932, 8.
9. *Reflections on Forty Years of Film Manufacturing,* Fuji Photo Film, Tokyo, 1975, 33.
10. Ibid., 29.
11. *Thirty Years of Oriental Photo Industry,* Oriental Photo Industry, Tokyo, 1950, 169. It is interesting to note, however, that *Kinema Shuho* (no. 180, November 24, 1933) provides a different view on this event. The magazine seemed to regard the first appearance of domestic film, which was not manufactured by Daicel, as rather abrupt, stating "unexpectedly Oriental went ahead and made a test film of *Junjo no Miyako . . .*" (11).
12. *Thirty Years of Oriental Photo Industry,* Oriental Photo Industry, 1950, 168.
13. Ibid., 169.
14. *The First 25 Years,* 68.
15. *Kinema Jumpo,* no. 489 (November 1933), 15. A similar report is found in *Kinema Shuho* (November 10, 1933), n. 178.
16. There is no existing print of this film; however, a recording of a greeting delivered by Toyo Kichich introducing domestic Oriental motion picture film is said to exist.
17. *Showa 9 International Film Almanac,* Kokusai Eiga Tsushinsha, 1934, 12.
18. *Photography Industry in the Showa Era,* Nippon Shashin Kogyo Tsushinsha, 1989, 7.
19. *Showa 9 International Film Almanac,* 320.
20. To be more precise, it was when Asahi Shimbun had two different newsreels, *Asahi Universal Hassei News* and *Asahi Ufa Hassei News*; on July 1934 these two newsreels were integrated into *Asahi Sekai [World] News*.
21. *Reflections on Forty Years of Film Manufacturing,* 52.
22. *Photography Industry in the Showa Era,* 14.
23. "Interview with Honorable members: 1) Mr. Kenjiro Takayanagi and Mr. Sakae Haruki," *Motion Picture and Television Engineering,* 68.
24. Fuji Photo Film and Kunio Fukumoto, ed., *A Road to Energetic Diversification—Fuji Photo Film—Contemporary Corporate Histories,* Vol. 31, Fuji International Consultant Publishing, Tokyo, 1963, 158–159.
25. *Photography Industry in the Showa Era,* 14.
26. *Thirty-Year History of Dai Nippon Celluloid,* 179–180.

27. Suketoshi Fuwa, "Recollections of the Film Law," in *Lectures on Japanese Cinema 4: War and Japanese Cinema,* Iwanami Shoten, 1986.

28. *Photography Industry in the Showa Era,* 46.

29. For example, such attitudes were apparent in Nagamasa Kawakita's essay, "A Proposal Concerning Film Material," *Nippon Eiga,* March 1941, and Norimasa Kaeriyama's essay "War Time Policy on Film," *Nippon Eiga,* November 1941. On the other hand, Toka Kuwano refers to the wartime production system of Fuji in his essay, "Fundamental Solution of Raw Film Problem," *Nippon Eiga,* May 1943, but his discussions tend to be rather abstract.

SKETCHES OF SILENT FILM SOUND IN JAPAN: THEATRICAL FUNCTIONS OF BALLYHOO, ORCHESTRAS, AND *KABUKI* ENSEMBLES

SHUHEI HOSOKAWA

INTRODUCTION

To say that silent film has never been silent is a truism. The space in which silent film was presented in fact was flooded with intended and unintended sounds—music, sound effects, mechanical noise, the loud voices of "explainers" and barkers, the chatting of audience members, and other meaningful or incidental sounds. Among a variety of sound elements, the special importance of the "explainers" (*benshi*) is well known. They were more vocal performers than mere commentators and consequently became as important as the silent actors on the screen for understanding the narrative and sensorial experience of the audience. Some of them indeed turned to celebrities in showbiz. Like the stylized narration of explainer, the musical performance itself was but one part of the sound complex spectators experienced, though an aesthetically privileged one. Rick Altman's colossal *Silent Film Sound* (2004) is epoch making in the study of film sound (including music) in the silent era because it deals with the total contextualization of film sound, including the construction of space, the formation and transformation of the film industry, technological achievement, programming, the heterogeneous audience and their diverse expectations, and discourses in trade journalism, all of which

were tightly interconnected. As for the music, Altman's book sheds light not only on the composers and their scores but also on the musicians, publishers, recording companies, unions, instrument manufactures, and other actors involved in actual performance.

Taking Altman's viewpoints and methods as a point of departure, I will discuss Japanese silent film sound, pondering points of commonality as well as the localized specificity of cultural conditions wherein the sounds were produced and perceived. Generally speaking, what is common comes from the material and social conditions of film and its projection space and the knowledge and practices imported from abroad in association with relevant technical apparatuses, while the local characteristics are mainly related to the vernacular context of sonic representation, especially that of popular spectacle (in the case of film history, precinematographic entertainments). Consonance and dissonance between the imported (purportedly global or universal) and the vernacular could be said to characterize almost all facets of Japanese (and indeed non-Western, if we broaden the cultural map) modern civilization.

Throughout the first quarter of the twentieth century, cinema was regarded as a novelty everywhere. For the majority of Japanese at that time, novelties themselves were nearly synonymous with things Western. As is evident in everything from politicians' discourse to advertising of new products, the "Westernness" of novel things was emphasized in the people's imagination. Film and its accompanying (and accompanied) sounds were constitutive of this "modern = Western" complex. The brass band, the piano, the march, and other Western musical items used for silent film sound (including the phonograph itself) all had deeply modern connotations in Japan.

Scholars of the Japanese silent film have examined topics such as the mixture of aesthetics of vernacular theater with those of Hollywood drama, the popular narrative tradition in the art of the narrator or "explainer" (*benshi*), the formation of genres and the industry, the civilizing and "democratic" discourses in the newborn film press of Taisho and early Showa Japan, the control of spectatorship by the police and the industry itself, and the invention of new visual technology and its representational consequences. What follows in this paper is a sound-centric treatment of these topics.

Among the diverse sound practices associated with silent film in Japan, I will consider "noise making" by brass bands and some attempts at sound synchronization in the first decade of film, the birth of sound "accompaniment," the introduction of Japanese instruments and their use in combination with Western band instruments, the importance of orchestras in metropolitan music life of the 1920s, and various forms of tie-in with popular songs and the music industry. I will occasionally cite the American instances not because they were "standard" or universal phenomena to which the regional and national variants should be compared, but because they have been better studied than other cases. Moreover, in Japan not only the frequent translations and reports by readers of American film magazines but also the experience of returnees and travelers from the United States played a vital role in reproducing the American model locally, yet with prominent innovations. The elite class often disdained vernacular practices derived from popular theater. The discursive conflict between the art-oriented few and the entertainment-oriented masses characterized film journalism and industry in the

period under consideration here (Gerow 2010). We will look carefully at the feasibility of a balanced view of cultural continuity and discontinuity with existing forms of theater and spectacle, and the changing situation surrounding image, sound, the aesthetic, and technology.

"The Music Performed Uninterruptedly"

In 1897, Lumières' *cinématographe* was presented for the first time in Kyoto and an article notes in passing that "the music is performed uninterruptedly to the rear of the public."[1] This was the brass band that was hired by the film exhibitors to draw the attention of the passersby as well as to create an exciting atmosphere inside the theater. Since both the film and the brass band represented Western "advanced civilization" at the turn of the century, they had close affinity. The choice of a brass band for background sound was almost a natural one. But synchronicity with the moving image was not even considered, so the band's sound was similar to what Altman called "ballyhoo."

Such noise (and a barker) was part of the vernacular theatrical practice; the film exhibitor simply replaced the traditional *taiko* with the eye- and ear-catching brass band in order to advertise the latest scientific marvel of moving pictures. The brass band, established in Japan in the 1860s, was a sonic and visual symbol for Western civilization that gradually penetrated civilian life from elite society. From the early 1880s, the retired military band men organized civil bands to comply with increasing demand from the commercial sector—circuses, hotels, sports events, dance parties, and other modern, "Western-import" spaces and gatherings. The Sino-Japanese War (1894–1895) further encouraged the diffusion of bugle and drum sounds in commoners' lives. The bands were usually employed by embryonic publicity agencies that were responsible for the decorations and rental equipment of public events, such as temporary structures, electrical illumination, uniforms, national flags, fireworks, and Western-style tables and chairs.

The same Kyoto show received another review that said, "The place was decorated in the Western manner and Western music was sometimes played so that the public would not get bored."[2] For the writer, the style of interior decoration and the Western sounds were almost equivalent; the brass band in effect was sonic wallpaper for the publicity agency as well as for the audience. In this account the brass band "sometimes" (that is, not uninterruptedly) performed for the sake of the psychological comfort of the viewers. In other words, novel Western music was played because the exhibitor worried that the viewers' interest in the film would wane without sonic diversion. Due to lack of experience and knowledge, the majority of this early audience could not "appreciate" Western music as the more "cultivated" audience did later in the 1920s. The article also notes that the explainer gave an introductory explanation about the real-life film made abroad that

was to follow (without which no audience could understand the contents of the film) then rang a bell to announce the start. We do not know whether his voice overlapped with or alternated with the brass band sound or whether the bell cued the musicians. What is certain is a brass band played for both the passersby outside and the spectators inside at this stage in the history of film exhibition.

Brass bands were employed by the itinerant film exhibitors of the silent era. They were a joyful symbol for the new entertainment medium, as many recollections show. Komada Koyo, one of the best-known entrepreneurs and distributors of early cinema in Japan (and an employee of Hiromeya, Tokyo's largest publicity agency), made it his custom to organize a pompous parade from the local railroad station to the center of a town or its theater. This "bluffer"[3] himself played the role of conductor of the band wearing a top hat and swallowtails. The "band" usually consisted of ten to twelve members among whom only four or five really played the instruments while the rest ("dummies") did a kind of "air play," pretending to blow into the instruments and showing off the shining brass and pseudomilitary uniforms.[4] This parade was clearly a simulacrum of military march displays, which became frequent after the Sino-Japanese and Russo-Japanese Wars. The priority given to loudness and look over musical quality is obvious. Komada's film shows consisted of seven or eight shorts, and during the intervals he played in full recordings of popular *shamisen* tunes to make the whole exhibition substantially longer. Yet too few materials have survived for us to know more about the musical aspects of Komada's itinerant shows.

Early Attempts at Sound Accompaniment

In 1899 the earliest known attempt at sound synchronicity was made. It took place at the Kabukiza Theater, Tokyo, where the first films by Japanese cameramen were exhibited. These included films of geisha dancing, "accompanied" by a sixteen-piece group of *shamisen* performers and singers.[6] The show began with the images of Tokyo commercial areas followed by those of dancing, filmed in Tokyo and Kyoto. The bandleader Kineya Rokuzaemon the Sixteenth, a *nagauta* (*shamisen*-accompanied narrative song genre) master affiliated with Kabukiza, viewed a film made in Kyoto in advance and chose a piece that he believed adequate for the image. He probably guessed the original music from the choreography. The show was so acclaimed that it ran for two weeks in Kabukiza, the largest theater in Tokyo, and for a few weeks elsewhere.

Doubtlessly the film was projected while the music was performed, but we do not know if the image–sound synchronicity was successfully realized, given the difficulty of reproducing the musical performance of the original image. One contemporary report mentioned a failure of synchronization of a vocal performance that made the audience uncomfortable.[7] Yet the audience for the most part was untroubled by the gap between

the sound and image, entranced merely by the novel experience of watching moving pictures of popular dancing in coordination with live performance of familiar pieces. It was presumably more attractive for the general public than viewing imported (novel yet unfamiliar) images "decorated" arbitrarily by foreign sounds, as in previous exhibitions. The entire show obviously simulated the experience of strolling from Ginza (near Kabukiza) to Asakusa (near Yoshiwara, the largest pleasure precinct) and viewing the dance pieces, and the explainer Komada Koyo would function as a "tour guide" and a sort of MC (master of ceremonies). Such a "narrative" itself was captivating since earlier exhibitions had been programmed with images from overseas that could hardly evoke viewers' memories. The imported images were often intended for the educational purpose (at least at the official level). They would not have expected the perfect synchronicity that today's audience takes for granted. This trial shows how both audience and exhibitors perceived the "silence" to be filled in adequate ways.[8]

Another simulation spectacle was presented in 1900 with the *sumo* films, which are comparable to the boxing film shows in the West around the same period. According to Imada Kentaro's analysis,[9] the venue (Kinkikan, Tokyo) was decorated in the guise of a *sumo* arena. A real *taiko* was deployed for the announcement of the event and the explainer's imitations of the calls of wrestlers was followed by the recorded voice of a referee (*gyoji*) played on phonograph while the images of wrestling were projected. The yelling of the referee did not necessarily require a high degree of synchronicity with the movement of wrestlers but was only expected to increase the "reality" effect of the image. This might be the first "sound effect" in Japanese film history.

It is intriguing to ask why the weaker and less intelligible sound of a cylinder phonograph played the role of referee, rather than the explainer. I presume it is because mechanical sound reproduction, in the mind of exhibitors, could reinforce the novelty of visual reproduction. They were both cutting-edge technologies that subverted the irreversibility of time to make the past audible and visible.[10] Around that time the phonograph was a sensation in fairgrounds and other places of amusement where the customers donned earphones to listen to prerecorded sound or a recording made on site. People were fascinated by listening to vocal impersonators of popular actors and the singing geisha, among others. The *sumo* show is considered to be the first convergence of the histories of audio and visual reproduction systems in Japan.

As soon as the domestic narrative film was produced, sound simulation of the stage performance was contrived. At the projection of the first known Japanese narrative film, *Inazuma Goto* (Lightning Robbery, 1899), a clever bandman reportedly shot firecrackers and voiced the dialogue of actors.[11] A few years later a sound effect for hammering was used in the American film *Robinson Crusoe* and in Japan canon sounded inserted in the middle of the theatrical performance during a scene of newsreels of the Russo-Japanese War.[12]

Such realistic sound effects were imported in the late nineteenth century as part of the techniques of Western theater. Vernacular theater traditions had no such "sound effects" as those developed in Europe. *Kabuki,* the most popular theatrical form in Meiji, has a group of instrumentalists (principally *shamisen* players) and percussionists behind

the curtain (in a chamber called *geza*), who are in charge of the basic sound design. (Sometimes they are visible from the audience seats.) The *geza* sound is highly codified to represent things such as the season, the place, the weather, and the mental state of characters. This sort of codification is far from realism: for example, in *kabuki* a storm is represented by a certain pattern of *taiko* drums and a pair of wooden clappers, but aurally this does not resemble the natural sound of a storm. A sword fighting scene is accompanied not by metallic noise, but by the wooden clappers sounding patterns that are asynchronous to the ballet-like movements of the actors, who never physically touch one another. Realistic sound effects were first developed in the "new theater" (*shingeki*) movement inspired by the impact of European modern theater. Yet they rarely entered the silent film cinema.

Use of voice behind the backdrop was a device that had been more or less established in *kabuki* performance practice. Many early films were semireproductions of popular acts of *kabuki,* filmed from the still viewpoint of a spectator, sometimes with "dubbers" (*kowairo*) hired to simulate the experience of being in a theater.[13] Since the vocal imitation of popular actors was already recognized as a performance genre in *yose* (vaudeville), these "dubbed" projections were easily accessible and attractive to the audience. The use of sound effects and voices behind the screen were doubtless the first devices to give a realistic effect to the moving image. However, they were short lived, not only because of budgetary problems but also due to the establishment of a new mode of realism in the perception of film audiences, which was different from that of the theater. Instead of simulating the theatrical sense system (hearing actors' voices and codified or "real" sound effects), film exhibition began to deploy an explainer and a musical band of Western instruments (adding instruments of *kabuki* ensembles for domestic films) as a standard format around the 1910s.

Ideals of Musical Accompaniment as Conceptualized in 1910

No contemporary text describes the musical ideal of early film more clearly than the Osaka explainer Eda Fushiki's article.[14] Eda seems to me the first who understood the importance of music accompaniment, discussing the necessity of "matching the music with the image." In his ideal formula, the band starts playing about thirty minutes before the show (upon the public's entrance to the theater). They play a march or something similarly rousing when the explainer enters. After his general comments, a whistle is blown from the projection booth and the lights go off. Then the film starts. The explainer/narrator rings a bell from his podium on the side of the stage to cue the band in the pit. In the event of mechanical trouble, the explainer should switch the lights on to release the audience while interrupting the music. If it is likely to take long to resolve the trouble, he lets the band play their favorite pieces, Western or Japanese, lest the audience

get bored. For the musicians, it is a highlighted moment when they can show their real musicianship. The exit of the audience is to be accompanied by cheerful music.

In Eda's article, by matching the music to the tempo, the emotional and narrative characteristics of the scene are especially underlined. For example, waltzes are good for sentimental or tragic scenes, while lancers, cotillion, quadrilles, and schottish are suitable for comedies and fantasy films, and gallops are for chase scenes. These dance forms were frequently played in the ballroom dance parties that had been enjoyed by the Westernized elite since the 1880s. (Rokumeikan's ball was of course the most famous of such events.) They were expected to arouse certain types of mood among the audience, few of whom had any actual experience of dancing to such music. With the change of location of performance, the music changed its purpose and nature from sound to which bodies moved in coordination, to an aural object for listening to while seated. National anthems could sonically represent scenes of official ceremonies in the imported films, while battle scenes needed bugle calls, firecrackers, and sound effects to represent the discharge of canons, as well as other noises made behind the screen. In each instance the band should play the relevant fragments repeatedly.

Eda curiously mentions that in pleasant travel scenes the travelers should be escorted by a well-known broadside ballad (*shoseibushi*) titled "Travel around the World" (1920). This example is interesting because it uses an association of the lyric content with narrative characteristics. Such a verbal play was part of *kabuki* routines. He also remarks that the brass band could have a break only when Japanese drama films were shown because the traditional accompaniment would replace it. Put differently, the two different bands—a brass band and a *kabuki* band—were ideally employed separately. It is still far from certain whether this two-band system was established in the 1900s; one does not know to what degree Eda's idea was put into practice during the period when no standard method of accompaniment was established. To my mind, Eda only noted the terms of ideal practice taken from the imported cinema journals, mixing them with his own ideas, to edify the exhibitors and the musicians. (After all, the article was published in a trade journal.) However, what is clear is that the required levels of musicianship and the principles of accompaniment had changed strikingly from the previous ones of uninterrupted sound making.

Soon after Eda published this article, the Japanese cinema industry began standardizing its exhibition system. The aural "gap" was to be filled with one explainer and one band (a Western or a mixed Japanese–Western ensemble). The voice dubbers, the brass band, and the *kabuki* band soon disappeared from the spectacle (albeit with some regional time lag in the process).

THE CINEMA PALACE AS A CONCERT HALL

In Japanese cultural history, the silent era roughly corresponded to a period of formation of an urban middle class with an interest in the new ideas of "individualism" (Natsume

Soseki) and "democracy", and an aptitude for consumption. One of their new aspirations was knowledge and appreciation of Western music. It was during the first decade of the twentieth century that the audience for concert music was first formed. Unlike people of the preceding decades, for whom Western music had been solely educational, ceremonial, social, or pragmatic, the new middle class started paying to consume Western music, going to concerts and opera, learning singing and instrumental performance at school, buying instruments and records, reading magazines, and giving music lessons to children, among other actions. Some Taisho "cinemaniacs" (*aikatsuka*) hence wished for the cinema to become, so to speak, a people's concert hall. In a manner similar to developments in the American counterpart, intermission music was expected to "democratize" the genre of concert music. In 1923 Gonda Yasunosuke, a staff researcher of the Division of Popular Education of Tokyo City and one of the earliest theoreticians of popular culture, appraised intermission music as the "origin of people's music."[15]

A step toward achievement of this ideal was the inclusion of nonbrass instruments in the band. The "uninterrupted" background sound was replaced with a more elaborate use of music to be called "accompaniment." By the late 1900s, apparently, the violin joined in and a few years later some large metropolitan theaters specializing in Western cinema started to compete with one another in terms of the musical quality of their eight- to twelve-piece "orchestras."

Since the end of nineteenth century, the violin, mainly due to the manufacturing of cheap domestic products, had become so popular among Japanese youth that in the streets some students supposedly showed off by carrying the case alone, without the instrument inside. Even the broadside balladeer (*enkashi*) took it up around 1910, inspired by the new cinema music. The violin was usually associated with femininity and sometimes charged with an excess of sentimentality. How this association was formed is hard to tell; while the discursive influence of intellectuals traveling abroad or reading Western books should not be underestimated, the violin was also a popular instrument among middle-class schoolgirls. This perceptual association probably figured in its use to accompanying scenes less suitable for the brass sound. The gradual stylistic diversification of imported and domestic feature films might correspond to the growing variety of instrumentation, as well as increased knowledge and expectations about music during the 1910s (although admittedly relatively few viewers were demanding about the musical accompaniment).

In the early 1910s, the musical life of Tokyo's aspiring middle class was increasingly Westernized by the free Sunday concerts at Hibiya Park given by military bands (since 1905), the tours of British operetta troupes, various concerts by European and Japanese musicians, performances of local opera–operetta troupes, and by "record concerts." Music journalism laid discursive foundations for this new tendency, as highlighted in a few new magazines that dealt almost exclusively with Western music. Some theaters became specialized in Western cinema and employed a six- to twelve-piece band consisting of piano, violin, trumpet, clarinet, trombone, percussion, and assorted other instruments. The musicians generally had learned their instruments at music school and military band (although some were self-taught). It is important to note that the film theaters were one

of the first regular performing sites for non-brass instrumentalists. The instrumentation was more or less compatible with the band formats in commercial public ballrooms (the first of which was established in 1920 in Yokohama) and in "Asakusa Opera." The latter genre was born in 1916 in Asakusa, the theater district of Tokyo, and was, despite its name, a mixture of opera, operetta, and dance that captivated modern-oriented youth such as the future novelist and film scenario writer Tanizaki Jun'ichiro.

There are few testimonies about how the musicians in movie theaters were recruited, how they estimated the job, and what and how they played. Probably the sheet music for accompanying a given film, as well as the information in imported magazines, gave them certain initial suggestions. The growth of interest in music among the "cinemaniacs" can be gleaned from Nakano Jiro's serial article titled "Motion Picture and Music" (1916–1917) in *Kinema Rekodo,* the first film periodical in Japan. He was a close reader of American magazines and remarked on the importance of matching the music with the narrative and the relative success and failure of each band he attended. Sometimes he quoted the list of music corresponding to scenes (cue sheets) from imported magazines, in the expectation that the bandleaders would read it. For him the American way was exemplary. He suggested that bandleaders (at least in the principal theaters) should consult the latest imported magazines and/or music lists he had quoted. If a certain list was not available, they had best choose the appropriate pieces from the broader stock to play for each scene. The more that stock was enlarged, the easier the job of selection became because the types of scene were not too numerous and the audience was rarely demanding. The case of accompaniment for Japanese films was not considered in Nakano's article, however, and this was typical for the readership of the Western film–oriented *Kinema Rekodo*.

The musicians' subjugation to the explainer's narration was a crucial condition for Japanese silent film sound. One explainer, according to the director Inagaki Hiroshi, had the musicians play his favorite melody, Schumann's "Träumerei," regardless of the content of scenes.[16] In that case, the music was played for the sake of the explainer rather than to enhance the narrative and image, and his fans probably cared more about his emotional performance than the narrative matching the image and the music. This may be an extreme case but it tells us how the music was peripheral for the perception of audiences. Nakano's approach was completely exceptional.

In the Western movie palaces, which attracted the urbane middle class, the "orchestra" played the overture at the entrance of the explainer and the intermission music.[17] The overtures performed included marches by John Philip Sousa, Franz Suppé, and John Stepan Zamecnik, all of which were routinely performed in other countries. The only exception known was one "Konparu March," composed by the trumpeter Hatano Fukutaro, bandleader at Konparuza (in Ginza, Tokyo), which became a recognizable "theme" tune for that theater and its band. Hatano was the first Japanese bandleader who played aboard the Pacific liner that traveled the Yokohama–San Francisco route in 1912. Being familiar with American popular music and purchasing a large quantity of sheet music there, he and his band played in hotels, dance halls, and movie theaters. At Komparuza he invented the term "descriptive music" (*keiyo ongaku*) for the way in

which he linked the music more directly with the image, for example by imitating the sound of kissing with the violin, playing a Japanese boatman's song for boat scenes, and so on. His performance won a great reputation among filmgoers.[18] In the United States, the use (or abuse) of similar gimmicks by the Nickelodeon pianists sometimes drew the criticism of engaged authors for its vulgarity.[19] At Konparuza, it is said, the percussionist rendered battle sounds for *kabuki* scenes by playing some of the characteristic percussion patterns for war scenes from Western films. The audience must understand Hatano's playful "translation." I have not met with criticism to Hatano's performance yet, and his music was recollected affectionately in the talkie era.

The orchestras in those palaces also presented the intermission music. In the post-Earthquake (1923) period this became very important, as is evident in advertisements in which the name of a conductor and the titles of pieces to be played were featured next to the title of the feature film and the explainer. Newsletters such as *Musashino Shuho* (of Musashinokan in Shinjuku, Tokyo) and *Odewonza Weekly* (of Odewonza, in Yokohama) had columns solely on the music played in the intermission. It usually took ten to fifteen minutes and the repertoire was taken from the overtures of opera and operetta, marches, waltzes and other dance melodies, arrangements of symphonic music, and so on (e.g., "Carmen," "La Paloma," "Orphée d'Enfer," and "Humoresque"). Usually the program changed weekly and some spectators went mainly to listen to these miniconcerts.[20] However, one demanding fan, reading the American magazine zealously, criticized the overly ambitious programming unmatched by the level of musicianship.[21] Such high hopes for hearing "good music" among avid spectators and musicians is understandable because the large movie theaters were at that time the only places where well-trained ensembles played Western music daily, even in Tokyo. (It was not until 1926 that Japan's first full-time symphonic orchestra was organized.)

Syncretic Music for *Jidaigeki*

While Western music was played for Western cinema, another type of music was invented for *jidaigeki* films ("period dramas" set in the Edo Period, typically featuring sword play). It was an ensemble of Western instruments, *shamisen,* and various kinds of percussion (among them small *taiko* drums and bell-like *kane*) used in the *kabuki* theater. Generally called *wayo gasso* (literally "a Japanese and Western ensemble"), it spread rapidly in the early 1910s. The size and specific instrumentation differed case-by-case, but the purpose of this ensemble was to be as flexible as possible to comply with the demands of different genres and theaters.

This mixed instrumentation was something new in Japanese music history. The probable reason it had not already occurred is that the high-culture connotation of Western instruments was incompatible with the vulgar image of *shamisen,* tied as it was to the red light districts and their bawdy songs. The *shamisen,* for Meiji Western-oriented intellectuals and bureaucrats, represented the uncivilized sound of old Japan.

How cinema musicians learned to play with the moving picture is hard to tell. The collaboration between traditional instrumentalists and Western ones, I imagine, could hardly have started smoothly because of their different modes of musicianship. The former were trained orally, aurally, and mimetically on the spot by the more experienced, while the latter usually learned their instrument in institutions such as military bands and music schools, so for them notation and teachers were almost indispensable. (There were, however, lots of teach yourself booklets for instrumental beginners in circulation.) No improvisation was possible until the end of the 1920s, by which time the dance music (i.e., jazz) scene had gradually matured. Like the piano in the popular theaters of Europe and North America, *shamisen* was multifunctional in traditional theater and entertainment; it could play solo, accompany ditties and/or create the mood of a scene by the established musical codes of the theater traditions. The professional *kabuki* musicians had to be versatile and flexible, so they may have been faster to become accustomed to cinema than Western instrumentalists who had little experience of performing with stage action.

Despite its innovative musical practices and nationwide prevalence, the *jidaigeki* accompaniment was hardly remarked upon by contemporaries. One of the reasons for that was the dominance of Western-focused aficionados in nascent film journalism. They were predominantly middle- and upper-middle-class youth, intellectuals, and artists, who regarded film as an innovative and democratic form of "universal" (Western-based) art and technology. They rejected *wayo gasso* much as they did the explainers as mere vulgar and regressive factors impeding the progress of modern art.

THE CUE SHEET BOOK FOR *JIDAIGEKI*

Despite a lack of written materials, the practice of *jidaigeki* accompaniment can be partially inferred from a kind of cue sheet book that was published in the late 1920s, a time when there was an explosion of sheet music publication in Japan in correlation with rapid growth of the publication business in general. In the new media climate of electrical recording, radio, journalism, publicity, and cinema, the sales of popular song records jumped and sheet music was published not only for amateur musicians and singers but also for listeners seeking visual anchor of their favorite melodies and singers (the sheet music covers were often illustrated by popular/commercial artists such as Takehisa Yumeji). The publication of cue sheet books for *jidaigeki,* stimulated by this new trend in the publishing world, was one aspect of the upscaled music industry.

For example, the first of the four-volume set, *Eiga Banso Kyokushu* (pieces for film accompaniment), edited by the Eiga Ongaku Kenkyûkai (literally, "Group for the Study of Film Music," about which nothing is known), and published by Shinfoni Gakufu (literally, "Symphony Music Publisher") in 1929, includes forty-seven pieces considered appropriate for *jidaigeki* films. Each piece has a brief comment on how to use it.

Many of the pieces selected were regarded as fitting for the squash back (*chanbara*) scenes. For instance, "Dojoji" (the temple famous for its tragiromantic legend; a *nagauta* piece) is described as being good for "scenes in which the fight is gradually escalated and finally becomes a war-like situation." "Ukina" (flirting gossip), by contrast, is appropriate for "scenes of fighting at night" and should be played "with [a sense of] terror." Other pieces for the sword fight include "Hayazen Zukushi" (warning bells; which was good for "scenes of fighting with a comical touch") and "Hitotsugane" (one bell; for "scenes of a big fight by a very small number of people"). Because the fight scenes are usually the climax of *jidaigeki* films and the music was expected to intensify the tension, they are classified more minutely than other types of scene.

Several pieces use verbal associations inherent in titles and lyrics. For example, "Ishidan" (stone steps) is effective for "scenes of a big fight on the stone steps of shrines and other places," while "Oimatsu" (old pine tree) can be played for "scenes of romantic conversation between a man and a woman in quiet gardens and the like." Two popular tunes, "Oki no Ofune" (a big ship offshore) and "Seigaiha" (blue ocean wave) are selected for "scenes on a boat or a marine journey." These instances show how the audience was expected to know the original pieces that were regularly used by *kabuki* musicians. "Genroku Hanami Odori" (cherry blossom–viewing dance in the merry Genroku Era of the late seventeenth century) was a standard tune for scenes of luxuriant cherry blossom–viewing parties both in *kabuki* and cinema. The comment about this tune said that it was also good to play in the intermission. Curiously, one foreign number is included: "Mysterioso," an oft-used incidental tune from American cue sheet books.[22] It is described as apt for "scenes of sneaking into a house and those with a quiet yet frightening atmosphere." The tune's signification in the Western cinema in this case was faithfully adopted to the *jidaigeki* aesthetic; no difference from its use in the Western movies can be identified. This tune literally "sneaked into" the world of Japanese film sound. Therefore syncretism took place not only in the instrumentation but also in the repertoire, and consequently even working-class viewers of *jidaigeki* were occasionally exposed to nonvernacular music.

There was also a series of music books designed for particular films. Published by the Mohan Gakufu Shuppan, there were at least four such books edited for individual titles. One of them was published in 1927 for the preceding year's blockbuster *chanbara* film trilogy, *Shura Hakko,* based on a bestseller novel about treasure robbery in the Edo Period. This volume contains five pieces that are denoted by the titles of scenes such as "A Sad Romance of the Street Singer Okoma," "Suicide by the Sword in a Thundering Storm after a Prayer," and "Rapid Palanquin along the Senbon Matsubara Road." Each piece is edited in a facing page format lest the musicians needed to turn the pages while performing. Yet, who needed such a publication? Even if *Shura Hakko* was highly popular, the number of its showings could not have been large enough for the publisher to sell large quantities of the notation. It is likely that only novices on Western instruments needed it. So how could it have been profitable enough?

I assume that these cue sheet books were used by amateur musicians rather than the cinema professionals. According to an advertisement, this sheet music series, edited by

the explainer Hirayama Shiho and published by Ongaku Shohosha,[23] had numerical notation (that is to say, 1 for do, 2 for re, and so on) for the bass harmonica and the tunings of the *shamisen*. How Hirayama himself contributed to the music book is unclear. The ad's copy said that "the arrangement is as accurate as ones used in the movie theaters. [Good for] the violin, mandolin, or harmonica." Amateur practitioners of Western instruments therefore could "replay" at home, with or without *shamisen*-playing companions, the tunes they were familiar with from the cinema. The majority of the titles are for *shamisen* ditties and the kabuki *geza* repertoire that had hardly been notated. Similar notations were published in abundance, according to the collector Misono Kyohei.[24] Part of the *kabuki* repertoire was thus smoothly transferred to cinema by means of a form of Western notation.

Kouta Eiga: Popular Song and Film

In Japan, early adaptations of European drama (among which Shakespeare, Ibsen, and Strindberg were prominent), which were generally called *shingeki* (new theater) flourished after the turn of the century. The movement in turn began to be popularized with the emergence of singing roles in a 1914 production of Geijutsuza, *Fukkatsu,* an adaptation of Tolstoy's novel, *Resurrection*. An incidental song nicknamed "Kachusha no Uta" (Katusha's Song), as interpreted by the powerful actress Matsui Sumako, became an unprecedented hit. The drama was immediately filmed by Nikkatsu male actors. The film, according to Tanaka Jun'ichiro,[25] had an onscreen insertion of the lyrics, and in some special presentations a female singer accompanied the projection. In 1917 the same *shingeki* troupe made another success with Tolstoy's *Ikeru Shikabane* (the living corpse), a production in which Matsui's singing was crucial. Its immediate filmic adaptation, shown at Yurakukan in Asakusa, featured live performances by the singer Kagawa Shizue. At that time Kagawa was active in the Asakusa Opera, so her appearance at this theater was not novel. She was, so to speak, a vocal impersonator of Matsui.

It is not until the Kanto Earthquake (1923) that the addition of a live singer became faddish. The boom came with Ikeda Yoshinobu's *Karesusuki* (Withered Grass, 1924) and its incidental song, "Sendo Kouta" (Boatman Ditty), which in turn was nicknamed "Karesusuki." This song became extremely popular after the earthquake, to the extent that some blamed this decadent song for the catastrophe. The lyrics, matching perfectly with the gloomy *zeitgeist,* depict a despairing couple who can find no place to be together other than the "other world." The film about this ill-fated couple, completed hastily in just four days, was a long-run success.

The peak of *kouta eiga* was *Kago no Tori* (A Bird in a Cage), which was released in 1924. The original song dealt with a fatal romance between a penniless student and a woman in the pleasure district. It was recorded by several artists, and its commercial success bore the sequel films with the same song and other song-based films. With these follow-ups the term *kouta eiga* (popular song film) was coined. The storyline vaguely

alludes to the song's lyrics. The lyrics are usually shown either in the intertitles or over-lapping with the scenes themselves. The stories are predominantly about sentimental romance set in contemporary Japan.[26] While the intermission music functioned as a point of contact with concert music, the *kouta eiga* did the same for new popular songs. A journalist in a 1924 newspaper wrote as follows about the sensation of female singers performing in the cinema:

> Teikine, Nikkatsu and Shôchiku are competing with each other to successively release films based on popular songs like *A Bird in the Cage, New Bird in the Cage,* and *Collected Ditties*. It is said they are so popular that all the theaters are full everyday. Of course the audience goes to see them because they love the lyrics of the songs and because they are curious to know how their favorite ditties are made into films and how they are sung. What's more, they are pleasurably intrigued by the dim silhouette of woman visible in a beam from the screen, and the sugary soprano voice that emerges from it. (*Yomiuri Shinbun,* October 18)

The singers sang while standing beside the screen, so that they were visible to the audience. A week later, the same columnist ironically annotated his comments on the charm of female vocals, writing more explicitly,

> They [female singers] sing in public, though on the dark stage. Their voice, spreading through the pale beam of light, is poured into the ears of foolish spectators. Dr. [Havelock] Ellis, it is said, wrote in his paper that "Music is powerful in provoking people's sexual sensations." Since our cinema viewers do not listen simply to the music but to the live voice of a soprano singing a hymn of love and romance, they may hear illusionary whispering while lying distractedly at home, and in the end write a love letter to that singer. (October 24)

Quoting words attributed to the widely read sexologist, the author humorously points out the danger of a seductive voice produced by a woman in dim lighting. The audiences, according to this columnist in a subsequent piece, finally reached a kind of boiling point when they started to "make a loud noise in chorus." Consequently the police sought to ban the *mise en film* of popular song and female singers in the cinema, claiming that "the chorus of decadent and self-despairing song is not good for children's education nor the general morals [of society]" (*Yomiuri Shinbun* and *Hochi Shinbun,* November 9). The "erotic" vocals made the public go crazy, it was said. Apparently audience behavior came closer to that of their counterparts in the music halls, cabarets, or vaudeville shows in the West. In retrospect, however, the prohibition of the female singers was part of the gradual establishment of control by the police and by the collaborative show business figures of not only the contents of film but also the conditions of its projection. The production companies tried to minimize the technical and perceptual deviations between sessions in order to regulate the spectacle.[27] So the singing spectators as well as the enchanting singers soon disappeared. The audience finally became silent "viewers."

The phonograph was an easy ersatz for the singer. The use of a phonograph is evident in *Sutoton Bushi* (1924), one of a few surviving *kouta eiga*. It is based on a

novelty hit of the same title ("sutoton" is an upbeat phrase made up of nonsense syllables). This short film (only about 15 minutes long) starts with a close-up of the rotating disc on a turntable that turns out to be positioned in a café in the second shot. Opening with the signature song would become part of the grammar of movie "theme songs" in subsequent decades. The film thus exploited the impact of popular song in its first moments. The lyrics are overlaid on the screen and the timing is broadly synchronized with the recording. To visualize the narrative flow effectively, the lyrics of second and third strophes appear with the rotating disc later in the film, like two punctuation points in a story. Thus the image determines the timing for the theater staff to play the disc (note that no perfect synchronization with the movement of lips, body, and other objects in the image was required because the reproduced music functioned as background—only the first strophe is diegetic, the rest are nondiegetic—sound). Although we do not know whether the band played in other scenes, the live instrumental performance must have been secondary to the use of recorded song. The plot of the film, a married working-class man longing for a female server, who is also married, derives from the lyrics, yet its concrete setting was almost entirely invented by the scenario writer.

The predominance of the phonograph in the cinema at this time was not only a direct consequence of the ban on female singers but also reflected the growing significance of recording in the music industry. The years 1927–1928 were a great divide in the history of the Japanese music industry because of the establishment of major multinational labels such as Japan Victor, Japan Columbia, and Japan Polydor. The investment of foreign capital in the Japanese market was part of the global process of enlargement and reformation of the music industry that followed from inventions such as radio, electrical recording, and "talkies." The centrality of sound and image technology was one of the most outstanding features of the new era. Instead of recording preexisting pieces, the record companies began taking the initiative to produce new songs under their exclusive copyright, which they could sell strategically, exploiting various forms of media "tie-in."

When a new song became a hit, several film companies immediately adapted it in a movie. They were hastily released to exploit the transient popularity of song. The plots were invented from the melodramatic lyrics. To make matters worse, song scenes (using the phonograph) were inserted in absurd sequences, which rendered the narrative tempo ineffectively slow. For proponents of Western film in the magazine *Kinema Junpo,* the *kouta eiga* represented a low-quality genre that relied upon a new mode of song production and consumption.

In the history of Japanese popular song, Nakayama Shinpei's "Tokyo Koshinkyoku" (Tokyo March, 1929) is always cited as a turning point. It is said that the disc sold 400,000 units, a truly surprising figure. This song, or more precisely the following song complex, was also epoch making in the history of media tie-ins: the beginning was the bestseller writer Kikuchi Kan's serial novel published in *Kingu* (King), the largest monthly magazine in prewar Japan, which was followed up by a Victor record and Nikkatsu film even before the novel was finished. Nikkatsu obtained the exclusive right

for film adaptation that prohibited its competitors from producing other versions. This reflected a growing copyright business encouraged mostly by foreign capitalization.

It was none other than Mizoguchi Kenji who directed *Tokyo March*. It opens with a pan shot of Ginza, Marunouchi, and Shinjuku overlapped with the lyrics celebrating these three metropolitan centers strophe by strophe. This literal visualization of sung spaces is followed by the main plot of a romance between a working-class girl and a bourgeois boy, who have the same father but different mothers. We do not know how the phonograph and orchestra were coordinated in the subsequent scenes.

After the commercial success of *Tokyo March,* production of a special song became common as an effective and lucrative means for publicizing a film, to the extent that the film distribution companies commissioned Japan-made "theme songs" for Western films, in the expectation that the songs would be played as a form of "plugging" in the intermission as well as in public spaces (e.g., Alain Crossland's *When a Man Loves,* Frank Borzage's *Bad Girl,* and Steinberg-Dietrich's *The Dishonored*). The term *kouta eiga* itself gradually fell into disuse, while "theme song" (*shudaika*) entered with the talkie era and is still current in today's blockbuster films and TV dramas.

Conclusion

These observations on silent film sound in Japan disclose both points of commonality with worldwide practices and points of distinctively localized practice. This sounds somehow banal yet inevitable, given the close and multilayered "association"[28] in audio-visual technology, production and exhibition, discourse, and industry that had existed on a global scale since the late nineteenth century. What was common, on the one hand, included ballyhoo, the cue sheet method, and an ever-intensifying connection with the music industry.

On the other hand, silent film sound was conditioned by vernacular music and theater traditions, most perceptibly and conspicuously in the oral performance of explainers and the syncretic ensemble and repertoire played to accompany *jidaigeki*. Another determining factor for Japan's silent film sound was a relatively limited diffusion of Western music in the public space. The piano was provided only in first-class theaters and there was no importation of electric organs, which were a versatile sound maker in American cinema of the 1920s. The scarcity of orchestral music in contemporary Japanese society helped increase the musical importance attached to cinema orchestras (especially as providers of intermission music) among the newly emerged public for Western music. In this way, the role of "educating" the film viewers' ears through "good music" (read "Western art music") was probably taken more seriously than it was at that time in the West. All in all, the case of silent film sound is only one instance of how vernacular appropriation as well as flexible adaptation and reinterpretation of Western culture occurred as a basic strategy of cultural producers and consumers in modern Japan.

Notes

1. Raidai, "Shinematogurafu wo Miru," 33.
2. *Kyoto Hinode Shinbun,* March 4, 1897.
3. Misono, *Katsuben Jidai,* 15.
4. Tanaka, *Nihon Eiga Hattatsushi I,* 96; Noma, *Zusetsu Fukuokaken Eigashi Hakkutsu,* 11.
5. Misono, *Katsuben Jidai,* 15.
6. Yoshiyama, *Nihon Eiga-kai Jibutsu Kigen,* 15–17, 87–88; Tanaka, *Nihon Eiga Hattatsushi I,* 74.
7. Imada, "Musei Eiga no Oto," 33–53.
8. Imada, "Katsudo Shashin Kogyo to Sono Shicho Taiken no Shoso," 22–24.
9. Sterne, *The Audible Past: Cultural Origins of Sound Reproduction.*
10. Yoshiyama, *Nihon Eiga-kai Jibutsu Kigen,* 85.
11. Imada, "Katsudo Shashin Kogyo to Sono Shicho Taiken no Shoso," 26.
12. Tanaka, *Nihon Eiga Hattatsushi I,* 160.
13. Eda, "Katsudo Eiga Eishaho (2) Ongakutai," 6; "Katsudo Eiga Eishaho (3) Hayashi, Serifu," 7–8. See Gerow, *Visions of Japanese Modernity: Articulations of Cinema, Nation, and Spectatorship, 1895–1925,* 142.
14. Gonda, *Gonda Yasunosuke Chosakushu,* 74–75; see also Gerow, ibid., chapter 2.
15. Inagaki, *Nihon Eiga no Wakaki Hibi,* 226.
16. To compare the American case, see Altman, ibid., 310.
17. *Kinema Junpo,* June 11, 1920, 9.
18. Altman, ibid., 220f.
19. Saito, "Yokohama Ongaku Katsudoshi no Kenkyu. Taishoki no Taishu Ongaku," 63–98.
20. *Kinema Junpo,* April 11, 1920, 9.
21. Altman, ibid., 358.
22. *Gekkan Gakufu,* June 1927, n.p.
23. Misono, *Katsuben Jidai,* 94.
24. Tanaka, ibid., 220.
25. Sasagawa, "Kouta Eiga ni Kansuru Kisochosa," 175–196.
26. See Gerow, ibid., chapter 4.
27. Silverberg, "Remembering Pearl Harbor, Forgetting Charlie Chaplin, and the Case of the Disappearing Western Woman: A Picture Story," 250f.

Bibliography

Altman, Rick. *Silent Film Sound.* New York: Columbia University Press, 2004.

Eda, Fushiki. *"Katsudo Eiga Eishaho (2) Ongakutai"* [How to Project the Motion Picture (2) Musical Band], *Katsudo Shashinkai* 7 (1910): 6.

Eda, Fushiki. *"Katsudo Eiga Eishaho (3) Hayashi, Serifu"* [How to Project the Motion Picture (3) Sound Effects and Dialogue], *Katsudo Shashinkai* 8 (1910a): 7–8.

Gerow, Aaron. *Visions of Japanese Modernity: Articulations of Cinema, Nation, and Spectatorship, 1895–1925.* Berkeley, University of California Press, 2010.

Gonda Yasunosuke. *Gonda Yasunosuke Chosakushu* [Works of Gonda Yasunosuke], vol. 4. Tokyo: Bunwa Shobo, 1975.

Imada, Kentaro. *"Musei Eiga no Oto"* [The Sound of Silent Movies], *Toyo Ongaku Kenkyu* 65 (1999): 33–53.

Imada, Kentaro, *"Katsudo Shashin Kogyo to Sono Shicho Taiken no Shoso" [Exhibition of the Motion Picture and the Aspects of Its Audiovisual Experience]*, *Filokalia* 21(2004): 15–34.

Imada, Kentaro, "Kabuki no Kagebayashi to Musei Eiga no Banso Ongaku wo Hikakusuru" [Comparing the Background Music of *Kabuki* and the Accompaniment Music of Silent Movies]. In *Kindai Nihon ni Okeru Ongaku Geino no Saikento* [Rethinking Music and Performing Arts in Modern Japan], 57–67, ed. Goto Shizuo (Kyoto: Kyoto Municipal Art University, 2010).

Inagaki, Hiroshi. *Nihon Eiga no Wakaki Hibi* [The Early Days of Japanese Cinema]. Tokyo: Chuo Koronsha, 1983 [1978].

Misono, Kyohei. *Katsuben Jidai [The Age of Film Explainers]*. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1990.

Nakano, Jiro, *"Katsudo Shashin to Ongaku" [Motion Pictures and Music]*, *Kinema Rekodo*, 33–47 (March 1916 to May 1917).

Noma, Yoshihiro. *Zusetsu Fukuokaken Eigashi Hakkutsu [Illustrated History of Cinema in Fukuoka Prefecture]*. Tokyo: Kokusho Kankokai, 1984.

Raidai, Kamezo, *"Shinematogurafu wo Miru" [Watching Cinematograph]*, *Shonen Kurabu*, 1.6 (June 1897): 33.

Saito, Ryu, *"Yokohama Ongaku Katsudoshi no Kenkyu. Taishoki no Taishu Ongaku" [A Historical Study on the Music Activities in Yokohama: Popular Music in Taisho Era]*, *Tsurumi Daigaku Kiyo*, 24 (1987): 63–98.

Sasagawa, Keiko, *"Kouta Eiga ni Kansuru Kisochosa" [Basic Research on Kouta Eiga]*, *Engeki Kenkyu Senta Kiyo* (Waseda University) 1 (2003): 175–196.

Silverberg, Miriam, "Remembering Pearl Harbor, Forgetting Charlie Chaplin, and the Case of the Disappearing Western Woman: A Picture Story." In *Formations of Colonial Modernity in East Asia*, 249–294, ed. Tani E. Barlow. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997.

Sterne, Jonathan. *The Audible Past: Cultural Origins of Sound Reproduction.* Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003.

Tanaka, Jun'ichiro. *Nihon Eiga Hattatsushi I* [Evolutionary History of Japanese Cinema I], Tokyo: Chuo Koronsha, 1975.

Yoshiyama, Akimitsu. *Nihon Eiga-kai Jibutsu Kigen* [The Firsts in Japanese Film World]. Tokyo: Shinema to Engeisha, 1933.

THE *JIDAIGEKI* FILM *TWILIGHT SAMURAI*—A SALARYMAN-PRODUCER'S POINT OF VIEW

ICHIRO YAMAMOTO
(Translated by DIANE WEI LEWIS)

THE CURRENT STATE OF *JIDAIGEKI* FILMS

In 2011, director Miike Takashi's 3D *jidaigeki Hara-Kiri: Death of a Samurai* (*Ichimei*) was screened in competition at the Cannes Film Festival. The *jidaigeki* film genre seems to have undergone a total revival in the past few years.

Notable works from 2010 include *Thirteen Assassins* (*Jusannin no shikaku,* dir. Miike Takashi), *Sword of Desperation* (*Hisshiken torisashi,* dir. Hirayama Hideyuki), *The Lady Shogun and Her Men* (*Ooku,* dir. Kaneko Fuminori), *The Last Chushingura* (*Saigo no chushingura,* dir. Sugita Shigemichi), and *Abacus and Sword* (*Bushi no kakeibo,* dir. Morita Yoshimitsu), contributing to a "restoration" that would have been unthinkable ten years ago. I happened to be one of three producers for the 2002 film *Twilight Samurai,* which is thought in part to have made this possible. In this article I will discuss what was going on at that time.

It so happens that as I write this now in November 2011, a 3D version of the film *Hara-Kiri: Death of a Samurai* is currently in theaters, even though 2D audiences remain the main target of its ticket sales. This stands to reason as patrons in their fifties and up (the senior discount group) relate to the film as sharing the same original story as *Harakiri* (*Seppuku,* dir. Kobayashi Masaki, 1962), while there are concerns about the physical strain of using 3D glasses, which leads some to complain about being "easily fatigued" by 3D films. In any case, as a rule, the *jidaigeki* audience is mostly older people. When it comes to *jidaigeki* films released in 2010, *The Lady Shogun and Her Men* led

the Japanese box office with over $27 million, while *Thirteen Assassins* and *Abacus and Sword* both grossed upward of $16 million in Japan. As Japanese society steadily continues to age, one expects *jidaigeki* to remain a reliable ticket, and indeed, it seems like the genre has become a safe bet. The works that become hits are those that are able to reach a wider audience by virtue of their casts or the popularity of the original works.

Jidaigeki Films and the Japanese Film Industry in the Year 2002

At the end of the 1990s, after an all-time low, the number of screens in Japan was finally back on the rise with the construction of multiplex theaters, reaching more than 2,000 screens by the end of the decade (rising to approximately 3,400 screens in 2010). Still, at that time, there was a tendency for most *jidaigeki* to be rejected at the planning stage for reasons related to the genre, for example "*jidaigeki* don't bring in audiences" or "too expensive." As a result, people with know-how from their experiences as former *jidaigeki* cast and crew also grew progressively older, and year-by-year their numbers dwindled.

It is precisely in this period that director Yamada Yoji planned *Twilight Samurai,* which opened in 2002. Yamada's status at Shochiku makes it exceedingly easy for his projects to be green-lighted, but there were many twists and turns in bringing the production to fruition. Nevertheless, Yamada's strong determination to shoot a *jidaigeki* ultimately guaranteed the film would be seen through to the end.

Looking back today, just the fact that there was a postwar *jidaigeki* film boom may itself seem strange. When GHQ controls ended and film subject matter could be chosen freely, perhaps people were thirsty for *jidaigeki,* or maybe enthusiasm for *jidaigeki* was sparked by the golden age of Hollywood westerns. It's intriguing to ask why so many people wanted to see fellow countrymen from over a hundred years ago meeting their deaths on the big screen in what we might think of as "choreographed and stylized, stagey sword fighting"—and why did they eventually get their fill? In any case, just as there were significant changes in the western with the onset of the Vietnam War, it's worth taking note of how the context surrounding Japan's *jidaigeki* films also changed.

The Production Committee System and the Collapse of the Bubble Economy

A system of filmmaking by production committee emerged during the rise and fall of the so-called bubble economy, providing a method for several companies, with film companies as the focus, to pool funds and spread these over multiple films, distributing

risk and allocating profit each according to its investment share. Today, the majority of Japanese films are produced in this manner, and it has practically become prerequisite for a production to be possible.

To get down to details, at the three Japanese majors (Toho, Toei, Shochiku) these production committees are generally made up of around five companies, mainly film companies, broadcast television companies, advertising brokers, newspapers, pay-TV companies, and trading companies. The broadcast television company gets right of first refusal of terrestrial broadcast rights and revenue from commercial advertising, the ad broker sells ads, the newspaper company guarantees film publicity—all expect a return on their investment. These days, there may be five to ten companies investing, and examples of the Internet company Yahoo! participating and obtaining Internet distribution rights, or talent agents putting up capital, are also on the rise.

For *Twilight Samurai,* the joint investors at the planning stage were Shochiku, which managed the Kyoto studio where the film was shot and handled the film's production, distribution, and exhibition; the trading company Sumitomo Corporation; and the broadcast television company Nippon Television. The advertising firm Hakuhodo, the publishing agency Nippon Shuppan Hanbai, and the pay-TV channel Eisei Gekijo (a Shochiku-affiliated company) were joint investors. Some years ago, these investors were known as a classic combo for launching films with big nationwide releases.

When it comes down to it, this system may have reduced risk for film companies, but successes also yielded slimmer profits, and while creatively exploiting rights may have dynamized the film industry, it also tended to take up a lot of time. Right now, we're in a spiral of increasingly scaled-back production, and if we're eventually to return to the high-risk, high-return films of yesteryear, that transformation will probably occur within the next few years.

The Director Yamada Yoji and Ofuna Studio

Still the most popular film series in Japan today, the Tora-san series (*Otoko wa tsurai yo,* 1969–1995) is said to be the longest in the world, with forty-eight films in the original series plus one special. Every film in the original series, which ended in 1995, was produced solely by Shochiku. Working at a pace of one, occasionally two films for the Tora-san series per year, director Yamada Yoji planned, scripted, and directed the films, which frequently took up social themes. One of these, *The Yellow Handkerchief of Happiness* (*Shiawase no kiiroi hankachi,* 1977), was remade in the United States in 2008 as *The Yellow Handkerchief* (dir. Udayan Prasad).

The first time a Yamada-directed film was made by the production committee system was *A Class to Remember* (*Gakko,* 1993), which took place in a night school. As with *Twilight Samurai,* Yamada spent many years planning the production, but due to its simple plot as well as strains on the contemporary film industry, it seems it was made as a

coproduction in order to ameliorate risk. For this production, the three-member investors were Shochiku, Nippon Television, and Sumitomo Corporation, and after meeting with commercial and critical success, *A Class to Remember* went on to become a series with *A Class to Remember II* at nursing school (*Gakko II,* 1996), *A Class to Remember III* at vocational school (*Gakko III,* 1998), and *A Class to Remember IV* about a youth ditching school to embark on a journey (*Jugo sai gakko IV,* 2000).

At the time shooting completed for the fourth installment in the *A Class to Remember* series, Japan found itself in a recession following the collapse of the bubble economy. Needing to readjust its debts, Shochiku sold off Ofuna Studio with its over sixty years of history, and the site was bought by a college.

A Map of the Japanese Film Industry

Here I would like to take a moment to touch on the literal geography of the Japanese film industry. Today, the vast majority of the film industry—including its film companies, studios, film laboratories, postproduction studios, talent agents, and so forth—are located in Tokyo or its vicinity. Two exceptions are Shochiku and Toei's Kyoto studios, which specialize in making *jidaigeki* films.

The aforementioned Shochiku Ofuna Studio was located in the city of Kamakura, about one hour from Tokyo. This famed Japanese studio was where Ozu Yasujiro's post-war films, as well as those of the so-called Shochiku New Wave directors Oshima Nagisa, Shinoda Masahiro, and Yoshida Kiju, and all of Yamada Yoji's films were shot. Shochiku films were also referred to as Ofuna-*cho* ("Ofuna-style"), their specialty being "home dramas" that afforded a glimpse into everyday life, and Ozu and many workers in the film industry lived in and near Kamakura.

By contrast, although a large number of directors, film crew, and actors made their home near Kyoto's film studios during the height of *jidaigeki* popularity (up until the 1960s), today the majority of directors and actors live in Tokyo, and it is established practice to stay in hotels or rent short-term apartments in Kyoto when filming *jidaigeki.* This is because it's about two and a half hours from Tokyo to Kyoto by *shinkansen,* Kyoto is thought of as the place where one goes for *jidaigeki* productions, and it is expensive there. As a producer, one of my most important duties was to work with the line producer to keep production expenses low, selecting and negotiating hotel accommodations for the cast and director and searching for short term apartments called "weekly mansions" for the Tokyo crew.

Deciding to Film in Kyoto

When Yamada decided to make a *jidaigeki* as his next film, he contemplated Tokyo's Toho Studio where Kurosawa Akira had filmed numerous *jidaigeki,* but it was ultimately

decided that the film be shot in Kyoto. (Yamada was close with Kurosawa in his later years, and it is said that Kurosawa repeatedly encouraged him to make a *jidaigeki* film.) I think it only natural that Yamada would want to make his first *jidaigeki* with his long-standing Ofuna crew of many years at Toho Studio, where Kurosawa's most acclaimed film *Seven Samurai* (1954) was filmed, but the fact is Shochiku had a studio in Kyoto, where there were also experienced and up-and-coming *jidaigeki* crew members at Daiei Kyoto. Yamada received assistance from many in Kurosawa's circle: he got advice about *jidaigeki* filmmaking from Kurosawa script supervisor and producer Nogami Teruyo (author of *Waiting for the Sun,* as well as another book that five years later would be the basis for Yamada's film *Kabei: Our Mother,* 2008); for costumes, he went to Kurosawa's daughter Kurosawa Kazuko; and for swordfight choreography, he turned to Kuze Hiroshi among others.

However, I should here emphasize the absolute centrality of the "Yamada-gumi" crew from Ofuna Studio. This group—including cinematographer Naganuma Mutsuo, production designer Degawa Mitsuo, sound recorder Kishida Kazumi, editor Ishii Iwao, costume designer Matsuda Kazuo, assistant director Hanawa Kinichi, and unit managers Mine Junichi and Saito Tomohiko—lent their support to Yamada's first *jidaigeki* attempt. Ofuna-*cho* dramaturgy flows through the heart of the family story depicted in *Twilight Samurai,* and the Ofuna crew had the long years of technical experience, strong mutual trust and respect, and passion necessary "to make a *jidaigeki* that was a Shochiku film, an Ofuna film, and a Yamada film." In 2003, I served as one of the producers on Hou Hsiao-Hsien's *Café Lumière,* his first film shot entirely in Japan and in Japanese to commemorate the one hundredth anniversary of Ozu Yasujiro's birth, for which he brought his own crew and staff from Taiwan. It seems to be the case that, wherever you go, a director's style—and cinema itself— is sustained by long-lasting teamwork.

Daiei Kyoto and Eizo Kyoto

Daiei stands with Toho, Toei, Nikkatsu, and Shochiku as one of Japan's major postwar film companies. Daiei Kyoto Studio, which mainly makes *jidaigeki* films, achieved fame for world-acclaimed masterpieces at international film festivals such as Mizoguchi Kenji's *Ugetsu* (1953) and *Chikamatsu monogatari* (*The Crucified Lovers,* 1954), Kurosawa's *Rashomon* (1950), and Kinugasa Teinosuke's *Gate of Hell* (1953), as well as the *Zatoichi* series (1962–1989) starring Katsu Shintaro and directed by Mori Kazuo, Misumi Kenji, and others (a series that has recently achieved further acclaim with Kitano Takeshi's 2003 remake), not to mention the *Nemuri Kyoshiro* series (1963–1969) starring Ichikawa Raizo. Unfortunately, Daiei declared bankruptcy and closed the studio in 1986.

In 1972, following Daiei's bankruptcy, Daiei Kyoto directors, actors, and staff established Eizo Kyoto and maintained a staff room for more than twenty years at the Shochiku Kyoto Studio until Eizo Kyoto's dissolution in 2010. Eizo Kyoto helped make

over fifty films, including *Tracked* (*Usugesho,* dir. Gosha Hideo, 1985), *Rikyu* (dir. Teshigahara Hiroshi, 1989), *Taboo* (*Gohatto,* dir. Oshima Nagisa, 1999), and more than two hundred television episodes, including *Kogarashi Monjiro* (1972), an Ichikawa Kon presentation, and *Gokenin Zankuro* (1995–2002) starring Ken Watanabe, who went on to work in Hollywood.

From set decoration to various other production tasks, Eizo Kyoto was represented in many departments in the making of *Twilight Samurai,* including art direction by Nishioka Yoshinobu (*Gate of Hell, Enjo, Taboo*) and lighting design by Nakaoka Gengon (*Rashomon* chief lighting technician and collaborator on *Hakuoki* and *Basara—The Princess Goh*).

Kyoto Eiga Juku and Me

With its lecturers consisting mainly of Eizo Kyoto staff, the small, two-year film school known as Kyoto Eiga Juku was established at the Shochiku Kyoto Studio in 1990. There were two classrooms. Every academic year, there were thirty-odd trainees. After graduating from university (my major was law), I quit being a "salaryman" within a year. Having no job prospects, I ended up working part time and going to the movies every day, joining the first class of Kyoto Eiga Juku trainees as a directing major. Unfortunately, the school closed one year before the filming of *Twilight Samurai,* but when I was a trainee, I apprenticed under Nishioka Yoshinobu and Nakaoka Gengon. During that period the person who helped me most, both personally and professionally, was Okamoto Kenichi in lighting, someone who had worked on numerous famous works such as *Rashomon, Ugetsu,* and *Chikamatsu monogatari.* In Japan, photography and lighting are divided into two distinct technical departments, so for instance, according to Okamoto, he almost never coordinated with cinematographer Miyagawa Kazuo when he worked on *Rashomon* and Mizoguchi Kenji films. Generally speaking, few Japanese films are shot according to storyboards, and the cinematographer is also lead camera operator: he's there on the crane when a crane is used, he's there peeking through the viewfinder and riding on the dolly for tracking shots, and he's the one panning the camera when it pans. This is because framing (composition) is the cinematographer's responsibility. The responsibility of the lighting designer is literally light and shadow. From the perspective of studio management, there would be too many personnel and it would be too costly to combine photography and lighting in a single department. Moreover, some think it's best to deal with photography and lighting separately in order to move shooting along efficiently within a given timeframe. Within the so-called director of photography system, there is also an impression that it is time consuming to give one individual the work of two technicians. To be frank, I think there is (was) a general sense among film professionals in Japan that photography and lighting are separate jobs. For instance, if we look at the work assistants do, it requires different technical expertise, both in terms of skills and training, to use an exposure meter or to plot the

distance between the camera and the filmed subject than it does to position lighting equipment in certain scenes when shadows are necessary, apply filters, and coordinate with the team to set up lights from different angles.

Not to belabor the point, but at the Japan Academy Awards, there are separate awards for photography and lighting, though in fact the cinematographer and lighting designer are voted on as a pair. In any case, the relation between photography and lighting is variable depending on the studios, the film, the director, and the relative experience of the cinematographer and lighting designer, depending on their respective careers. In the case of *Twilight Samurai,* I remember cinematographer Naganuma Mutsuo and lighting designer Nakaoka Gengon combining their talents and working things out together. Nakaoka, much like Okamoto Kenichi, is someone to whom I owe very much. In addition to his knowledge of lighting, he also had extensive experience and expertise related to *jidaigeki.* From his sharply discerning reading of the script, to the immediate, concrete advice he provided on set, his advice on the everyday life of the Edo period and other matters was as good as historical fact—Nakaoka is so knowledgeable, I felt that his very presence on set guaranteed the quality of our *jidaigeki* film.

At Kyoto Eiga Juku, in addition to practical training, there were many days of lectures by individuals who had played an important role in Japanese film history, including cinematographers Miyagawa Kazuo and Morita Fujio, art designer Naito Akira, screenwriter Nakamura Tsutomu, and a host of individuals from Eizo Kyoto (Daiei), Shochiku Kyoto, and Toei Kyoto. In addition, weekly special lectures by visitors from Tokyo, such as producer Fujii Hiroaki and art designer Kimura Takeo, were built into the curriculum. As a film fan, I was blown away by what we heard in these lectures, but for the teachers facing the plight of the Japanese economy and steadily advancing generational change in the film industry, these lectures boiled down to a central problem: *Can the filmmaking craft be passed down through education? Is filmmaking really something that can be taught?* (As a small aside, I remember that when Yamada Yoji visited for a special lecture, I was hassled by my classmates for making him extremely cross with my questions—that was our very first interview.) Some years later, during my time as a visiting scholar in the UCLA film department from fall 2006 to fall 2008, I was frequently reminded of my days at the Kyoto Eiga Juku, the biggest difference being that Kyoto Eiga Juku was a school inside a film studio. It's no ordinary "school" where you regularly bump into directors and film crew in the hall and washroom—and even *jidaigeki* actors in full costume!

In 1999, when I came back to Kyoto as an assistant producer on the film *Taboo,* it was deeply moving to finally return on a film production for the first time since my graduation. But by the time I got my first credit as the third producer on *Twilight Samurai* with my name listed alongside Shochiku producers Nakagawa Shigehiro and Fukasawa Hiroshi, my alma mater was no more. One could chalk this up to things like the dramatic watershed in digital technology, or poor job prospects following the collapse of the bubble economy, as well as instructors retiring. Coincidentally, the narrow studio staffroom for *Twilight Samurai* was actually the very same classroom where I'd gotten detailed, direct instruction from those who'd taken part in the filmmaking process on the most enduring

masterpieces in cinema history—and where, time and time again, I was scolded in class discussion. It often gave me a strange feeling to be working together with director Yamada and many of my former teachers among these familiar old desks and chairs.

Shochiku Studio

When *Twilight Samurai* was filmed at "Shochiku Kyoto Studio," as it was called in 2002, the Shochiku Co. Ltd. studio (as it is known today) centered on six soundstages, each approximately 400 square meters in size. It opened as the Makino Talkie Studio in 1935 and became Shochiku Uzumasa Studio in 1940, the place where Mizoguchi Kenji made *The 47 Ronin* (1941–1942). After closing its doors for a short period, production started up again in the early 1970s with the long-running *jidaigeki* television hit series *Sure Death!* that continues to this day. In 2008, with the establishment of the College of Image Arts and Sciences at Ritsumeikan University, instruction facilities and classrooms were also created at the studio, Yamada and Nishioka were enlisted as faculty, and one senses that Kyoto Eiga Juku has been resurrected and expanded within a college educational setting. This development realizes Yamada's desire to transmit the craft of filmmaking to successive generations, and in 2009 Yamada collaborated with students to make the film *Kyoto Story* (an official entry in the "Forum" category at the Berlin International Film Festival), in which I also participated as a producer.

Toei Kyoto Studio

The other remaining studio in Kyoto is Toei Kyoto Studio. I bring this up because Sanada Hiroyuki, who plays the protagonist Iguchi Seibei, and Kobayashi Nenji, who plays Seibei's compassionate boss, were both "raised" at this studio. Moreover, the actor Tanba Tetsuro, who plays Seibei's grandfather and is known overseas for his role in *You Only Live Twice* (dir. Lewis Gilbert, 1967), is deeply connected to the studio, having starred and cameoed in numerous Toei *yakuza* film masterpieces.

   Toei Kyoto Studio boasts a long history of over eighty years, and today its sixteen stages neighbor open sets and a *jidaigeki* theme park. Toei also has a studio in Tokyo, but the majority of its *jidaigeki* films and television series came out of Kyoto—including the 1950s and 1960s Golden Age "Toei *jidaigeki*" that were so wildly popular with young people, the classic *jitsuroku yakuza* series of the 1970s *Battles without Honor or Humanity* (dir. Fukasaku Kinji), the nationwide hit television series *Mito Komon* that's been around for over forty years, and the *Shadow Warriors* series (1980–1985) starring Sonny Chiba, which even has a large following overseas.

   One of Toei Kyoto's main specialties is its expertise in sword films: many of its actors are trained in a very high level of sword fighting technique. The film *Thirteen Assassins*

(1963) directed by Kudo Eiichi, and recently remade by Miike Takashi, was also filmed at Toei Kyoto.

After *Twilight Samurai,* Sanada appeared in the Hollywood films *The Last Samurai* (dir. Edward Zwick, 2003) and *Rush Hour 3* (dir. Brett Ratner, 2007).

With the decline of *jidaigeki* films, there has been a sharp decrease in the availability of crew members with "firsthand experience" in the daily life of samurai, in horsemanship and dress as well as customs, and in the hair and makeup particular to *jidaigeki* films, not to mention swordsmanship. It is rare to find actors born in the postwar who, without any previous training in all of this, are able to meet the demanding high standards of *jidaigeki* filmmaking. Toei Kyoto Studios had just this foundation. In addition, Sanada was an all-around talent with a wealth of stage experience, including in Great Britain, and very highly acclaimed performances in the theater.

Since appearing in *A Class to Remember III,* Kobayashi Nenji continued starring in Yamada's films. He had also built a long career at Toei Kyoto. I think one of the principal reasons that Yamada continued to work with Kobayashi even after changing studios is Kobayashi's own pronounced "studio" character.

Twilight Samurai: A Film Infused with the Storied Studio System Tradition

In this sense, *Twilight Samurai* was an extremely rare film, infused with a singularly dynamic and balanced blend of the qualities of the Ofuna, Toho, Daiei Kyoto (Eizo Kyoto), Shochiku Kyoto, and Toei Kyoto Studios. There was nothing like it before, nothing like it since, and I don't think there will ever be anything quite like it again. With so many individuals retiring over the past few years, it would simply be impossible to bring these elements together again.

Since the 1960s, the studio system created by the major film companies has been in decline and is heading toward demise. For this reason—or, perhaps, because we already knew then that the studio system was finished—Yamada was able to mix and match studio styles, drawing primarily on his own experience at Ofuna Studio, taking a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity (*ichi go ichi e,* as they say in the Japanese tea ceremony) and making it into a reality.

The Plot of *Twilight Samurai*

It's the end of the Edo period. Low-ranking samurai Iguchi Seibei of the small Unasaka clan in the province of Shonai has recently lost his wife, and in order to care for his aging mother and two small daughters, he must return home as soon as his work in the clan

storehouse is over. As a result, he earns the nickname "Twilight Seibei." One day, after coming to the rescue of his friend's sister Tomoe for whom he harbors affections, his sword fighting ability becomes renowned among the other retainers, and he is selected to execute one of his clansmen in a duel. In defiance of supporters of the shogun who have ordered he be purged, Seibei's opponent Yogo Zenemon has shut himself up in his home in a one-man rebellion. Unable to refuse the clan's orders, Seibei opens up and confides his feelings to Tomoe before, determined to win, he heads to Yogo's home. Yogo surprises Seibei by confessing his desire to flee the province, and in return Seibei confesses his own secret, confiding that his sword is a bamboo blade. Yogo suddenly has a change of heart, and the two begin a fight to the death.

Fujisawa Shuhei's Original Works Come Together in the Script

The script for *Twilight Samurai* is based on three short stories by Fujisawa Shuhei, "The Bamboo Sword," "An Act of Mercy," and "Twilight Samurai." It seems that "The Bamboo Sword" was the original inspiration for the film, though by the time of my involvement, the script was just taking shape following a period of experimentation. Asama Yoshitaka collaborated with Yamada on the script from very early on. Asama hailed from Ofuna Studio and is the director of such films as the 1987 remake of Kinoshita Keisuke's masterpiece *Twenty-Four Eyes* and a 1988 adaptation of *La Dame aux camellias* set in Hokkaido. He not only cowrote the Tora-san series with Yamada but also collaborated with him for more than thirty years on projects like *The Yellow Handkerchief of Happiness* (1977). With Asama's extensive knowledge of world literature, and English-language literature and poetry in particular, these two undertook the majority of the writing on the second floor of the Wakana *ryokan* located in Kagurazaka, Tokyo. Around the time I got involved, they had established a pattern of staying there for two nights (three days) at a time; around six in the evening, I'd drop by with my boss from Shochiku, producer Fukasawa Hiroshi. It became customary for us to discuss progress on the script and the state of casting over a modest supper and coffee, until it was time to escort them back to the *ryokan* around 8:30 or 9:00 pm. I say "modest" because the first time I went to Wakana as an assistant producer I expected an extravagant dinner. But I wouldn't be surprised if there were some correlation between our modest meal and the fact that the main characters of Yamada's films are ordinary folks and low-ranking samurai.

 Fujisawa Shuhei (1927–1997) is one of the most famous *jidaigeki* novelists in Japan and, along with historical writers like Shiba Ryotaro and Ikenami Shotaro, one of Japan's best- and longest-selling authors. Fujisawa differs markedly from Shiba in that his many short stories are generally about ordinary, no-name samurai during the Edo period, a time of peace. In addition, the majority of Fujisawa's works are set in the Tohoku region and in

the "Unasaka *han*," said to be modeled on the domain of Shonai. Even for an established author, Fujisawa has many fans and is so popular that even the prominent Japanese author, director, and dramatist Inoue Hisashi was inspired to create a map of the Unasaka domain.

Twilight Samurai as an "Ofuna-*cho*" *Jidaigeki*

For many Japanese film fans, the fact that Yamada made Fujisawa Shuhei's short stories the basis of his first "real" *jidaigeki* film should not have been surprising. As neither a grand story belonging to a long saga nor a tale of heroism, it's perfectly in keeping with his earlier films.

Yet there's still a question as to why Yamada, whose films deal with ordinary people, made this film when samurai (low-ranking or not) made up the ruling class. Actually, Yamada's first *jidaigeki* film *Un ga yokerya* (1966) was based on a classic *rakugo* story about Edo period commoners who live in a tenement house. As if to bracket this *jidaigeki* made at Ofuna Studio, *Twilight Samurai* was advertised as "Director Yamada Yoji's first real *jidaigeki.*" Here, "real" suggests "based on the reality of samurai who used swords in fights to the death."

Yamada has stated an interest in "how one deals with life after wielding the sword" as the reason he wanted to shoot a *jidaigeki*. Now, since samurai were the ones who carried swords, the story couldn't be about anything other than samurai, but the life of the common samurai that's so precious to the family depicted in *Twilight Samurai* is practically that of commoners—making Fujisawa's works perfectly suitable for an "Ofuna-*cho*" *jidaigeki,* I think.

It's generally known that the Edo period was a strict class society (*shinokosho*) that placed samurai at the top, with samurai supposedly comprising just 10 percent of the population, although statistics vary.[1] Nevertheless, Fujisawa's novels are very popular among middle-aged and elderly salarymen even today, with the organization of samurai within the Unasaka clan representing something like "a company" so that readers are able to put themselves in the circumstances of common samurai leading simple lives— moreover, since part of the premise is that Seibei is actually an expert swordsman, the sympathy readers are able to feel with him also approaches a feeling like longing.

Differences between the Original Works and the Script

Major differences between the original Fujisawa works and the film script include shifting the setting to the end of the *bakufu,* putting the dialogue into the Shonai dialect, and

framing the entire story as a recollection. Fujisawa's original work centers on the period following the stabilization of the Edo shogunate, a period when major transformations in society were yet to come—in other words, this is far from the last days of the shogunate. This setting may have something to do with the fact that more than half of Fujisawa's works were written in a period of stabilized high economic growth in Japan (the 1970s to the 1990s). This was a time when few salarymen could have imagined that the companies they worked for would go bankrupt before they retired. By contrast, *Twilight Samurai* was planned during the so-called lost decade, in the period following the collapse of the bubble economy when companies failed one after another; in keeping with the atmosphere of that time, the setting of the film was shifted to the last days of the shogunate.

In addition, Yamada added the framework of protagonist Seibei's elderly daughter recalling the story in the "present," creating her in the image of his own grandmother. Using the conceit of his grandmother imagining her childhood, he was able to conjure into reality the far-off time of the samurai's existence, while he thought that describing anything before that time with a sense of reality would have been difficult.

So, to aid in the writing of the script, Yamada used, for example, Yamakawa Kikue's *Women of the Mito Domain* and Sugimoto Etsuko's *A Daughter of the Samurai* as a foundation, and photographs taken by foreigners at the end of the feudal period were consulted as historical materials for authenticating details. Compared to other time periods, it was relatively easy to assemble historical materials suitable for Yamada's pursuit of reality. Fashionable hairstyles and clothing changed throughout the Edo period, which lasted for close to 300 years, and special care was taken to reproduce these as faithfully as possible.

Yet, regarding historical authenticity, there was one very crucial and difficult matter. Many directors pursuing *jidaigeki* projects ran up against this: the issue of how extremely difficult it is to replicate an average day in the life of a common, provincial samurai with any historical accuracy. For this exact reason, it is said that even director Kurosawa Akira abandoned a plan to make a film about a day in the life of a samurai who commits *seppuku*. We consulted with Edo period researchers and went to the city library in Tsuruoka in Yamagata Prefecture (formerly Shonai, the model for the Unasaka domain). Using historical research and combining our best efforts, we tried to reconstruct what it was like to live then, but nevertheless there remained many unknowns.

With respect to the frame narrative, opinions were divided, but since this constituted the essence of Yamada's approach to the *bakamatsu* period, I believed it was absolutely essential.

Next is the use of the Shonai dialect, another product of the pursuit of cinematic realism. At one time Japan was filled with dialects, but with the spread of radio, and television in particular, these are disappearing. Shonai is one of these, so we had some of the older residents of the Shonai region check the Shonai dialect used in the film. We also interviewed a rather elderly descendent of Shonai samurai whose grandfather had been a samurai, and the published screenplay is in dialect.

As for the language spoken in *jidaigeki,* there are comparatively more *jidaigeki* (especially television programs) that take Edo (i.e., Tokyo) as their setting; still, though the

language used by samurai is not dialect per se, most expressions are in samurai speech, which is much more finely nuanced than contemporary Japanese. Even in *jidaigeki* that are set in the countryside, there are extremely few *jidaigeki* big enough to get nation-wide distribution that use dialect prominently throughout the entire film as in *Twilight Samurai.*

The majority of Japanese audiences have some familiarity with Kansai regional dialect through comedy programs and are more or less able to understand Kyushu and Tohoku dialect, but Shonai dialect is an extremely minor dialect, so a large number of people had probably never heard of it before this film. This is not to say it was so difficult that essential dialogue would be misunderstood, for even if there were unfamiliar words, their meaning could be gathered from the context that preceded or followed, couching the scene. Unfortunately, it's extremely difficult to represent such nuances in English (or foreign language) subtitles, which do nothing to convey a sense of the dialect. As a film fan, this has given me new awareness and appreciation of all "foreign language films," for example, when it comes to the English in American films (particularly westerns), the dialect of Italian films, and Chinese "dialects" in the films of Hou Hsiao-Hsien.

One of the actors in the film was Sugawara Tsukasa, who hailed from the Shonai region and led a performance group there. In addition to playing the role of the insect cage seller, Sugawara recorded a tape to help others pick up Shonai dialect. Insofar as it was possible, Yamada filmed and recorded live sound at the same time, following the progression of the story, a style that allowed him to make daily modifications to the screenplay while Sugawara stood by during the shooting of every scene, ready to assist with last-minute alterations in the dialogue.

Cast

The roles of the protagonist and heroine were played by Sanada Hiroyuki and Miyazawa Rie. Famed beauty Miyazawa had also starred in a *jidaigeki* before (in *Basara—The Princess Goh,* dir. Teshigahara Hiroshi, 1992, at which time I was interning as a props assistant at the Kyoto Eiga Juku, carrying around her straw sandals and bamboo hat), and just like Sanada, her age, build, experience, and passion made her a perfect fit for her role in every way. In contrast, we had a bumpy road casting for the role of Yogo. A number of names came up but, undecided, we opened our search to look beyond actors and finally came upon dancer Tanaka Min, an acquaintance of the head of financing at Hakuhodo. Tanaka is quite well known in America and Europe and also famous for drawing many intellectuals, like Michel Foucault, Roland Barthes, and Felix Guattari, to his Paris performances. *Twilight Samurai* was his first real appearance in a film role. When we were shooting the fight scene, Susan Sontag, a friend of Tanaka and acquaintance of Yamada, came and visited the set with her friend and translator, scholar Kobata Kazue.

Changing Japanese and *Jidaigeki*

It's said that contemporary Japanese are no longer the right size for *jidaigeki*. For instance, the average male height has increased more than four inches over what it was in the Edo period. Since the size of tatami mats and the height of doors, *fusuma,* and shoji haven't changed, when actors who are practically 5′11″ enter a Japanese-style home, the proportions between actor and house are positively awful. Furthermore, the amount of time spent kneeling or sitting cross-legged has sharply declined since the war, especially during the period of high economic growth. Most houses have gone from being Japanese houses centering on tatami to Western-style houses, and with the shift to chairs and beds and Western-style toilets with seats, it's said that legs have also gotten longer. Accordingly, there are an increasing number of actors with body types that are unsuitable for *jidaigeki*: the position of their waists is higher, kimono are no longer flattering, and they don't have the proper proportions to cut a nice figure wearing a sword. Furthermore, it's said that even the shape of the Japanese face has changed. This is principally due to changes in diet and lifestyle, since an increasing number of people are switching staple diets from rice to bread, while rich foods like hamburgers have caught on. As a result, jaws have become narrower, a poor fit for that unique *jidaigeki* hairstyle, the *mage* or "top knot" (or at least compared to actors of the past something seems amiss). They don't look like the samurai and farmers of 150 years ago. In terms of speech, dialect and honorific language have dramatically declined in contemporary Japanese, which is mixed with foreign loanwords disseminated by television and the mass media. Therefore actors have to drill the old Japanese used in *jidaigeki* starting with the very basics. In the 1970s, it was reported that Kurosawa Akira said that films like *Seven Samurai* can't be made anymore, because "there are no actors today with those kinds of faces," and this was apparently a factor in the nationwide auditions for *Kagemusha,* which included amateur actors.

Facing these conditions, for *Twilight Samurai* we enlisted the help of as many short-statured actors from the Tohoku region as possible. We took our time auditioning the sisters, taking time to train them so they'd become accustomed to kimono and the lifestyle of that period. It was a reality check for older staff like me running the auditions to see so many long-legged children who had never known the tatami lifestyle.

Wigs and Makeup

Wigs are one of the unique technical aspects of *jidaigeki*. I've heard that many of the actors in *The Last Samurai* actually shaved their heads, but in Japan, actors wear wigs in the majority of cases, and the boundary between wig and bare skin is skillfully erased with makeup that adapts the wig to the actor's real hairline. The main reason not to shave

heads is that many actors have to coordinate their schedules with appearances in modern films or on television that overlap with shooting. Furthermore, there is no allowance for production fees that would keep actors under contract for a long period.

In the case of *Twilight Samurai,* it worked best for shooting to have wig craftsmen and makeup staff work together under the supervision of a company called Yagi Wigs. Of course every director wants "natural and real" wigs, but that costs time and money. For Yamada, it seemed only fitting that protagonist Seibei would be somewhat slovenly in his personal grooming, and in keeping with the idea that this could be indicated by his *sakayaki* (the shaved part of the forehead) and top knot, Yamada did a number of tests and had a variety of wigs made. If shooting started at 9 am, makeup application usually began around 7 am. The time required to prepare for shooting, including costuming, was generally about two hours.

In terms of makeup, one thing that left a strong impression on me was the two daughters' chapped and weathered skin. In Tohoku in winter, in a household with no mother, even young children had to help with housework—accordingly, in his strict pursuit of reality, Yamada imagined what kind of place and strong winds would cause that weathering.

The Studio

Since the beginning of filmmaking in Japan, Kyoto has been the center of *jidaigeki* film production. There are thought to be many reasons for this, but whatever else one might say, Kyoto has a great variety of buildings surrounding temples that can be used as locations; the natural landscapes descriptive of *jidaigeki*—mountains, river, forest—are all close at hand; that indispensible garment, the kimono, is one of Kyoto's main products and is available in abundant supply; and finally, there's Kyoto's kabuki tradition.

During the postwar *jidaigeki* boom, Kyoto, which had escaped the air raids of WWII, became the center of filming out of necessity. But even in Kyoto, buildings and land redolent of the Edo period were modernized by the fearsome forces of high growth, the bubble economy, and the development and land speculation they brought, causing a sudden decline in the number of places close to the studios that could be used as locations, which made it necessary to look for sites in far-off locations, where one had to stay overnight. For *Twilight Samurai,* after a long location hunt Seibei's house was built on a site in Nagano Prefecture that had been repurposed for farmland; the castle was Hikone Castle, a national treasure in Kyoto's neighboring prefecture Shiga; the funeral, fishing, festival, and final scene in the countryside, among others, were shot in the former Shonai domain, present-day Tsuruoka, in Yamagata; and the exterior of the house where Yogo shuts himself in, as well as the courtyard of the heroine Tomoe's family home, were filmed in Kakunodate in Akita Prefecture, where a samurai mansion still exists.

To use the duel sequence as an example, the interior of Seibei's home was a Kyoto studio; when he sets off, the exterior is in Nagano Prefecture; the road he walks is also

in Nagano Prefecture; he arrives at the mansion in Akita Prefecture; the duel itself takes place in a Kyoto studio; and then the exterior, again, is in Akita Prefecture. These localities cooperated graciously with the shoot—from the places we stayed at to the extras whose help we received, local residents provided us with invaluable assistance in every respect.

The Shooting Schedule and *Kacho-fugetsu* Aesthetics

Shooting ran from March 1 to May 31, 2002 (with retakes in Akita Prefecture on July 8). Whenever possible, Yamada shoots his films according to the order in the script, and when necessary, revisions to the script focus on changes in the dialogue. Most of his films are shot using a single-camera setup, and once every few days rushes for what has been shot so far are linked together and screened. Day after day, the entire staff works together on both the direction the film is headed and day-to-day issues; as a result, by the time shooting is finished, most of the editing is more or less done. There were no big scenes deleted in editing nor expensive shots left on the cutting room floor. By shooting every day and periodically viewing rushes, the script could be constantly reworked.

One winter's day before the beginning of shooting, the entire staff gathered in a dark studio, and on Yamada's cue, Shimamura from the props department deftly lit a paper lantern using flint instead of a match or lighter. Yamada asked that we share the light with the entire staff. Even though modern Japan has streetlights and homes equipped with fluorescent light that make for "bright nights," with this proclamation our film started with the real, firsthand experience of a lantern's fire.

On a different day, Yamada suggested that the entire staff watch a film together, so we watched Tarkovsky's *Nostalghia* (1983). The selection was cinematographer Naganuma's idea, and the candlelit procession left a powerful impression on me that remains to this day.

Three months filming is a long time for a Japanese film. Most aim for some filming in the winter, spring, and early summer. Compared to Hollywood films, Japanese films have a tendency to emphasize the seasons, and this is also the case with traditional Japanese painting and poetry, which are tied to Japan's natural landscape. I'm not sure if the essence of the concept behind the four-character phrase *kacho-fugetsu*—meaning "flower" (*ka*), "bird" (*cho*), "wind" (*fu*), and "moon" (*getsu*)—can really be explained, but according to the Daijirin dictionary, it means "1. A landscape with beautiful natural scenery. 2. The examination of nature in poetry or painting as a refined pastime. The aesthetic appreciation of nature." For example, one of the shortest poetic forms in the world is the Japanese haiku, in which, as a rule, words known as "season words" (*kigo*) are arranged in phrases of 5, 7, and 5 *on* expressive of the seasons.[2] Perhaps we even find something like this in the titles of Ozu's films, such as *Late Spring, Early Summer,*

Early Spring, and *Late Autumn;* nevertheless, many have wondered why there's no "winter" or "summer," and I have a feeling it's risky to bring up Ozu's name on the subject of "Japaneseness," so I'll leave it at that.[3] In any case, *Twilight Samurai* starts at the end of winter with snow melting and dropping from the eaves and a girl losing her mother, and ends in early summer, with flies swarming the corpse slain by Yogo and the same girl welcoming a new mother. This is not the only work in which Yamada linked characters' emotions to *kacho-fugetsu*—many of his dramas might also be described using this concept, which is closely linked to their subject matter. This is strikingly and artfully illustrated by the follow-up to *The Hidden Blade* (2004), *Love and Honor* (2006), the last part of the Yamada/Fujisawa *jidaigeki* trilogy.

The First Day of Shooting: In a Long Take, the Camera Tracks from Right to Left

Hollywood films that get nationwide release are typically planned and filmed according to what are called storyboards, images drawn on a sequentially ordered series of panels. In the case of *Twilight Samurai,* the filming of the duel and other specific scenes were based on numerous sketches known as *e-konte* (storyboards) that were prepared in advance, though these images were mainly used with the aim of deciding the placement of characters and determining the number of cuts (so, positioning the camera and deciding the scale at which characters will be shown), and I believe they were mostly sketched out immediately before the shoot, with the number of cuts and order of shooting determined on the day of filming.

The shots taken on the first day of filming were those for the scene in the home the day that Seibei's wife dies, or Scene 1 in the script. At dinner the previous day, Yamada and cinematographer Naganuma planned how the first shot would be filmed. In contrast to the scriptwriting, the setting for this discussion was a *sukiyaki* restaurant, and it seemed that arranging this right before the special day shooting was finally set to start served to charge the batteries once more before we began. (Since I have a beef allergy, I sat nearby eating a seafood *sukiyaki.*) Naganuma's proposal was to do the shot in one cut, beginning with people coming and going in the murky room and, as snow falls with a thud from the eaves, ending the long take with a close-up of the little girl's face. They'd been discussing this idea since before I came, so I don't know if they were just reviewing what had been decided or if this was the first time the proposal had been made. Because beginning a film with a long shot sets the tone for an entire film composed of long shots, I listened to the conversation with extreme apprehension. In the end, Yamada agreed to the idea, and I slipped out of my seat to telephone my superior, line producer Saito, to say "tomorrow they shoot a long take."

Incidentally, in the finished film this shot lasts one minute and twenty seconds, with the camera moving from right to left, but it seems there are almost no Hollywood films

that begin abruptly with a right-left tracking shot. It's probable this has something to do with the fact that the alphabet is written from left to right, or that lines on graphs run upward from left to right, or that a timeline progresses from left to right. I wondered if there weren't many in the overseas audience who felt a nearly unconscious, faint sense of unease as they began to watch the film.

Today, Japanese is transcribed both up-and-down and side-to-side. After the war and under the influence of English, the use of horizontally transcribed Japanese increased, but until then, the majority of Japanese was written vertically with subsequent lines added to the left. In most forms of literature and in letters, the gaze generally moves from right to left. Recently, with the spread of PCs, the use of horizontal writing in company documents and business writing is spreading, and emails and websites are also written horizontally. The main places one still sees Japanese written vertically are kinds of literature, like novels, newspapers, manga, and screenplays. In China and Korea, it seems the use of horizontal writing has dramatically increased, and in Japan as well, the use of horizontal writing in forms of literature will probably increase with the spread of social media networks and smart phones.

Whatever the case may be, there's no reason that tracking from right to left should create a strong sense of dissonance among Japanese, so for instance, when the vertically written opening credits of Mizoguchi's *Ugetsu* end, the film begins with a right-left camera movement, a predictable choice for a film auteur who envisioned "cinema like an *e-maki* picture scroll." Whether or not this comparison came to mind, this was rather exotic for Western film festival audiences at the time, to whom *Ugetsu* appeared incredibly new and fresh.

I haven't asked Yamada and Naganuma about this in the case of *Twilight Samurai,* but there's no reason for them to have been especially attentive to the direction of the camera, as their choice was made from the perspective of what worked best for directing the scene.

Examining the completed film, in the first shot, the voiceover narration draws attention to the fact that the entirety of the film is a recollection, so for many spectators a right-left shot seems inevitably—and extremely efficiently and effectively—to represent the backward flow of time as a camera movement.

For argument's sake, we could term Mizoguchi's long, typically high-angle, right-left shots "*e-maki mono*" shots, but we wouldn't call the first shot of *Twilight Samurai* by that name. For one, at the beginning of the film, before the first shot, we first see the main cast and crew credits written horizontally like the alphabet. (The title, however, appears several minutes later and is written vertically—this was a "work" commissioned from the famous *ikebana* master Nakagawa Yukio.)

In Japanese films, most opening credits are written horizontally. Until the early 1970s, vertically written titles were most common. The last shot to appear was "*owari*" (The End) when the film reached its end. It's probably only when three-minute-long scrolling end credits begin to appear, accompanied by the title song or main theme, that titles first began to be written horizontally. Of course, Hollywood films were probably also an influence, which is surely also related to the decline of the Japanese studio system.

I've always thought it odd that in Japan the majority of audience members remain seated to watch the credits roll until the very end, whereas in the West, people stand up just as soon as words start appearing on the screen, and by the time the end credits are over, there's not a soul left in the theater.

Anecdotally, last year in 2010, there was a retrospective of the director Amos Gitai at the Tokyo FILMeX film festival. At the Q&A after the screenings, I asked Gitai about the extremely striking last shot of *Esther* (1986), a long, moving-camera shot from right to left. Gitai's answer was something to the effect of, "I don't really remember, but it wasn't something I was particularly conscious of. I don't think it was the cinematographer [Henri Alekan]'s idea but mine, though a certain critic said [wrote] that maybe it had something to do with Hebrew being written from right to left."

I digress a little, but it used to be that English-language translations of manga in America were printed backward, with horizontal text reading left to right and binding that opened on the left. It seems they thought that a book that opened on the right (with consecutive, horizontally aligned frames reading right to left) wouldn't sell among Americans. So in those days, all the samurai in *jidaigeki* manga were left handed, and even their kimono were closed backward with the right-hand collar folded over the left. Lately they've started to make manga that open on the right, like the originals.

The Premiere and Film Festivals

Twilight Samurai was completed in July 2002 and opened nationwide in Shochiku theaters on November 2. These details aren't released to the public, so the figures below are all approximations, but let's say the production cost $5 million and advertising cost $3 million. To break even you'd need to make back a total of $8 million. However, supposing distribution costs use up half the box office revenue, box office revenue needs to add up to $10–$12 million lest, even taking into account secondary income like television broadcasts and DVD and video, the whole project ends up in the red. Around that time in 2002, if a film opened on approximately 200 screens, it needed to be a big hit or else it would come up short.

When *Twilight Samurai* was first released the numbers looked bad, and everyone was resigned to ending up in the red. With that kind of start, we couldn't possibly meet our target receipts.

However, it so happened that through a number of unusual occurrences, *Twilight Samurai* became a hit film and raised more than $15 million at the box office.

Prime Minister Koizumi and Publicity

In no time after its opening, *Twilight Samurai* was endorsed by Prime Minister Koizumi, a noted film fan. At that time the highly rated Koizumi administration (April 2001 to

September 2006) was pressing "painful structural reforms," and it seems that Seibei, who silently ekes out a humble living while carrying out the domain's "painful" orders, was a model "national citizen." Right after this came out, the lifestyle pages of newspapers started pitching the film as perfect for salarymen, and starting in the middle of its release, the film's audience began to grow.

As a side note, 2004's *The Hidden Blade* came out during the same Koizumi cabinet, which continued to receive high approval ratings, but one of the reasons the film didn't perform well is probably that the protagonist "followed by pain" *quits* being a samurai—in other words, it's about rejecting the entire system behind one's current predicament, and the film was unable to generate the same kind of publicity.[4] By contrast, it could be surmised that one of the factors that made *Love and Honor* a big hit when it opened in fall 2006 is that it deals with a protagonist "followed by pain" who remains a samurai within the system.

Compared to *gendaigeki* (modern dramas), there are far more *jidaigeki* plots that sensationalize contemporary conditions by transposing them to the past, for example, portraying protagonists who not only live according to but are even killed by the system. From a certain perspective, it's commonsense that films reflect contemporary box office mandates and political and economic conditions. It's never easy for a film to become a hit if its story is not somehow closely linked to contemporary concerns. By the same token, it seems that the exaggerated manner in which *jidaigeki* reflect their viewers' present-day circumstances increases their likelihood for success.

The Internet, the Berlin International Film Festival, and the Academy Awards Nomination for Best Foreign Language Film

Picking up the thread, while the film was in the midst of its release, Utada Hikaru, a popular musician who is influential among young people, made news by lending her support to the film on the Internet, and the younger audience increased.

Naturally, I'm not aware of anything that suggests that Prime Minister Koizumi and Utada were promoting the film at Shochiku's request.

Among critics and film journalists, too, the reviews were also extraordinary, the film dominated Japan's major film awards, and in February *Twilight Samurai* was screened as an official competition entry at the Berlin International Film Festival—the buzz it generated here also boosted the film, extending the film's run and landing it a nomination for the Academy Awards Best Foreign Language Film the following year, making it the first Japanese film in twenty years to be nominated. The box office take ultimately reached $15 million.

Incidentally, in 2002, the top two grossing domestic films were both anime: in first place *The Cat Returns: Ghiblies Episode 2* (dir. Momose Yoshiyuki) with $53 million, and in second place, *Case Closed: The Phantom of Baker Street* (dir. Kodama Kenji) with about $28 million. The number one foreign film was *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* (dir. Chris Columbus) with $168 million, and number two was *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* (dir. Columbus) with $149 million.

Conclusion

Later on, Yamada's *The Hidden Blade* and director Kurotsuchi Mitsuo's adaptation of the Fujisawa's novella *Semishigure* (*The Samurai I Loved,* 2005) were filmed in Tsuruoka in Yamagata Prefecture. In addition, the Shonai Eigamura (Shonai Movie Village) shooting facility was built, and year after year this has since specialized in filming *jidaigeki* for the theatrical market, including films like Miike Takashi's *Sukiyaki Western Django* and *Thirteen Assassins,* Hirayama Hideyuki's adaptation of the Fujisawa Shuhei work *Sword of Desperation,* and Sakamoto Junji's *Zatoichi: The Last.*

I've used up all my pages here, but if I had another opportunity, I'd write about all the wonderful actors and crew I've left out. For example, the film brought to fruition an extremely powerful and rare collaboration between sword fighting expert Kuze Hiroshi and kendo master Minowa Masaru. Or I might discuss the many films throughout history and from all over the world that are referenced by *Twilight Samurai* (for example, when and how to spot allusions to works like *The Searchers, Apocalypse Now, A Time to Live, A Time to Die,* and *Yojimbo*), or I'd write about the film's publicity.

This is just a modest piece of writing, but the more I've written, the more I recalled all the help I've received from so many along the way. Once more, I offer my deep gratitude to you.

Notes

1. Translator's note: *shinokosho* literally means "samurai, farmers, artisans, merchants," in descending order, the four castes in Japanese feudal society below the emperor and imperial family.
2. Translator's note: An *on* or mora is a phonetic unit in Japanese similar to a syllable.
3. Translator's note: The original Japanese-language title of *Early Summer* is *Bakushu*, or "wheat harvest," which contains the characters for "wheat" and "autumn."
4. Translator's note: Prime Minister Koizumi repeatedly warned that his reforms would be "accompanied by pain." "The pain of reform" became a famous catch phrase of his administration.

OCCUPATION AND MEMORY: THE REPRESENTATION OF WOMAN'S BODY IN POSTWAR JAPANESE CINEMA

AYAKO SAITO

The more the film is distanced from memory, the more the binding effect of the narrative is loosened. The sequence breaks apart. The fragments go adrift and enter into new combinations, more or less transitory, in the eddies of memory: memories of other films, and memories of real events (*The Remembered Film,* Victor Burgin).

REBELLIOUS WOMEN

IMMEDIATELY after the defeat in the Pacific War, Japan was subject to American occupation (from September 1945 to April 1952). Under this new order and regimentation, the country went through a 180-degree turn of the entire social, economic, political, and cultural system from a militarist, imperial society to a democratic one. It was, arguably, one of the most controversial and turbulent times in modern Japanese history, fraught with confusion and contradiction, as opposing forces and desires were negotiated through drastic changes and radical reforms, giving rise to conflicting reactions and ambivalent emotions. The radical experience of defeat and the subsequent occupation affected the lives of Japanese people in every way, and resonated with them for years to come.

With the ultimate objectives of demilitarization and democratization of Japan, the U.S.-controlled occupation government established a new regime based on a new constitution promulgated in November 1946. This democratization project aimed to "bring about the eventual establishment of a peaceful and responsible government which [would] respect the rights of other states," and prevent the "impos[ition] upon Japan [of] any form of government not supported by the freely expressed will of the people."[1] Its formulation, however, was, after all, an "imposed" democratic "revolution from above," as John Dower notes, controlled and implemented by a "neo-colonial military dictatorship,"[2] and, therefore, inevitably contradictory.

Confronted with this urgent and difficult task of reforming the defeated imperialist state into a democratic nation, the occupation government turned to the effectiveness of media to publicize this new ideology to society at large. Knowing the power of media as propaganda, it fully exploited the very media used by the Japanese militarist government to mobilize the nation for the imperial holy war. Various images and stories in newspapers, journals, radio, and cinema helped facilitate the process of this drastic transition, alleviating contradictory and duplicitous messages, functioning as a bridge between the physical reality and the psychical reality of war defeat and the occupation.

Kyoko Hirano demonstrates in her groundbreaking study *Mr. Smith Goes to Tokyo* that cinema was regarded as one of the most effective tools in transforming "the uncivilized Japanese nation into a civilized fellow citizen of the world."[3] On the day of the arrival of the occupation forces, the Information Dissemination Section (later the Civil Information and Education Section, or CIE) was established and began to control media by propaganda and censorship. By October 1945, the CIE exercised preproduction censorship of film projects and scripts by checking translated materials submitted by film companies, as well as postproduction censorship by checking completed films. All films to be screened in Japan—including foreign films, feature films, 16 mm documentaries, and educational films—had to be cleared by both civilian and military authorities. This double censorship officially started in January 1946 and continued through June 1949 when *Eiga rinri kanri iinkai* or *Eirin* (the Film Ethics Regulation Control Committee) was established. At this point, preproduction censorship was discontinued. Until the end of the occupation on April 28, 1952, however, completed films were subject to CIE's clearance and approval for screening.[4] The existence of CIE's censorship remained strictly confidential and was supposed to be virtually unknown to the general public.[5] CIE demanded that studios and filmmakers produce films that propagated democracy, and it prohibited anything that the CIE considered reminiscent of wartime militarism and imperialistic nationalism.[6] After having dealt for a long time with prewar and wartime control and censorship, in particular since the 1939 Film Law was put into effect, the Japanese film industry now faced categorical control and censorship once again, yet this time, ironically, in order to aid the democratization administered by the American authorities. Despite the new regime's intent to achieve the total negation of the militarist, imperial past, both the film industry and individual filmmakers were confronted with the structural continuity of regulation imposed by the occupation government's censorship and control "from above." The duplicitous structure of underlying continuity

in the guise of discontinuity lies at the heart of the practices and discourses of postwar Japanese cinema.

Among the major changes implemented by the occupation government, one of the most radical reforms the American authorities undertook was to advance gender equality and ensure women's rights, most visibly by granting woman suffrage in the new constitution. They endorsed the idea of women's liberation in their media policies, strongly promoting the depiction of liberated, independent woman in films as iconic representations of democratized new Japan, freed from wartime militarist repression and masculinist dominance. This policy radically changed the conventions of gender representation in Japanese cinema, which characterized film practice in the occupation era.

In an early stage of the occupation, many films were made with a clear objective to inculcate the ideology of democracy, as promoted by the recommendations of the CIE. They were referred to as democratization films, democratization enlightenment films, or idea pictures, and included Keisuke Kinoshita's *Osone-ke no ashita* (*The Morning of the Osone Family*), 1946; Akira Kurosawa's *Waga seishun ni kuinashi* (*No Regrets for My Youth*), 1946; Kenji Mizoguchi's *Josei no shori* (*The Victory of Women*), 1946; *The Love of Actress Sumako* (*Joyu sumako no koi*), 1947; and *Waga koi wa moenu* (*My Love Has Been Burning*), 1949; Tadashi Imai's *Minshu no teki* (*An Enemy of the People*), 1946 and *Aoi sanmyaku* (*The Green Mountains*), 1949; Teinosuke Kinugawa's *Joyu* (*Actress*), 1947, to name but a few.

One of the most interesting characteristics of such idea pictures was that women's liberation was heavily emphasized in the narrative, thanks to the occupation government's policy in promoting gender equality in social reform in Japan. So the representation of apparently strong-willed, liberated, and independent women, freed from wartime militarist repression and masculinist dominance, emerged on screen. Typically the woman is young, rebellious, and a proponent of the new democracy. She often and unabashedly criticizes patriarchal, conservative men for their sexist views, and challenges their authority by confronting their militaristic past, presenting a stark contrast from the representation of woman during wartime. Women and children, who used to be subservient to the masculinist nation's cause, confined in the domestic sphere, be it at home or in factory labor, protecting the home front, persevering through the hardship of war, unfailingly valorizing the imperial patriarchy of the Japanese nation, are now transformed, reformed to voluntarily support the new American ideology. At the same time, paternal authority and masculine virtues were denounced: men as the subject of prewar militarism and imperial violence were culturally and visually castrated.

Not every film presented such strong female images, of course. Often the story undermines the depiction of independent women by showing strong conflicts between traditional femininity and the newly gained notion of gender equality. However, the impact of these films was so great that they seemed to turn cinematic gender representation upside down. Typical heroines on screen such as strong militarist mothers and sisters who used to be fully in accord with the wartime ideology, suddenly rebelled against everything they had previously supported. Most importantly, faithfully following the reformers' calls, their rebellion was targeted toward Japanese manhood.[7] With war defeat and new democratization, men were portrayed as defeatist and reactionary, if not

simply weak and powerless, and women emerged as rebellious and defiant, even though such images of rebellious women were often deemed contrived and unnatural.

This pattern of female characters as oracles of democracy is already apparent in one of the first idea pictures, Kinoshita's *The Morning of the Osone Family*.[8] At the climax of the narrative, a mother whose son was killed in the war denounces her brother-in-law who was once a high army official. Encouraged by her daughter who helped her survive the hardships of war, the mother chastises him for his hypocrisy and war crimes: "It is you and your militarism that killed my son!"[9]

Another memorable image is found in many postwar Setsuko Hara characters, making a stark contrast to her typical wartime image as a loyal, diligent, obedient wife, daughter, or sister.[10] In Kurosawa's *No Regrets for My Youth,* the heroine Hara plays the spoiled petit bourgeois daughter of a college professor who endures the hardships of war for her antiwar activist husband who is arrested as a spy, and after his death in jail she inherits his will to work with and for the local peasants. In this film she is not explicitly an ideological messenger of democracy. However, she is an atypically strong-willed, independent, passionate woman, performed by Hara at times à la Bette Davis.[11] *Anjo-ke no butokai* (*A Ball at the Anjo House,* 1947) directed by Kozaburo Yoshimura, begins with a scene in which Hara directly speaks to the camera, "I am against it!" thus establishing her character's rebelliousness from the beginning. She also appears in *The Green Mountains* (1949) as a liberal schoolteacher who introduces democratic ways of thinking to an old provincial community in rural Japan. In an early scene, she slaps a male colleague in the face when he expresses an old-fashioned, feudalistic view of women. Interestingly, even in Yasujiro Ozu's *Late Spring* (1949), Hara's first collaboration with Ozu, who is often regarded to have best illustrated Japaneseness and the Japanese aesthetic, she plays an active young heroine, Noriko, who contradicts her widowed father's wish for her marriage. Her portrayal of Noriko is still reminiscent of the early occupational era heroine who expresses strong emotion and independent will, relentlessly showing her adversarial feelings against the father's potential choice in an arranged remarriage.[12]

Not only Hara but also other major actresses including Kinuyo Tanaka in Mizoguchi's *The Victory of Women,* Hideko Takamine in *Ai yo hoshi to tomoni* (*My Love with Stars*) (Kajiro Yamamoto, 1947), who used to represent ideal, traditional femininity ready for imperial sacrifice, in service to the nation, now joined in condemning men for their wrongdoing during wartime.[13] Women characters could assume innocence as victims, exempt from war crimes and imperial endeavors, unlike many male characters, who were either tormented by guilty memories from war or defeated former war criminals. Therefore, despite the new images of women used to convey the concomitant new image of a reborn Japanese society, the plausibility of such images could be undermined by the apparent continuity of the bodily presence of the leading actresses on screen.[14] In a way, the radical discontinuity of the social, cultural, and political realities of defeat and occupation tended to be obscured, or even absorbed, by the very continuous presence of actresses' bodies. It is as if their physical bodies in action on screen embraced the contradictions of defeat and occupation.

Thus, it was, above all, the female body that substantiated the new, postwar regime of democracy, at the same time epitomizing the contradiction of postwar democratization. The same body, once repressed and de-sexualized during the military regime, shamelessly delivers new messages in the postwar era, reflecting the ideology of the victors. More problematically, the woman's body soon becomes highly sexualized once again in the postwar culture milieu that Dower refers to as the "culture of defeat," typically known as *ero-guro* (erotic-grotesque) culture.

In fact, the occupation government and conservative Japanese politicians apparently utilized various forms of entertainment (described cynically by the political left as "three-S policy"—"sex, screen, and sports") to divert attention, energy, and frustration that might otherwise have been directed toward political activism, thereby protecting the occupation government and avoiding any call for real social change.[15] The validity of this sort of conspiracy theory notwithstanding, a culture of defeat that exploits expressions of sexual freedom flourished. The first Western-style beauty contest took place on January 15, 1947, crowning Miss Ginza. The same day saw the premiere of a precursor to the strip tease called the "picture-frame nude show" at the Teitoza in Shinjuku district. Entitled *The Birth of Venus,* it featured scantily dressed women posed inside large artificial picture frames as though they were famous Western paintings. Although it was not a strip show in the strict sense since the women were marginally covered, by 1948 American-style strip shows had emerged in Asakusa, one of Tokyo's major entertainment districts, introducing "new perspectives on 'democratization,'" and quickly spread throughout the country.[16] See figures 16.1 and 16.2.

FIGURE 16.1: The "picture-frame nude show."

FIGURE 16.2: Strip-shows in Asakusa, introducing a "new perspective of democratization."

Numerous magazines featuring erotic, sexually titillating stories, graphic images, and photos appeared and disappeared, forming what would be later known as the *ero-guro* culture, or the "*Kasutori* (cheap, poor-quality alcohol) culture."[17] Clearly, various forms of sexually charged, erotic entertainment, including cinema, were primarily targeted to and accordingly consumed by male audiences.[18] Despite the initial strict censorship, film exploited most of this drastically changing sexual order in the *Karutori* culture. As Hirano points out:

> Flush with the newly granted freedom to portray sex (as long as the genital areas were not actually exposed), Japanese filmmakers flooded the market with so-called "*ero-guro*" (erotic-grotesque) films full of titillating sexual appeals. Subgenres such as striptease films and "*pan-pan*" (streetwalker) films also arose.[19]

Sex and screen indeed worked hand in hand in both attracting and distracting the public. Postwar women's liberation was, thus, first and foremost, marked as the "liberation of the body," both in reality and visual imagination, epitomizing the contradiction of postwar democratization. Yet, one has to wonder to whom this liberation really was directed: the women who were displaying their almost naked bodies or the men who were watching them?

This is one of the most crucial questions posed by Joanne Izbicki in her insightful study of Japanese cinema during the occupation from a feminist perspective. She argues that the notion of "liberation and freedom" promoted by the occupation government

and disseminated by the media was closely connected to the proliferation of female bodies on display. As she writes:

> During the period of the Allied Occupation, the representation of the female body—in varying degrees of undress—figured regularly in film-journal illustrations and essays, fan-magazines, and in the movies themselves. Representations of the female nude had…long been part of twentieth century Japanese popular culture…However, the act of publicly disrobing on stage for the sole purpose of titillating the audience does not appear to have been a common mode of public entertainment before the postwar years.[20]

The tangibility of the bodily representations of women in motion in film, that is, the strong impact of the *visual* materialization of the woman's body—much more than that of the literary and illustrative field of representation, I would argue, was one of the most conspicuous and problematic articulations of the reality of war defeat and occupation.

This contradictory representation of liberated women on the occupied screen (to borrow Akira Iwasaki's expression) was one of the most articulate, fascinating visual icons of the reformed postwar Japan. In the following pages, I will trace the long-lasting repercussions of the traumatic experience of the occupation, experiences that were inscribed in women's bodies and haunted the cinematic vision and memory in postwar Japanese cinema for years to come. More than anything else, I would argue, fragments of the cinematic visual memories of the sexualized, liberated body of a woman as a traumatic signifier of the occupation will make unexpected returns to the past in the cinematic field of representation.

Bodies That Matter

Izbicki stresses the issue of how sexuality was represented publicly within the specific circumstances of the occupation and how that representation was related to notions of liberation in her analysis of the proliferation of female nudity or disrobed bodies on screen. However, I will argue that what is at stake is the question of the body/the flesh or *nikutai* as much as that of sexuality. Sexuality points to one aspect of valorization of the body. Sexual freedom is the most exquisite metaphor of the celebration of the liberation of the body in the occupation era, the notion that lies at the heart of *nikutai bungaku,* "literature of the flesh," or "body literature."

Indeed, postwar Japan saw an emergence of an era of *nikutai,* that is, the body. Many critics, historians, and scholars, including Dower, Yoshikuni Igarashi, and Michael S. Molasky, who have presented broader examinations of the social and cultural repercussions of the occupation, all emphasize that the body was the most privileged signifier of ambivalence of the occupation. They read the postwar body in opposition to the imperialistic notion of "*kokutai* [national body]" which abstracted the body into a national unity, rigidly regulating, or even negating its physical reality, in order to

regiment nationalist ideology. Therefore, the ending of war registered foremost as the liberation from wartime regulation of bodies. As Igarashi observes: "both the American occupation authorities and Japanese society deployed bodily images as tropes for radically shifting social configuration," and, thus, bodies "emerged in the immediate postwar period as ambivalent entities that represented both the liberation and the subjugation of Japan."[21]

To make it more problematic, the liberated sexualized image of women was often presented in tandem with degraded and feminized men as the iconic image of the nation's defeat. Probably, the most vexed representations of liberated, overly sexualized women were striptease dancers and prostitutes, notably, those derogatorily called *pan-pan,* streetwalkers who specifically catered to American GIs. "Decked out in brightly colored dresses, strutting around in high heels and puffing on Lucky Strikes," the tough sexual presence of the *pan-pan* is the embodiment of postwar ambivalence: "admiration and disdain, pity and envy, fear and desire."[22] On the one hand, regardless of whether sexual freedom was voluntarily embraced, "sexual enjoyment marked the postwar liberation of Japanese bodies and expressed defiance of the regulatory regime that demanded bodily sacrifices."[23] On the other hand, however, the contrast between the liberated women with the American GIs and defeated Japanese men was an ironic image, to say the least— a disturbing, ambivalent signifier of both postwar liberation and the humiliating subjugation of Japanese female sexuality. As Dower observes, in both reality and popular culture, this visual configuration constantly evoked a "piercing wound to national pride in general and masculine pride in particular."[24] Once "Americanized," these women were subject to both desire filled with yearning, as well as hatred and contempt. The overly sexualized *pan-pan* was the embodiment of the historical trauma of war defeat and occupation. The representations of these women were thus both consciously and unconsciously perceived as evidence of masculine crisis, and it remains a persistent visual memory of the postwar historical trauma.[25]

It was *nikutai bungaku* (hereafter translated as "body literature") that most relentlessly valorized and exploited women's bodies, especially those of streetwalkers.[26] The emergence of body literature, best exemplified by Taijio Tamura's novels, propagated the stereotyped image of sexually "liberated" prostitutes and streetwalkers as the postwar symbol of social change reinforced a tendency of depicting women's liberation *as* the liberation of the body. Although Tamura's novel *Nikutai no akuma* (*Devil in the Flesh*) published in September 1946 marked the beginning of body literature, it was *Nikutai no mon* (*Gate of Flesh*) published in March 1947 that sparked a huge sensation, creating a *nikutai* boom. It tells a story about a group of *pan-pan* who try to survive the harsh realities of defeat and postwar confusion, with tough, no-nonsense attitudes to life. The "brash, iconoclastic streetwalkers" that embraced not only former enemies but more importantly "American mannerism and fashion," fascinated traumatized writers just back from the battlefield who were trying to face the realities of defeat.[27]

Tamura's *nikutai* discourse explores the male subject's effort to come to terms with the trauma of war defeat and occupation.[28] He was drafted in 1940, stationed in the Northeast of China and stayed there in the battlefield as a sergeant until his return to

Japan in January 1946. Totally disillusioned by the "holy war," he wrote *Devil in the Flesh,* a love story of a Japanese soldier and a Chinese woman soldier passionately engaged in the resistance movement against the Japanese army. Heavily criticized for the novel's lack of "thought," Tamura defended himself in an essay, which became known as his declaration of *nikutai* discourse.[29] For Tamura, *nikutai* was reliable because one could at least feel pain and suffer the hardship of living. The body that grasps, enjoys, suffers, signified everything human, making an explicit contrast to the wartime ideology of highly abstract, spiritual "national body" which was nothing but "thought," an entity totally devoid of humanity. Tamura repeatedly insisted on the physicality of the carnal body as a rite of passage that the Japanese, now as the defeated nation, ought to overcome. In order to enter the world of modernity, that is "to be fully human," one had to "become modern," or, in other words, achieve complete Westernized subjecthood: in this formulation, the gate to modernity is ultimately to be fully *man*.[30] But what he needed to be "fully man" was the sexual other of the female colonial body: highly sexualized images of prostitutes in the colonial landscape of Manchuria and China, as well as the postwar *pan-pan* provided Tamura a perfect signifier of the other.

Therefore, in Tamura's discourse of the flesh, woman's body assumed a role as an agent of the "modernization" project, bearing the colonial unconscious, while struggling to achieve unattainable modernity under occupation. That was at the core of the contradiction he consciously and unconsciously was working through by way of narrating from the woman's body, while objectifying it as the primitive other. Appropriating the woman's body, possessing it, by sexually dominating it itself has become the ultimate aim, in a sense, giving an illusion of disavowing the historical trauma.

Published two months after the first beauty contest and the first picture frame nude show, *Gate of Flesh* was a phenomenon, fueling the emerging *ero-guro* culture with its titillating sexual description and direct reference to postwar social problems, so much so that it became a long-running sensation that spanned several cultural spheres. In August 1947, only seven months after publication, it was adapted into a stage play and performed at the Teitoza, the same theater where the "picture-frame nude show" was inaugurated. The play also proved to be a sensational hit with a run of more than one thousand performances over three years. Quite naturally, what drew public interest was the women players' titillating costumes and sexual references.[31] It was soon made into a film, directed by Masahiro Makino, supported by many players from the theater, and released in August 1948. This was only the first of the four adaptations, which appeared in every decade from the 1960s to the 1980s.

Thus, the postwar boom of body literature is a direct response to the sexual reconfiguration of Japanese society under occupation. Postwar cinema not only expanded the vision and discourse of body literature, but the highly gendered postwar cinematic representation owes a great deal to the *nikutai* discourse as much as to the *ero-guro* culture, as noted earlier, with broader historical impact. In cinema, "body literature" achieved a more long-lasting legacy as the immediacy of the bodies of the actresses on screen etched memorable visual representations into popular memory.[32] As a contemporary critic pointed out, the parallel movement and mutual influences between postwar

cinema and literature cannot be overestimated for mapping the postwar reconfiguration of cultural discourses.[33] The cinema of the occupation era had now taken another turn from the coerced "idea pictures" to the cinema of the flesh, as a discursive response to the contradictory nature of the body in the democratization project implemented during the occupation. Here the woman's body was recognized as a singularly privileged signifier of postwar freedom and liberation from the military past, while it bore witness to the ugly reality of occupation and defeat.

The importance of *nikutai* discourse is not limited to its literary importance or Tamura's individual artistic vision. It also lies in its historical and cultural ramifications in the gender representation of films from the 1950s onward. The visceral body of the *pan-pan* with her apparently unrestricted sexuality and defiant vitality, or at least so it seemed to the defeated male subject, haunts like a ghost, evoking a threatening memory of an image of a castrated, powerless, impotent nation dwelling in war defeat and occupation, through *Taiyozoku* [sun tribe] cinema in the mid-1950s. She appears, too, in the cinema of Yasuzo Masumura or Seijun Suzuki, who belong to the so-called *senchu-ha* generation (those who spent their youth in war years) of filmmakers in the 1960s.

In postwar cinema, the woman's body continues to be the major site of negotiation and contradiction: as the emergence of the sun tribe in the revisionary, phallocentric vision of Shintarao Ishihara, author of *Taiyo no kisetsu* (*Season of the Sun*) and later right-wing politician, typifies this trend. Woman's body as sexually dominated by the former enemy appears again and again in the literary and cinematic imagination, motivating problematic and endlessly repeated representations of rape.[34] The very ambivalent, sexually charged representation of women not only reflected the condition of postwar Japan, but also projected the political and social anxieties of defeated male subjects, reinforcing the age-old misogynistic myth of femininity as duplicitous and unreliable, and women as betrayers and cheats. This is not all that postwar cultural imagination has to offer, however.

Dance, Girl, Dance: Showcasing Kinoshita's Carmen

Apparently, the images of prostitutes proved fascinating for many directors and screenwriters as well as for *nikutai* discourse and left-wing socialist discourse in which modern prostitution offers one of the most favorite metaphors of capitalist exploitation of humanity. Though still under CIE's direct censorship, both 1948 productions of *Gate of Flesh* and *Women of the Night* dealt directly with the *pan-pan*; the latter features long-time national sweetheart Kinuyo Tanaka in a 180-degree transformation from her roles in the 1930s or even from her bad-modern-girl images in the 1920s. Even Ozu's *Kaze no nakano mendori* (*A Hen in the Wind*) deals with a housewife, played by Tanaka, who has no other recourse but prostitution when her child needs expensive medication.

Tamura's *Shunpuden* (*Diary of a Prostitute*) is first made into film in 1950 as *Akatsuki no dasso* (*Desertion at Dawn*) directed by Senkichi Taniguchi, and CIE's interventions into the film's script are well examined by Hirano.

By the early 1950s, before the end of the occupation film policy in 1952, many films contained scenes or a few shots showing scantily clad women in performance on stage, in clubs, cabarets, or cafes, usually not closely tied to the narrative.[35] As examined by Izbicki, such films as Kozaburo Yoshimura's *Jiyu gakko* (*Freedom School,* 1951), Minoru Shibuya's *Tenyawanya* (*Utter Confusion,* 1950) or Akira Kurosawa's *Ikiru* (*To Live,* 1952), with scenes featuring the public display of female flesh illustrate "the installation of female nudity as public, paid entertainment and as a vehicle for constructing a masculinized notion of liberation."[36] The rooftop scene in *Tenyawanya* where Chikage Awashima lies on a blanket in a two-piece bathing suit recalls one of the most famous postwar photo series featuring Kasutori culture shot by Tadahiko Hayashi.

In this context, a discussion of two specific films is in order: *Karumen kokyo ni kaeru* (*Carmen Comes Home*) and *Karumen junjo su* (*Carmen Falls in Love*), directed by Keisuke Kinoshita in 1951 and 1952, respectively, both starring Hideko Takamine as the heroine, Lily Carmen, an exemplary and subversive postwar female icon. Both films are apparently simple yet surprisingly poignant comedies. They are fascinating allegories of postwar Japan under occupation that deal directly with the issue of women's bodies and defeated masculinity.

Carmen Comes Home is one of the first films that feature that typical icon of postwar femininity, the stripper as protagonist. Among films that directly deal with the women under occupation, *Carmen Comes Home* is unique because it was a major, high-budget production, featuring one of the most popular stars, directed by one the most prominent directors, and produced by a major studio, Shochiku. It is not a typical *shimpa* melodrama (a new theater school featuring contemporary and realistic dramas emerged in the late nineteenth century), which had a long tradition of depicting woman in service professions as tragic, social victims, as with the case of Mizoguchi's *Women of the Night*. On the contrary, it is a comedy, not designed as a social critique like *Gate of Flesh* or *Women of the Night,* but, at least on the surface, as pure entertainment and a commercial venture—the first domestic color film.

Hideko Takamine was one of the most popular actors of all time, and her enormous presence cannot be underestimated when considering her impact in an era in which Japanese cinema had a vast cultural and social influence on public imagination. Lily Carmen is a stripper, who believes her job is real art, and, thus, she considers herself an artist. *Carmen Comes Home* begins with Lily and her friend, Akemi (played by another popular actress Toshiko Kobayashi), two strippers coming from Tokyo to Lily's provincial hometown, a premodern countryside whose landscape remains unscarred by the brutality of war. The film presents the two women with bold flashy clothes and heavy make-up, marking a stark contrast to the bucolic landscape and simple rural people. Their presence, their brash, artificial, in other words, postwar, Americanized appearance, breaks the peaceful local landscape, almost as a rude awakening, like a violent intrusion of modernity into this premodern world. Here, the director alienates the

female body, which has always been "naturalized," projecting at the same time postwar confusion onto the woman's body.

The peaceful local town is reminiscent of lost prewar innocence of Japan. Beautiful mountain landscape, children peacefully playing in the school yard, with a minor tune played by a blind music teacher whom Carmen secretly likes but who has a very traditional wife. In the course of the narrative, Carmen unwittingly humiliates the blind teacher, but in the end, Carmen's art, that is striptease, manages to help him financially. The allegorical nature of the whole setting is obvious. The blind man is the avatar of the castrated male who is served by traditional femininity for his everyday needs, while the Americanized, liberated woman helps him financially. The dichotomy between the prewar-Japanese-rural and the postwar-Americanized-metropolitan dominates the film.

Music also accentuates the difference: Everything that is Japanese and traditional is expressed with melody in a minor key, whereas the two dancing and singing heroines use westernized modern musical accompaniment. Takamine was already successful as a singer with a huge popular hit, *Ginza kankan musume* ("Ginza Can Can Girl," 1949) directed by Koji Shima, and her singing was featured as much as her dancing, marking the Kinoshita film almost as a musical. A critic described the film as "ochazuke (green tea over rice) with beef steak on it" or "a mixture of luxury of American cinema and modesty of Japanese cinema."[37] The film posits the two women's bodies as a site where the domestic and the alien meet. See figures 16.3 and 16.4.

FIGURE 16.3: Lily Carmen (Hideko Takamine) and Akemi (Toshiko Kobayashi) in *Carmen Comes Home* (1951).

FIGURE 16.4: Two Americanized women from the city in a provincial Japanese village in *Carmen Comes Home* (1951).

On the narrative level, Carmen and Akemi's thinly dressed bodies are supposed to be the "objects" of desire, to be looked at, evoking visual pleasure from the male audience. Carmen's body is that of a big star, the young and pretty, lively Hideko Takamine, but the sheer cinematic presence and power of the lively dynamic bodies of two women frolicking through the rural landscape, doing a song and dance number, subverts the potential objectification of their bodies, by undermining the classical code-of-gender representation. Kinoshita even brings a comical touch by depicting a teacher and children who are supposed to be painting the landscape but notice the women dancing and sneakily look at them. See figures 16. 5 and 16. 6.

Consider the famous field-day scene in which they accidently humiliate the blind teacher. While people are listening to the sad minor-tone music the teacher composed with a solemn sense of gratification, Akemi suddenly stands up shouting because of being touched by an anonymous hand, with her skirt sliding down (i.e., an accidental striptease), followed by rolling laughter. The blind teacher does not know what is going on, and this traumatizes him. The bright image of the big field with flags hanging around in the middle with the Asama mountains under the blue sky, with Akemi standing up with her beautiful legs exposed creates a strange mixture of feelings of liberation in the open school yard, tinged with a sense of humiliation and sexual titillation, as well as laughter and sadness. See figures 16. 7, 16. 8, and 16. 9.

Kinoshita clearly plays with the two heroines, perhaps to mock the new strip-show fad by taking a cynical view of the two heroines who believe what they do is an art. It could be easily read as a poignant satire of naive strippers as a problematic product of the postwar *ero-guro* culture, not to mention the people who shamelessly pursue such

FIGURE 16.5: The lively dynamic bodies frolicking in the rural field in *Carmen Comes Home* (1951).

FIGURE 16.6: Local boys gawking at Carmen and Akimi dancing in *Carmen Comes Home* (1951).
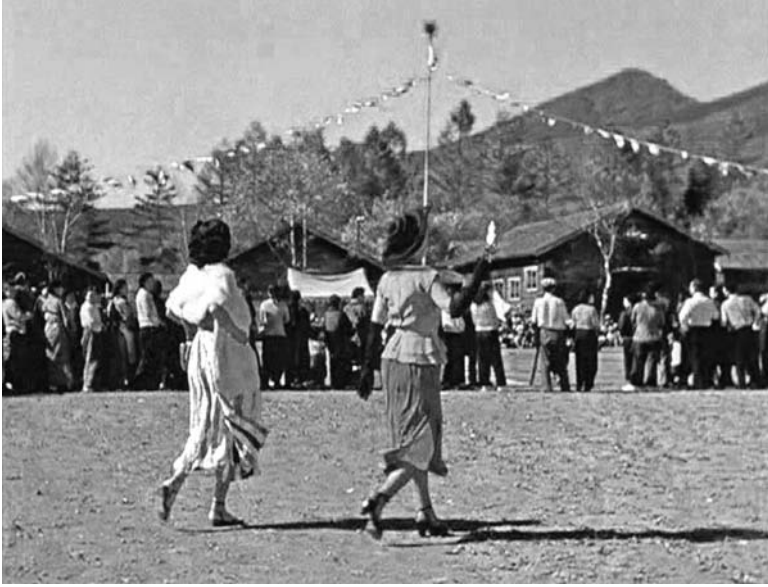
FIGURE 16.7:   Two strippers walking in the local school yard in *Carmen Comes Home* (1951).

FIGURE 16.8:   The blind music teacher playing the minor-toned music in a solemn manner in *Carmen Comes Home* (1951).

FIGURE 16.9: Akemi's bare legs accidentally exposed, prompting rolling laughter in *Carmen Comes Home* (1951).

erotic entertainment in the culture of defeat. In fact, even a strain of misogyny could be detected in the depiction of the strippers. In this regard, "the ultimate thrust of the film" may be "rather reactionary," as Izbicki argues.[38] However, because Kinoshita does not control the unrestricted, carefree bodies of the two actresses, his direction emphasizes the excessive, eruptive power of their bodies.

The final strip show that Carmen and Akemi perform is considered a spectacle on a literal level. They both engage in titillating and seductive performance, but, on another level, Kinoshita deprives the show of its eroticism, by constantly inserting shots of rural audiences who look perplexed. Men do not know how to take the performance because it is too stimulating for them and women enjoy the curious act, yet remain puzzled by it. Moreover, Takamine dances with solemn face evoking a professional mode. Toward the end of the dances, the music becomes uncontrolled and both Carmen and Akemi move from dance to something closer to exercise as they kick their legs high. See figures 16. 10–16. 13.

At this point, the supposedly erotic spectacle becomes sheer bodily movement; its presumed visual pleasure turns into something burlesque and subversive. Quite contrary to Rita Hayworth's striptease scene in *Gilda* (Charles Vidor, 1946), Kinoshita constructs this sequence, with his rather queer sensibility undermining the fetishized body as spectacle and exposing femininity as performance at the same time that he critiques the kind of controlling male gaze.[39] Despite Kinoshita's initial intention to criticize the postwar erotic entertainment and the culture of defeat at the expense of female characters, the way in which the film liberates the bodies of the actresses unwittingly effectuates a critique of masculinist tendency of the *nikuitai* discourse.

FIGURE 16.10:   Carmen dances with solemn face in *Carmen Comes Home* (1951).

FIGURE 16.11:   Carmen and Akemi performing striptease in front of the villagers in *Carmen Comes Home* (1951).

FIGURE 16.12: Moving from striptease to sheer exercise in *Carmen Comes Home* (1951).
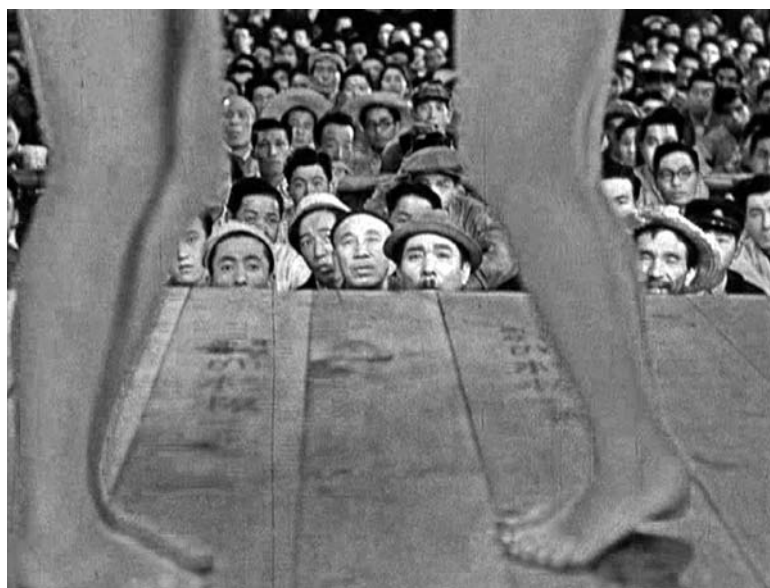
FIGURE 16.13: Kinoshita's self-conscious teasing shot of the supposedly controlling male gaze in *Carmen Comes Home* (1951).

After this burlesque show, Kinoshita immediately cuts to a scene in which four adult men (Carmen's father, the school principal, and two teachers) drink with their heads bowed out of embarrassment. They cannot stand the ridicule the two young women face by performing a striptease in front of the local audience. The contrast of the two women and the men, explicit in the transition between the two scenes, ironically reveals that the postwar liberation of the female body could only mean shameful humiliation to the male subject. See figure 16.14.

In *Carmen Falls in Love,* a sequel to *Carmen Comes Home,* Carmen and Akemi are brought back to the city, Tokyo.[40] Now, Akemi, a single mother, abandoned by her lover, comes to Lily for help. There is no stark contrast between excessive female body and nature, as in the previous film, but Kinoshita this time goes even further: he de-stabilizes the entire film by constantly tilting the camera. Moreover, he questions the demands on the female body by at times stripping of them of their "femininity." Neither Carmen nor Akemi's body is presented as an object of admiration or titillation. Takamine, in her underwear, sits like a man, and snores in her sleep, while Kobayashi, in her motherly outfit, nurses her baby most of the time. As actresses, they are stripped of their beauty and glamour. Strip shows are no longer a form of erotic entertainment in *Carmen Falls in Love*; rather, they are a trade that these women perform for living. The two strippers are first and foremost presented as laborers who earn a living to take care of Akemi's child. See figures 16.15 and 16.16.

There are striptease scenes in the film, but the erotic charge is negated and subverted. In one of the climactic, and most memorable strip-show scenes, Carmen even refuses to perform because she has fallen in love with a dubious avant-garde artist, Sudo, and

FIGURE 16.14:   Men in gloom in *Carmen Comes Home* (1951).

FIGURE 16.15: Lily Carmen performing striptease with Bizet's music in *Carmen Falls in Love* (1952).

FIGURE 16.16: Carmen in her underwear, Akemi baby nursing in *Carmen Falls in Love* (1952).

she would not like the idea of performing a striptease in front of her beloved. The entire show goes haywire, and the manager tries to drag the stubborn Carmen onto the stage to force her to perform. At this point, the film's music changes its tone to the classical silent-film *chanbara* (cloak-and-dagger) music, and to help Carmen out of this mess, Akemi jumps onto the stage, suddenly becoming a female *swordsman*! The subversive nature of the scene is astounding; here as in the previous film, the eroticization of the female body is thoroughly undermined to the degree that translates the scene as critical social commentary. Whatever Kinoshita's intention was in the scene, its hilarity depends on a revelation of the contradictions foisted on the female body in postwar cultural discourses. See figures 16.17–16.20.

Moreover, in this film, Kinoshita adds a highly dubious female politician as a parody of prewar conservative ideology, and a rather odd housekeeper, played by Chieko Higashiyama (perhaps best known as the genteel mother in Ozu's *Tokyo Story*) constantly refers to the atomic bomb in Hiroshima. Due to censorship, such characters would have been impossible during the occupation, but Kinoshita manages to include the political issues of rearmament and the revival of the conservative party at a particular moment in time. As a consequence, the film is disjointed, and might even be considered an artistic failure, but it does powerfully assume a kind of carnivalesque atmosphere, a mixture of passion, parody, ridicule, critique, sympathy, and playfulness, constantly undermining and mocking the stereotypical depiction of gender representation. In a way, this film translates quite directly the postwar confusion in many different ways and could only have been made in this particular time. Ultimately, both Carmen and Akemi do not appear to be "rebellious" in the narrative, but in its entirety, their role

FIGURE 16.17:   Carmen refuses to strip with her beloved in the audience in *Carmen Falls in Love* (1952).

FIGURE 16.18: The shows goes haywire when the dancer refuses to dance in *Carmen Falls in Love* (1952).

FIGURE 16.19: Jumping onto the stage, Akemi chivalrously tries to help Carmen in *Carmen Falls in Love* (1952).

FIGURE 16.20: A dubious female politician as a parody of prewar conservative ideology in *Carmen Falls in Love* (1952).

within the film is so aberrant that they possess the potential to destabilize dominant gender order.

In these two films, the contradictions of body politics during the occupation are played out. Carmen is nothing but a product of postwar confusion, corruption, and contradiction: striptease functions as a symbol of postwar liberation that, in the end, cannot mask the reality of the occupation itself. Historical continuity and discontinuity are projected on the female body, which then negotiates the incompatible reality. However, although the woman's body is supposed to be presented and exploited as the object of desire, consumed within the narrative, or simply delivering messages as oracles, her body can be potentially aberrant, subversive, revealing the contradictions themselves, which are supposed to be sealed into her body. The woman's body assumes a function of exorcizing ghosts from the war past, even as it symptomatically projects a desire to retrieve the historical continuity in negating the historical trauma of war defeat. At the same time, the two Carmen films are among the few films that deal with the occupation as such, not metaphorically, but self-reflexively by questioning and underlining the female body of the postwar icon, the stripper.

Kinoshita ends *Carmen Falls in Love* rather suddenly with a question "Carmen, where are you going?" which resonates as a question about the depiction of gender in Japanese film generally during this period. In 1953 he directs *Nihon no higeki* (*Tragedy of Japan*) and in 1954 *Onna no sono* (*The Garden of Women*), furthering his critical view on postwar reality and gender representation. However, he then directs *Twenty-Four Eyes* (1954) with Hideko Takamine, this time making her a national heroine, an idealistic mother of democracy, and representative victim of the traumatic wartime past—a character totally

at odds with Takamine's Carmen, who once carried on her excessive body the culture of defeat, and ambivalent postwar liberation. This is a symbolic event for Japanese film history, precisely because it marks the moment the female body was reappropriated by domestic ideology and aligned with a patriarchal discourse of femininity.[41]

ANOTHER CARMEN: SEIJUN SUZUKI REVISITED

Although *nikutai* discourse eventually lost its special privilege in postwar liberation and its meaning of "resistance" against the militarist past, its representation of the female body has long haunted postwar cinema. A good example is Seijun Suzuki's *Kawachi Karumen* (*Carmen From Kawachi*), released in 1966—a rather neglected film.

At first glance, Kinoshita's Carmen and Suzuki's Carmen seem to have nothing in common except for the name of the heroine. The latter is an adaptation from an original novel by Toko Kon, contemporary popular writer, and there seems to be no evidence that Kon was referring to Kinoshita's Carmen in his novel, although the name Carmen in both versions clearly refers to the original heroine in the Mérimée novel, which was adapted into Bizet's opera and had been known in Japan since the 1920s in the repertoire of the Asakusa Opera.[42]

Both the *Carmen* series and *Kawachi Karumen* (hereafter *Kawachi*) are regarded as lesser films in the directors' oeuvres. Especially, *Kawachi* has drawn little critical attention; Suzuki (hereafter Seijun) is more known for his early action films in the 1950s, or sardonic films noir in 1960s in his Nikkatsu days such as *Tokyo nagaremono* (*Tokyo Drifter,* 1966), *Kenka elergy* (*Fighting Elegy,* 1966), and *Koroshi no rakuin* (*Branded to Kill,* 1967) all immediately follow *Kawachi,* or his artistic ventures in the 1980s such as *Twigoineruwaizen* (*Zigeunerweisen,* 1980) and *Kagero-za* (*Heat Summer Theater,* 1981).

Moreover, Seijun notoriously dislikes critics reading his films and analyzing them, politically or ideologically, or interpreting them seriously. Despite this, he has been regarded as an auteur with a distinct cinematic style, especially good at deconstructing genre films, but he has generally been regarded as a filmmaker with no social or political interests. His avowed refusal to be regarded as a "serious" director in a sense makes it harder to contextualize him in the occupation or postoccupation cinema. Yet, we have to remember that in the mid 1960s, he made two remakes based on Taijio Tamura's novels: *Gate of Flesh* (1964) and *Story of a Prostitute* (1965). He directed *Story of a Prostitute,* perhaps because of the sensational hit of *Gate of Flesh,* but as Inuhiko Yomota has demonstrated, Seijun's version is much closer to Tamura's original novel than the 1950 adaptation *Desertion at Dawn.*[43] One may even argue that the three films—two Tamura remakes and *Kawachi*—may constitute Suzuki's postwar woman's trilogy: all feature Yumiko Nogawa as the heroine, whose bodily presence made her famous as an actress who did not reject nudity on screen.[44]

Given this context, the seemingly innocent signifier "Carmen" becomes loaded with meaning, transforming its lone iconoclastic auteur into a historical subject, placing him in the larger context of postwar Japanese cinema. "Carmen" connects seemingly dissimilar Kinoshita and Seijun vis-à-vis Tamura, forming an alternative perspective of a hidden history consisting of visual memories from personal and cultural postwar experiences. As I will discuss later, Seijun, in fact, inserts postwar visual memories in his films, in a rather erratic manner, constantly returning to his point of departure as a filmmaker back in 1948 in the Shochiku studio, the year in which the first adaptation of *Gate of Flesh* was made into a film by Makino. Here Seijun is no longer a stylistic cineaste, but rather a postwar generational male filmmaker. This Seijun is precisely whom I want to shed light on.

Many of Seijun's early Nikkatsu action films feature the clubs and dancing halls of the postoccupation era. For example, in *Yaju no seishun* (*Youth of the Beast*) in 1963, in which he collaborated with set designer Takeo Kimura whose work helped establish his directorial style, a huge mirror effectively highlights a strip-show scene. The stylized use of the mirror demands critical attention, as do the film's harsh postwar references. Although released in 1963, the diegetic world still makes direct reference to the postwar trauma of occupation.

Even though *Kawachi* is definitely a film after *nouvelle vague,* if we take a look at *Kawachi* in this context, strangely enough there are some scenes very reminiscent of Kinoshita's two Carmen films, especially in the first half of the film. The opening scene of *Kawachi* presents the mountain landscape in Kawachi, echoing that of the Asano Mountains in *Carmen Comes Home*. The shot of Reiko with a rose stem in her mouth is evocative of Takamine's Carmen in the opening scene of *Carmen Falls in Love*. Reiko then rides on a bicycle, an image symbolic of many idea pictures of liberated youths in films such as *No Regrets for My Youth* and *The Green Mountains,* thereby connecting this heroine to the young oracles of democracy. See figures 16.21 and 16.22.

FIGURE 16.21: *Carmen From Kawachi,* 1966.

FIGURE 16.22: Reiko (Yumiko Nogami) with a rose-stem in her mouth against the rural mountain landscape in *Carmen From Kawachi* (1966).

Moreover, one of the main male characters Takano, played by Tamio Kawachi, departs from the original novel. Originally he is an industrial designer, but in the film he is an avant-garde painter, who likes to call his work a *geijutsu* (art), Carmen's favorite word; he is thus reminiscent of Sudo, the dubious avant-garde artist Carmen falls in love with in Kinoshita's *Carmen Falls in Love*. Seen from this perspective, Takano may be said to be a parody and a critique of Sudo because, unlike Sudo, who tries to exploit Carmen, Takano turns out to be the only man who does not exploit *Kawachi's* Carmen. See figures 16.23 and 16.24.

FIGURE 16.23: Carmen's love interest, Sudo (Masao Wakamiya) in his avant-garde art studio in *Carmen Falls in Love* (1952).

FIGURE 16.24: Takano (Tamio Kawachi) on the left, an avant-garde painter, reminiscent of Sudo, in *Carmen From Kawachi* (1966).

Of course, Carmen in *Kawachi* performs a song-and-dance number, though she is not a stripper. Nonetheless, her dance approaches that of striptease: in a cabaret named "DADA," she takes off her stockings on the bar counter, like a runway from Carmen's stage in *Carmen Falls in Love*. See figures 16.25 and 16.26. Although the second half of the film takes a different turn, following Carmen's passionate but disappointing first love experience and showing her coming to terms with her mother's illicit relationship with her lover, in the final scene, Carmen determines to start all over again in Tokyo. The film ends with a shot of Carmen with the stem of the rose in her mouth again. The shot could somehow be read to be a perfect reply to Kinoshita's question, "Carmen, where are you going?" I am tempted to say that Seijun's *Carmen From Kawachi* may be an answer to the question posed by *Carmen Falls in Love* about 14 years earlier.

This film is not only *about* a woman in the postoccupational time, but also *visually* refers to the cinema of occupation. These small details are probably coincidental. As a whole, the film looks different with different themes, definitely a mid-1960s film based

FIGURE 16.25: Reiko posing like Lily Carmen (see Figure 16.15) in *Carmen From Kawachi* (1966).

FIGURE 16.26:   Frame composition reminiscent of Kinoshita's version (see Figure 16.17) in *Carmen From Kawachi* (1966).

on a different original novel. Seijun himself would have sneered at any critical interpretation of his work. However, if we situate Seijun within *nikutai* discourse and its continuing ramifications in the mid-1960s, while he was making Tamura adaptations, he might have been unconsciously thinking of and responding to, if not fully aware of, this context. One should not underestimate Seijun's experiences as a soldier in the Philippines and Taiwan who returned in 1946 to the culture of defeat in the occupation era. Seijun and his films may be, or I would argue, *should be* read alternatively in a discursive history of the larger context of postwar Japanese cinema.

As mentioned earlier, Seijun was first hired by Shochiku studio in 1948, started working as an assistant director in 1951, and then, in 1954, moved to Nikkatsu. He never worked for Kinoshita while he was at Shochiku: actually, rumor has it that Kinoshita refused to have Seijun as his assistant director because of Seijun's shabby look, yet Kinoshita was the only director who encouraged Seijun when he left for Nikkatsu. His filmmaking career began with the culture of defeat, with the three-S policy, in the *ero-guro* culture. As a director, he made many B-action films because he was not assigned to make big star productions featuring the Nikkatsu star, Yujiro Ishihara. Behind the glamorous A-feature star vehicles, Seijun quickly made genre films simple entertainment; he reportedly said that cinema was fine as long as it had action and singing and, even better, dancing.[45]

Despite all this, when *Gate of Flesh* was critically dismissed as a mere *ero-guro* film, he wrote an essay defending his film and, indirectly, *nikutai* discourse, exactly as Tamura defended his novel when attacked by the literary establishment. In this essay entitled "*Raidosha* [Blind Follower]" he argues that, without hyperbole and excess, the *nikutai* film is no different from the so-called home drama (family drama) because "in terms of the basis of our everyday life in Japan family drama and nikutai film are exactly the same in its quality," and "there are no lively human beings in a 'healthy family drama.'" Seijun continues:

> That is exactly why we look for subjects in the unusual situations or aberrant events, reviving an ordinary human being as a "real human." In other words, it's a reevaluation of human being. Borneo Maya in *Gate of Flesh* violates the *okite* [law]

for survival to be a dropout, willing to take the risk of being lynched. If we replace this law with the emperor system or democracy we understand clearly that Maya is a woman with the spirits of modernity. She is not a blind follower like us.... I wonder what a man saw [in my film] who pointed out the temporal gap of twenty years between the original novel and this film adaptation.... He must have taken this sublime lie as the truth, he has become a pre-modern man who esteemed the reality over lie.[46]

In an amazing manner, Seijun's understanding echoes Tamura's *nikutai* discourse in the immediate postwar period under occupation. He knew too well that previous adaptations were subject to CIE's censorship, and, therefore, he failed to depict what the heroine was fighting against.

Furthermore, in another essay Seijun wrote, entitled "*yo-pan* to *norainu* to jido-shoju [The *Pan-pan* Who Specializes in American GIs and *Stray Dog* and Automatic Rifle]," an essay that could be read as a reply to criticism against *Story of a Prostitute,* he reveals an amazing observation about the occupation cinema, mixing in his own personal experience.[47] He introduces some people's reactions to postwar films. He rented a room to two *yo-pan* in the spring of 1949. According to Seijun, the two women said *Late Spring* was good enough, though a bit too slow, and a better film was one of the *Shimikin* comedy series featuring Kin'ichi Shimizu, vaudeville comedian from Asakusa (perhaps a film directed by Yuzo Kawashima in 1948). He describes a classmate from grammar school who used to be a fanatical nationalist, but after defeat began to believe that he was cheated by the Emperor and was unable to adjust to the political change. Regarding Kurosawa's *Stray Dog,* this classmate said, "I can't understand why people find the film interesting. It would have been much more fun if the film had a scene of an American being splashed with paint. It's no big deal that a Japanese arrests another Japanese."

In another episode, Seijun was drinking at a *Kasutori* bar with a man, who had just returned from a Siberian internment camp; the man said, "I hear you make films. Please make a fun, entertaining film. *The Green Mountains* is such a good film!" They then sang the title song of *The Green Mountains,* while walking along a side street with an American who was engaged in a sexual encounter with a Japanese woman; that night he dreamt that he was madly shooting an automatic rifle that used to belong to the old navy at somebody, and with tears in his eyes realized the meaninglessness of his actions. That night, Seijun gave up his hope of raising a revolution with an automatic rifle. This kind of visual memory mixed with fantasy was his point of departure as a director. That he sang, despairingly, the song of *The Green Mountains* with a veteran from Siberia along a street where the *pan-pan* lived is something that haunts him, and is, in fact, an experience that haunts the Japanese postwar cinema.

At the end of the essay, Seijun calmly states, "cinema has nothing to do with thought or politics. It is powerless before them." He himself shows that his insistence on making enjoyable entertainment cinema is deeply rooted in his own postwar experience, which is inseparable from the *nikutai* discourse. Accordingly, Seijun's remakes of Tamura's novels, as well as his indirect homage to Kinoshita's *Carmen* films in *Kawachi,* should

be situated within a larger context of postwar cinema during the occupation in which male subjects negotiate their experience of defeat both on and off screen. Coincidentally or not, it is as if he were making his own versions of *nikutai* discourse in the trilogy 15 years after the *nikutai* boom. *Carmen Comes Home* was not hailed as a Kinoshita materpiece, especially compared with *Tragedy of Japan* or *Twenty-Four Eyes,* though the film was immensely popular, and people enjoyed watching the vibrant bodies of Hideko Takamine and Toshiko Kobayashi in beautiful color. In these essays Seijun never refers to this Kinoshita film, but he never forgot his point of departure.

Film Remembered or Remembered Film

Let me finish this article by evoking a scene from Seijun's 2001 film, *Pistol Opera.*[48] The scene, like many others in the film, is nonsensically inserted, and comes about three-quarters of the way into the film. It features a famous fashion model from the 1970s, Sayoko Yamaguchi, playing an agent from a killers' guild. Sitting on a big black car, draped in a shawl with the Union Jack pattern on it, she suddenly starts talking about her dream (see figure 16.27):

> I used to collect little flags on the children's plate lunch at the department restaurant. Even now I feel overwhelmed to see any flag of any country. When I saw a scene in *Carmen Comes Home* with the Japanese Sun Flag flying in the school yard behind

FIGURE 16.27:   Sayoko Yamaguchi in *Pistol Opera* (2001).

the two Americanized dancers, I couldn't stop crying. But in my dream, fireworks behind them burst, with the Sun Flag, Stars and Strips, Tricolor, and Union Jack, and others spread to the blue sky, but every flag is bloody, muddy, shitty (excuse my language). But it really stinks, smells of rotting slime, blood and rotten meat . . . . Some are burnt and fall down. No one ordinary flag. What does it mean? The dancers are merrily dancing cancan. The dream is a bad omen, but I can't stop seeing it. It is a recurring nightmare.

The scene from *Carmen Comes Home* that Yamaguchi describes is a condensed image of two scenes from the film: the one in the schoolyard on the field day where Carmen and Akemi unwittingly humiliate the blind music teacher and the final strip show. In the scenario, the actual names of Kinoshita, Takamina, and Kobayashi are referred to in the lines.[49] Given that Seijun himself once said in an interview, "I always cry when I see flags,"[50] this nightmarish image in the film points directly to the visual memory of his war experience as a soldier, the postwar culture of defeat, and the cinema of occupation, condensed in Kinoshita's *Carmen Comes Home*.[51]

Pistol Opera was made as a sequel to *Branded to Kill* and a woman's action film, in a "remake" that replaced male killers with female killers. However, behind this woman's action film, a female version of *Branded to Kill,* it is not Jo Shishido, nor any of the male Nikkatsu action films or film stars, that dominates the visual memory of the film. Rather, Suzuki's own women's films such as *Gate of Flesh, Story of a Prostitute,* or *Carmen From Kawachi,* as well as the films *Carmen Comes Home* and *Carmen Falls in Love,* have a strong presence in the film. Symbolically, Seijun returns to his own memory of the female body in postwar liberation, Kinoshita's Carmen. A nightmarish reference to Kinoshita's Carmen seems to interject what could not have been expressed in Kinoshita's *Carmen Comes Home*: traumatic memory of war defeat and occupation.

The woman's body that articulates the postwar contradiction during the occupation haunts both the private and the collective memory of Japanese film history. The female body calls the male subject into question, mitigating historical traumas while exposing the vulnerability of male subjectivity. *Pistol Opera* is impossible to understand if we fail to see its reference to war defeat and the subsequent occupation, even if this does not exhaust the film's different meanings.

The body of Carmen is like an inerasable landscape that bears witness to the postwar cinematic imagination. Here we can track, in the most remote work of Seijun Suzuki, visual traces of the female body that, as I have argued, was a signifier of both postwar liberation and defeat, from the "idea films" to the *nikutai* discourse that continues to haunt the cinematic imagination. This reading does not posit Seijun or Kinoshita as politically conscious filmmakers who made explicit references to the war past and the occupation cinema. Rather, it treats them as historical subjects whose cinematic memories are infused with their own visual memories and life experiences, whether consciously or unconsciously. Reclaiming such fragmentary archival images from the body of cinematic memory by untangling gender dynamics remains, as yet, undone.

NOTES

1. John Dower, *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1999), 77.

2. Ibid., 69, 81.

3. Kyoko Hirano, *Mr. Smith Goes to Tokyo: Under the American Occupation, 1945–52* (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992), 39. For more detailed examinations of film censorship under occupation, see Tadao Sato, *Nihon eigashi 2 1949-59* [History of Japanese Cinema 2 1949-1959] (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1995); Akira Shimizu, *Senso to eiga: senjichu to senryoka no nihon eigashi* [War and Cinema: History of Japanese Cinema during Wartime and Occupation] (Tokyo: Shakaishisosha, 1994); Akira Iwasaki, *Senryosareta sukuriin: waga sengoshi* [The Occupied Screen: My Postwar History] (Tokyo: Shinnihon shuppansha, 1975); and Lars-Martin Sorensen, *Censorship of Japanese Films During the U.S. Occupation of Japan: The Case of Yasujiro Ozu and Akira Kurosawa* (Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2009). See also Hirano's more recent article, "Jidai wa dare no mono ka. Rekishi wa kako-kei de iinoka—Hanseiki go no kaiko [To Whom Does a Period Belong? Should History Be Told in the Past Tense?: A Reflection after 50 years]" in *Senryo ki no eiga—kaiho to kenetsu* [Cinema in Occupation—Liberation and Censorship], ed. Kenji Iwamoto (Tokyo: Shinwasha, 2009), 316–336.

4. Hirano, 4–6.

5. As early as February 1947, however, Ichiro Ueno writes in a film journal about the GHQ's intervention in filmmaking principles to promote democratic "idea" pictures. Ichiro Ueno, "Shusengo no nihon eiga wo kaeri mite [Reflecting on Postwar Japanese Cinema]," *Eiga hyoron* 4.1 (Feb 1947): 39–45.

6. Prohibited subjects and topics are: period films (*jidai geki*); any reference to Emperor Hirohito's war responsibility and the atomic bombs (unless it was depicted as a final recourse to end the war); any criticism of the Supreme Commander of the Allied powers; dealing with or approving of what they thought as the subjugation and/or degradation of women. On the other hand, CIE strongly promoted the depiction of kissing on screen as a symbol of individualistic human relationships and freedom, although many filmmakers were reported to feel the depiction as unnatural on screen as in traditional Japanese culture (Hirano, 154–165). Although Hirano agrees that the valorization of kissing and romance is an expression of individual freedom and independence, Isolde Standish offers a different reading of this policy, as she writes: "the myths of romance becomes one of the principal scripts through which social roles are inscribed in the cultural and economic terms of masculinity and femininity" (Isolde Standish, *A New History of Japanese Cinema* New York & London: The Continuum International Publishing Group, 2005, 165).

7. To be more precise, when the military government changed its policy to promote women's labor in factories in early 1940s, women as strong and willing workers appeared, as in Kurosawa's *Ichiban utsukushiku* (*The Most Beautiful*) or in some documentary films made or written by female filmmakers Taka Atsugi or Tazuko Sakane. In these films, however, women were not necessarily rebellious but, rather, independent and strong, which was a big difference from those rebellious women in postwar idea pictures. In fact, in a rare moment of Japanese film history, though for a brief period, the unusual pairing of strong, often self-righteous women with impaired, defeatist men was inordinately conspicuous, forming a dominant gender configuration, though it was soon to be denied, sexually objectified, and thus normalized again in the mid 1950s when the country began to regain its economic power and confidence. Interestingly, Mikio Naruse's postwar films, many of

which are regarded as "women's films," share this characteristic of pairing of strong women and often weak men.

8. I borrow the term "oracles of democracy" from female film critic Midori Yajima who wrote one of the earliest, incisive examinations of women's images in postwar Japanese film in relation to male directors' unconscious working and coming to terms with war defeat in her "kinbenna miko tachi [deligent oracles]" in *Deai no enkinho* [Perspectives of Encounters] (Tokyo: Ushio shuppansha, 1979), 17–84.

9. Hirano points out that the director had to include the ending the American censors recommended, and also "did his best, against the suggestions of the Americans, not to portray the 'enemy,' the militarist uncle, as thoroughly evil. The director and the screenplay writer were convinced that 'there could not be such an evil human being'" (152). As Hirano describes in her study, these democratic "ideas" were not necessarily imposed by the occupation authorities but also voluntarily expressed by screenwriters and directors who embraced to a certain extent the new democratic Japan, denouncing the military past. However, the extent to which the heroines deliver the official ideological messages promoted by CIE cannot be ignored.

10. Standish argues rightly that the way in which the film depicts Hara's character, Yukie, ultimately follows the traditional gender dichotomy between the irrational/female and rational/male (Standish, 167–168).

11. Hara plays the heroine of Akira Kurosawa's *The Idiot* (1951), Taeko, who in my view gives one of the most remarkable depictions of intense female character with exquisite passions and raging desire, and I would argue that she is definitely a heroine in the occupation era.

12. In *Late Spring*, in fact, at the surface level, the film seems to make Noriko subservient to her father's will, but at another level, ironically, Noriko's excessive attachment to her father makes her almost subversive in undermining the father's patriarchal authority. This Noriko is very different from the widow Noriko of the later *Tokyo Story* (1953).

13. I am aware that there are surely many exceptions to this tendency. However, because of the basic policy of promotion of women's rights, a policy welcomed by many male writers and directors, the majority of heroines on the occupied screen show one way or another strong-willed voices of their own, often declaring "no" to their fathers, brothers, or men in general. For example, in the famous left-wing documentarist Fumio Kamei's 1949 narrative film, *Onna no issho* (*Life of a Woman*) the heroine repeatedly expresses her dissent to her weak father, or her often inconsiderate husband.

14. The same may be said of the male stars who continued to appear on the screen after the war, but did not assume the same role as messengers of democracy like their female counterparts. The image of male actors was dubious to say the least, because they were often cast as the opposite type from the characters they played during wartime. Yet, the contrast between the new and old heroines was much starker, and visually far more explicit and, therefore, more shocking.

15. Dower, 165.

16. Ibid., 153. See also Hisashi Inoue and Komatsu-za, eds., *Asakusa Fransu-za no jikan* [Time at Asakusa France-za Theater Troupe] (Tokyo: Bunshun nesuko, 2001).

17. See for example, *Senryoki zasshishiryo taikei IV* [Anthology of Publications in Magazines during the Occupation Period: Popular. Culture], ed., Taketoshi Yamamoto et al. (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 2009).

18. Michael S. Molasky also points out: "Japan's rhetoric of sexual violation often teaches us less about female victimhood than it does about men's fears and desires" (*The American Occupation of Japan and Okinawa: Literature and Memory*, New York: Routledge, 1999, 105).

19. Hirano, 164.

20. Joanne Izbicki, "The Shape of Freedom: The Female Body in Post-Surrender Japanese Cinema," *U.S.-Japan Women's Journal: English Supplement* 12 (December 1996): 120–121.

21. Yoshikuni Igarashi, *Bodies of Memory: Narratives of War in Postwar Japanese Culture, 1945–1970* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000), 48.

22. Molasky, 103.

23. Igarashi, 55.

24. Dower, 138. See also Igarashi, 56–58.

25. The experience of war defeat and the enemy's dominance over Japan during the occupation are often consciously or unconsciously expressed with the tropes of rape in many 50s and 60s novels and films, and this needs to be understood in the context of the historical trauma of male subjectivity in the immediate postwar period. See my discussions of this issue: "Ushinawareta falusu o motomete—Kinoshita Keisuke no namida no sanbusaku saiko" ["Looking for the Lost Phallus—Keisuke Kinoshita's Trilogy of Tears Reconsidered"], in *Eigagaku/Film Study* 14 (2000): 2–20 (a revised version in *Eiga no seijigaku* [Politics of Cinema], ed., Masato Hase and Hideyuki Nakamura, Tokyo: Seikyusha, 2003, 61–117); "Orchestration of Tears: Politics of Crying and Reclaiming Women's Public Sphere," *Senses of Cinema* 28 (Sep–Oct: 2003); "Films in the 1950s and Ishihara Shintaro," *Bungaku* 5/6 (2004): 76–90; and "Where Does Carmen Go? Discourses and Representations of Body in Postwar Japanese Cinema," in *Visual Criticism,* ed. Akihiko Nakayama (Tokyo: Tamagawa daigaku shuppanbu, 2008), 83–126.

26. See Douglas N. Slaymaker, *The Body in Postwar Japanese Fiction* (New York: Routledge Curzon, 2004); Alan Tansman, *The Writings of Koda Aya: A Japanese Literary Daughter* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1993); Nina Cornyetz, *Dangerous Women, Deadly Words: Phallic Fantasy and Modernity in Three Japanese Writers* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999); P. G. Schalow and J. A. Walker, eds., *The Woman's Hand: Gender and Theory in Japanese Women's Writing* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1996).

27. Molasky, 103. On the other hand, Slaymaker contrasts the representational difference in depicting *pan-pan* between male *nikutai* writers like Tamura and female writers. I should add that similar attempts by female authors to propose a different discourse on women's bodies from that by male *nikutai* writers and directors can be found in some directorial works by Tanaka Kinuyo, especially 1953 *Koibumi* (*Love Letters*) and 1961 *Onna bakari no yoru* (*Girls of Dark/Girls of the Night*).

28. Tamura's writing career began in the 1930s; he met Ri Koran (Li Xianglan) in 1939 when he visited Manchuria, and this encounter was said to have inspired the idea for *Story of a Prostitute,* another novel that established Tamura as the *nikutai* novelist. See Inuhiko Yomota, "Ri Koran to Chosenjin ianfu" ["Li Xianglan and the Choson *Comfort Women*"] in *Ri Koran to Higashi Asia* [Li Xianglan and East Asia], ed., Inuhiko Yomota (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 2001), 204.

29. Tamura writes: "I do not permit any thought that lacks confusion at a time like this to be considered 'a thought.' I do not trust any person who speaks logically in a time like this. I do not believe in any soul that does not suffer secretly the pain and misery of war defeat in the middle of the night, cannot help but weep in recognition of deep sorrow, feeling so alone that one has to tear up one's own body and heart and throw them at the wall" (Taijiro Tamura, "Nikutai ga ningen de aru [body is the human]," *Tamura Taijiro Senshu 5,* [Taijiro Tamura Selected Works 5], ed., Hara and Onishi, Tokyo: Nihon tosho center, 2005, 190, originally published in 1947).

30. Taijio Tamura, *Waga bundan seishunki* [Record of My Literary Youth] (Tokyo: Shinchosha, 1963), 219.

31. As Igarashi points out, "images of sexually active women dominated postwar society.... Even Tamura's play *Nikutai no mon* was consumed largely as a striptease: Its popularity stemmed from the climax scene, where the female protagonist is stripped naked and beaten by other prostitutes" (Igarashi, 58).

32. I would like to point out that films in the post-Korean war also had similar tendencies to emphasize the body: consider Shin Sang-ok's *A Flower in Hell* (1958), which features prostitutes who work for the U.S. military base in Korea, as well as a few films that have *nikutai* in the titles, such as *A Confession of the Body* (Cho Geung-Ha, 1964).

33. Ueno, "Reflections on Postwar Japanese Cinema," 42.

34. This sort of highly gendered discourses on Japanese modernity vis-à-vis something "Western" as opposed to "Japanese" and "feminine" found in Tamura is not unique, and, as I have discussed elsewhere, similar symptomatic critical discourse is found in Yasuzo Masumura or Shintaro Ishihara, for instance. See my article "Reading as a Woman: The Collaboration of Ayako Wakao and Yasuzo Masumura" in *Reclaiming the Archive: Feminism and Film History,* ed., Vicki Callahan (Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 2010, 154-175) and "Films in the 1950s and Ishihara Shintaro."

35. An interesting exception is a rather unknown film, Keigo Kimura's *Mesuinu* (*The Bitch*), released in 1951, featuring Machiko Kyo, who could be described as the most representative postwar *nikutai* actress, as a cabaret dancer. Interestingly, this film, whose title directly refers to Jean Renoir's 1931 *La Chienne,* and is probably a loose remake of the Renoir film, depicts the fall of an accountant enthralled by the sexual charms of a cabaret dancer. The heroine played by Kyo is a curious amalgam of the typical noirish femme fatale and prostitute of *nikutai* discourse expressed through her unleashed sexual desire and body.

36. Izbicki, 111. Ironically, as Izbicki also points out, in the cinematic representation the presence of the American occupiers is not "mentioned, much less imaged" (127) because of strict censorship, resulting in a problematic asymmetrical representation of gender and race on the occupied screen.

37. Kunio Kuroda, "Commentary on *Karumen kokyo ni kaeru,*" in *Rinji Zokan—Kurosawa Akira and Kinoshita Keisuke Subarashiki Kyosei* [Special Issue Akira Kurosawa and Keisuke Konoshita: Wonderful Superstars], *Kinema junposha* (1998): 264.

38. Izbicki, 141.

39. Kinoshita's homosexual leanings were a well-known secret, and some critics have attempted a queer reading of his films, especially the director's extraordinary depiction of men and masculinity. See Ikuko Ishihara, *Isai no hito—Kinoshita Keisuke* [Man of Extraordinary—Keisuke Kinoshita] (Tokyo: Pandora, 1999); Wataru Fujita, "Kinoshita eiga ni okeru kokusaku to itsudatsu—dansei tachi no 'danseisei'" [National Policy and Aberration in Films of Kinoshita—masculinity of men], in *Nihon eiga to nationalism 1931–1945*, ed., Kenji Iwamoto (Tokyo: Shinwasha, 2004), 295–318.

40. Kinoshita says in a colloquy with Akira Kurosawa that he was already thinking of a sequel when making *Carmen Comes Home* (*Special Issue: Kurosawa and Kinoshita,* 142). He is also reported to have said that after returning from his first trip abroad to France in 1952 he felt the need to speak up when the conservative party began advocating rearmament as a means to regaining power (Hideo Yoshimura, *Kinoshita Keisuke no sekai* [The World of Keisuke Kinoshita], [Tokyo: Cinefrontosha, 1985], 98).

41. I use the term "domestic ideology" here as Kazuko Takemura has designated: in her use, "domestic ideology" is the modern norm of sexuality and gender roles that supports the dichotomy between men in the public sphere and women in the private sphere, and, more importantly, the dichotomy between the domestic women to be respected and protected and foreign women to be disregarded and, thus, sexually exploited in order to protect domestic women, for example, in colonial Japan (*Feminism* [Tokyo: Iwanami-shoten], 2000). As the importance of *Twenty-Four Eyes* in the cultural reconstruction of the nation, see my article "Looking for the Lost Phallus—Keisuke Kinoshita's Trilogy of Tears Reconsidered."

42. The opera *Carmen* was one of the most beloved in the repertoire of the Asakusa Opera that started in 1916 at the cinema in the Rokku district in Asakura, Tokyo. The first performance of *Carmen* was in 1922, and (along with Verdi's *La Traviata*) helped popularize the music, as well as the passionate heroine and her tragic love triangle.

43. Yomota, "Li Xianglan and the Choson *Comfort Women,*" 195–230.

44. Seijun himself refers to these films as women's films (Seijun Suzuki, *Seijun/Eiga* [Seijun/Cinema], ed., Tsutomu Isobe/Yukio Todoroki, [Tokyo: Waizu shuppan, 2006], 214).

45. Masao Matsuda, "Seijun kyoto o megutte" [About Seijun Concertation]," *Sotokushu Suzuki Seijun*, [Full Review, Seijun Suzuki] Tokyo: Kawadeshoboshinsha, 2001, 64.

46. Seijun Suzuki, *Kenka elegii* [Fighting Elegy] (Tokyo: San'ichi shobo, 1970), 66–67. All translations in the citation are mine.

47. All the quotes are from ibid., 25–32. This essay is also included in *Suzuki Seijun Essay Collection*, ed. Inuhiko Yomota (Tokyo: Chikuma shobo, 2010).

48. I saw the film when it was released, found it interesting as the director's own venture to deconstruct the genre, but never thought of it in the context of postwar film and totally forgot about this scene, though I remembered that I had the strong sense of incongruity in the narrative. I happened to rediscover the scene as I was trying to finish this chapter as if to find a ghost rising from an open tomb, while watching Seijun's other films.

49. Kazumi Ito, "Scenario, *Pistol Opera,*" *Scenario* (Nov. 2001): 50. Even though Ito is credited as a scriptwriter, the DVD commentary points out that these dream scenes are based on Seijun's ideas.

50. Suzuki, *Seijun/Eiga,* 233.

51. This scene is followed by another inconsequential scene in which a veteran actress talks about the suicide of Yukio Mishima. However, it seems not totally inconsequential that Mishima appears after Kinoshita in this postoccupational visual history. Interestingly, in March 1952, after Mishima was cheated in Paris by a black market money exchange dealer and was forced to move out of his expensive hotel, Kinoshita helped arrange a room for him in his apartment building (Takeshi Ando, ed., *Mishima Yukio Nichiroku* [Yukio Mishima Journal], Tokyo: Michitani, 1996, 147–148). This encounter was a known fact because their colloquy was published in *Tokyo Shimbun* April 22 ("Kinoshita Keisuke, Mishima Yukio, Pari futarigumi taidan [Keisuke Kinoshita/Yukio Mishima, the two talk in Paris]). There is no way of telling if Seijun read it, but it is quite likely that he did it, or at least knew the two men were in Paris.

READING *NISHIJIN* (1961) AS CINEMATIC MEMORY

MITSUYO WADA-MARCIANO

The weight of the tradition, and the darkness of the roof in Nishijin....
Nishijin is a square town and a square factory.... Please protect Nishijin,
which sustains history.... Nishijin, the town with the rain of memories.

Sekine Hiroshi and Matsumoto Toshio, narration from *Nishijin*[1]

INTRODUCTION

THIS chapter examines cinema by focusing on its relationship with memory. Cinema is a medium of recording a subject in front of a camera, and it also screens what is recorded. Cinema's role thus resembles how memory works in the process of recognition, remembering, and recalling a matter. As Russell J. A. Kilbourn states, cinema not only reveals the matter from the past, but also establishes the image as collective memory, through its power of mechanical reproduction.[2] Films disseminate the image to a number of audiences, who now share it as common knowledge, as a collective memory. Simultaneously, memory is often considered as personal, tied with one's past. This aspect of memory, collective and/or personal, also has a reflexive relationship with cinema.

Both cinema and memory have been discussed in various ways, but they have not been dealt with definitively. Philosopher Paul Ricoeur applies phenomenology to understand memory, history, and forgetting.[3] Art historian Susan A. Crane approaches memory via historical examination of museums.[4] Canadian philosopher Ian Hacking, specializing in the philosophy of science, examines memory at the nexus of science and civilization through a number of studies on multiple personality.[5] Historian Pierre Nora tackles memory as French national identity in the field of cultural sociology.[6]

There are only a few in-depth studies on the relationship between cinema and memory, besides Kilbourn's aforementioned *Cinema, Memory, Modernity* and Maureen Turim's *Flashbacks in Film*.[7] In the latter case, Turim traces the history of the flashback as the significant expression for cinematic temporality to convey memory. The narrative device first appeared, according to Turim, in the 1950s art cinema of Europe under the influence of modern literature. In other words, expressing memory in a narrative form was already established in the field of literature prior to the cinematic technique. Kilbourn, on the other hand, extends the link between cinema and memory to not only the level of film's content and form, but also film's own "directions for use," and he analyzes a group of films as the "art of memory."[8] Those films, to Kilbourn, are not simply "representing memory, but…employ[ing] memory as the basis of a cinematic aesthetic."[9] Either way, both Turim and Kilbourn underline *the representation of memory* as the crucial object of their studies, as their selections of films clearly indicate.

My chapter, however, investigates how cultural memory is reiterated through cinema, especially how that memory links moments of crisis in Japanese modernity. I consider the "poetics of cinema" of Matsumoto Toshio (b. 1932), as evinced in his film *Nishijin* (1961),[10] as a case study for the construction of national memory through traditional crafts and film, evoking at once the arcane and the modern. In order to analyze the role of cinema as a mechanism for recording and recalling the past, I highlight *Nishijin*'s depiction of ordinary people's manual labor in the traditional textile trade in Kyoto, in particular how the film resonates with the folk-crafts discourse of the late nineteenth century. This documentary's subject might seem rather narrow; at first glance, it is simply about the craftspeople in Kyoto, and limited in its exclusive address to the local audiences; but it is, on the other hand, extremely communicative beyond its cultural and temporal boundaries. *Nishijin*, indeed, won the short-documentary award at the Venice Film Festival in 1961, indicating the warm response outside Japan. The film encapsulates various, sometimes conflicted perspectives on tradition and modernism, and art and craft, which express the uncertainty of the postwar period and the nation's struggle for international recognition.

Historian John W. Dower states that the Japanese people embraced their defeat, a stance encouraged through the support of the United States.[11] My question is how did the Japanese themselves actually go through the process, engaging with often traumatic memories of wartime and after? Postwar Japanese popular culture, such as cinema, functioned as a "prosthetic memory," in Alison Landsberg's term, for various peoples in Japan to constitute a sense of *renewed* nationhood and national identity, especially in the 1950s and the early 1960s, when the United States had officially ended its occupation and the Japanese government was striving for ideological consensus regarding the direction of national recovery.[12] The postwar years were the period of a "memory crisis,"[13] when the Japanese people had strong ambivalence toward their past, the wartime that they "now" regarded with regret.

The postwar crisis of memory conjures an earlier upheaval in values, in late nineteenth-century Japan, wherein modernization for the Japanese meant Westernization. As Richard Terdiman describes in the case of the "memory crisis" exemplified by early nineteenth-century France, Japan faced a long period of "memory crisis" during its rapid

modernization in the nineteenth century.[14] Japanese modernity, as Harry Harootunian reiterates, has never been the same as Western modernity, despite the fact that "for the most part, 'modern' meant the West, its science, and the devastating effects it had inflicted on the face of traditional social life."[15]

Nishijin skillfully deploys the historical "memory crisis" from the nineteenth century, which was confronted by a sense of cultural nationalism, while also mitigating the "present" crisis in the postwar period by embracing a "new" Japanese modernism in its film style. The film, in other words, plays with the dual memories that are dovetailed with the modernization projects from different historical periods. The first memory stems from the images of craftspeople, which invokes the cultural nationalism that shaped the Japanese arts in the late nineteenth century, and the other memory originates in the film's style of "poetic cinema" that one often finds in the art cinema of postwar Europe, such as in the films of Joris Ivans and Albert Lamorisse. Matsumoto deployed the style for his work to gain acceptance outside Japan when the whole industry of Japanese cinema, and even much of the nation itself, sought recognition as a modern state by "the West."[16] In the following sections, I will analyze the dual memories through the images of craftsmen and the poetic style of cinema.

About Matsumoto and *Nishijin*

Matsumoto Toshio is known as a leading experimental filmmaker as well as an incisive critic of visual culture, still active in teaching at Nihon University College of Art in Tokyo. Many of his filmic works, however, had long been extremely difficult to locate, though recently they have been restored in the form of digital media. The National Film Center in Tokyo found his first documentary film *Bicycle in Dream* (*Ginrin*, 1955) in 2005 and digitally reprinted it in 2010. The film production and distribution company Uplink also distributed Matsumoto's experimental films as a DVD box set in 2005. His works from almost a half century ago were "rediscovered" in the digital age.

The film *Nishijin* literally originated in Kyoto. The local cinephile association's request for making a film that reflected people's everyday lives provided the impetus for Matsumoto to direct the film. The Association for Viewing Documentary Film in Kyoto (Kyoto kiroku eiga o miru kai) first suggested he focus on a town, Nishijin, which is a historic area that spans the Kamigyo and Kita wards in Kyoto.[17] Making a film upon request from a particular group was not, according to Matsumoto, so unusual in the 1950s—when films might be made, for example, for labor unions—but this particular case in Kyoto involved an art movement, a unique opportunity for him. Having poet Sekine Hiroshi (1920–1994) as a co-writer, Matsumoto accepted the subject of the local weaving industry in Nishijin, one of the oldest and culturally unique areas in Kyoto. The camerawork by the veteran cinematographer Miyajima Yoshio (1909–1998), who was the head of Toho's union during the notorious strike from 1946 to 1948, is mesmerizing, adding mythic dignity to images of traditional working places. The music composer

Miyoshi Akira (b. 1933) had just returned from his study at the Conservatoire de Paris from 1955 to 1958, and his abstract score notably omits any sentiment or nostalgia toward the archaic town and the people living there. Although the documentary was originally produced for a local art movement, it appeals to us still as an expressive film full of historical implications, crossing beyond both regional and cultural boundaries.

Matsumoto started his career as a documentary filmmaker, especially in so-called PR cinema (public relations cinema, producing promotional films for a company or an organization) in the 1950s. After studying art history at Tokyo University, he found a position with a film production company, Shinriken-eiga, in 1955. Reflecting the beginning of Japan's economic recovery, there was a high demand for creating promotional films from various companies and public offices, especially heavy industries such as coal mining, electric power, and steel companies.[18] In the immediate aftermath of the war, the damaged land could not produce enough crops such as rice and grain, and the nation relied heavily on imported foods. As a result, Japan in the immediate postwar period could not afford to import much of anything else, such as raw materials for restoring manufacturing industries, a situation that stagnated those industries' immediate recovery. The lack of electric power, for instance, caused chronic problems at that time, and the only domestic source for energy was from coal mining. The procurement boom that resulted from the Korean War from 1950 to 1953 gradually turned the Japanese economy to heavy industries, and this was the period when Matsumoto became a filmmaker.

While working as a PR filmmaker, Matsumoto kept having conflicts with his clients over his insistence on stylistic control over the films, often to the detriment of the clients' commercial needs. He first directed the twelve-minute PR film *Bicycle in Dream* for the Bicycle Manufacturing Association, to promote Japanese bicycles for export abroad. In the 1950s, before Japan's automobiles achieved their high reputation, bicycles were one of the country's major exports. Although Matsumoto continued making PR films, his work's innovative style and its lack of explanatory narrative typical of a PR film, tended to cause discord with his sponsors. After making another PR film, *The Record of a White Long Line* (*Shiroi nagai sen no kiroku*, 1960), he was suspended from his company because of his unwillingness to give in to demands for changes from the sponsor, the Kansai Electric Power Company. After a few years' suspension, Matsumoto directed the "poetic cinema" trilogy: *Nishijin*, *The Song of Stone* (*Ishi no uta*, 1963), and *Mothers* (1967). *Nishijin* was formed in the middle of Matsumoto's personal crisis and his need for recognition, whether domestically or internationally, in order to continue his career as a filmmaker. His eagerness for acknowledgment, indeed, resonated with the Japanese film industry's own shift toward exporting its products abroad along with the Federation of Economic Organizations' support, especially after the successes of Kurosawa Akira's and Mizoguchi Kenji's films in various international film festivals since 1951.[19]

As a documentary, *Nishijin* emphasizes the stylistic expression of its images over what is exposited as an object. The shots of mechanized or manual looms, the close-ups of a shoulder and human hands are beautifully composed, and they become our objects of desire to capture, store, and retrieve in our minds as cinematic memories. The film, for instance, shoots Nishijin's town from above, its tiled roofs forming geometric patterns.

FIGURE 17.1: *Nishijin* (1961). The film starts with the geometric pattern of the dark tiled roofs with skylight windows, which are special to the area.

The image of a number of dark tiled roofs with a square window—the requisite skylight for a craftsman to see the colors of silk under natural light—carries the weight of tradition. [Figure 17.1] The "weaver wanted" advertisements on the archaic lattice walls represent both the town's long history and the craft's lack of successors. [Figure 17.2]

FIGURE 17.2: *Nishijin* (1961). Another geometric pattern of the archaic lattice walls with a "weaver wanted" ad. The subtext of declining business is intermingled with the traditional architecture.
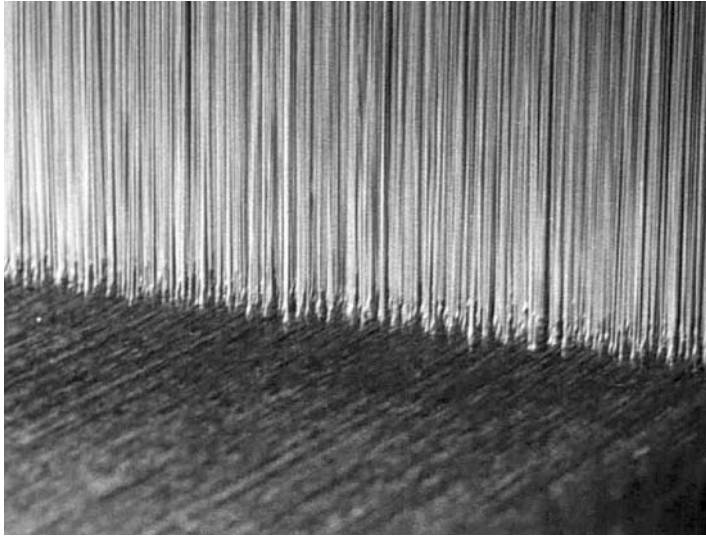
FIGURE 17.3:   *Nishijin* (1961). The lines of silk set in the loom indeed look like "the rain of memories," the poetic phrase described in the film's narration.

As described in the citation at the beginning, the lines of silk shine like "the rain of memories," which signifies the beauty of the fabric and its noble value. [Figure 17.3]

Those geometric images are juxtaposed with the organic images of body parts, the close-ups of craftspeople's hands, arms, shoulders, feet, and so on. A man's arm pulls the lever at a steady pace, as if he is part of the machine. [Figure 17.4] In the shot of a man's

FIGURE 17.4:   *Nishijin* (1961). The camera captures a weaver's arm mechanically pulling the lever, but his face never appears in the film.

FIGURE 17.5: *Nishijin* (1961). Close-up of a weaver's shoulder. The repetitious movement of the wrinkled undershirt heightens a poetic expression of rhythm and endurance.

shoulder covered with a wrinkled white cotton undershirt, the pulse of muscle beneath the cloth and the suggestion of the hot environment make us sense how hard his life is. [Figure 17.5] In the close-up of his buttocks, heavy and firm, wearing jeans, and the battered-looking strings of an apron tied at the waist, both cloths are symbols of labor. [Figure 17.6] But still, the film discourages identification with the craftspeople on a

FIGURE 17.6: *Nishijin* (1961).

personal level; they are represented as incomplete subjects. The camera is drawn to their movements, not who they are. The first complete face that we find is of actress Kagawa Kyoko's beaming smile in a life-size poster. [Figure 17.7] Thus the film makes an explicit contrast with the superficiality of commercial cinema and the tough existence of its subjects. In his commentary for the film's DVD edition, Matsumoto states that he wanted to emphasize the power of images—that is, what the representations of the objects can do, not simply what the objects themselves mean to the audiences. Instead of capturing some rare events or unique materials, he consciously chose the mundane details of the craftspeople's lives and challenged himself to find beauty in the ordinary and how to assemble those images. He states: "I made the film to reveal the introverted world that Nishijin has occupied historically" and names his method as "phenomenological technique" (*genshotekina gijyutsu*).[20] Nonetheless, as the geometric images attest, *Nishijin* is a film about tradition, and, at once, it foreshadows that tradition's end.

The film, at the same time, reveals the context of the early 1960s in Matsumoto's way of constructing narrative with Marxist dialectics. With its new constitution, Japan faced a surge of public support for syndicalism in the 1950s and '60s. After the strike against AMPO (the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security between the United States and Japan) in 1960, the political movement fueled by students and labor unions hit its peak from 1968 to 1970. Progressive filmmakers and critics, among other intellectuals, were, of course, influenced by this social trend. The film presents the subjects and images in various dichotomies: tradition vs. modernization, handicrafts vs. mechanical production, and the working class vs. the bourgeoisie.

FIGURE 17.7: *Nishijin* (1961). A part of the life-size poster for a kimono company. The actress Kagawa Kyoko (b. 1931) had already been established through roles in *Tokyo Story* (1953) and some of Kurosawa's works such as *The Bad Sleep Well* (1960).

This political characteristic stands out particularly when one compares *Nishijin* with much later documentaries, such as Ishii Kaori's *Circle of Life* (*Meguru*, 2006), which also depicts craftsmen and their kimono textile production. *Circle of Life* idealizes the craftsmen who have revived an archaic method of woodblock dyeing on silk (*mokuhan-zome*); with total avoidance of modern technology, the process signifies a return to the smaller scale of production in a pre-market economy. The camera meticulously captures the process step by step, and the film creates suspense from the element of risk inherent in less predictable handicraft, the painstaking labor of making a blank piece of silk cloth into a stunning kimono. The workshop of the craftsmen is presented as a region of stillness, and there is absolutely no dissonance. *Nishijin*, on the other hand, suggests the endless conflicts in the industry. It expresses a sense of pain, as if that is the end product of the collisions between the aforementioned dichotomies. The film deploys a montage with images of hot glass bulbs on a worker's bare back (a moxibustion treatment) [Figure 17.8], children throwing sharpened nails into the ground [Figure 17.9 and 17.10], the wild-haired Noh actor Kanze Hideo (1927–2007) flinging spiderwebs [Figure 17.11], and the image of Kuginuki Jizo (a shrine for curing pain). [Figures 17.12 and 17.13] This sequence reminds us of the montage in *Battleship Potemkin* (Sergei M. Eisenstein, 1925), which only became available for Japanese audiences in 1956. The producer of *Nishijin*, the Association for Viewing Documentary Film in Kyoto, also leased *Battleship Potemkin* for its screening in Kyoto in April 1959.[21] In terms of Japanese film history, *Nishijin* reveals a time lag in the cultural translation of montage technique, which thus became a symbolic form of expression in the postwar period. Analyzing the film in the journal *Eiga Hyoron* (Cinema criticism) in 1961, critic Sato Tadao praises *Nishijin* as "intelligent, sharp, and beautiful.... What I mean by 'beautiful'

FIGURE 17.8: *Nishijin* (1961). The beginning of the sequence of "pain": a folk remedy, moxibustion treatment (*kyu* or *yaito*).

FIGURE 17.9:   *Nishijin* (1961). The sequence of "pain" 2. Boys are playing by throwing long nails into the ground.
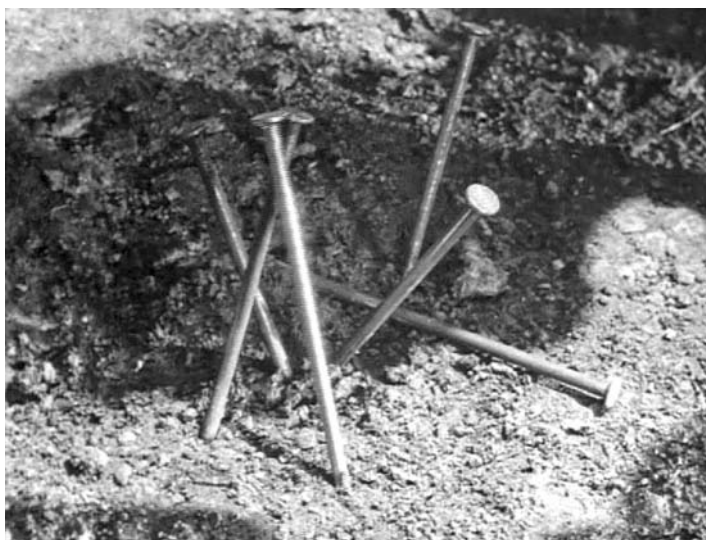
FIGURE 17.10:   *Nishijin* (1961).

FIGURE 17.11:   *Nishijin* (1961). Kanze Hideo playing the Noh character *tsuchi-gumo* (a ground spider). The visual parallel of "silk," a material of Nishijin weaving, and a spiderweb resonate with a foreboding sense of "spellbinding."

FIGURE 17.12:   *Nishijin* (1961). Kuginuki Jizo, a guardian deity for people who are suffering pain. This shrine still exists in the area of Nishijin, Kyoto.

FIGURE 17.13:   *Nishijin* (1961). Old fellow praying to Kuginuki Jizo.

is not simply about the film's looks or composition, but the *logic* [*ronrisei*] throughout the film's style."[22] The film was embraced by both the left-leaning critic Sato and the journal, which was well known as one of the most progressive journals on cinema.

Recalled Memory of "Cultural Nationalism"

Nishijin was filmed in 1961, when Yanagi Soetsu (1889–1961), the leading figure of the Mingei movement, passed away at the age of seventy-two. The Mingei (crafts by and for ordinary people) movement occurred in the 1920s with the manifesto for the Japanese Mingei Art Museum (Nihon Mingei Bijutsukan) representing a reaction against the Industrial Revolution and the poor perception of outside observers toward Japanese art. The movement had been fully established by the 1960s with the efforts of Yanagi and others, such as British studio potter Bernard Leach (1887–1978), to elevate the traditional crafts to the level of art and to gain social recognition throughout the wartime and postwar periods. As a work of cultural memory, *Nishijin* reiterates the ideological correspondence to Mingei theory, which along with other cultural nationalist discourses on "art" and "crafts" in the late nineteenth century contributed to Japanese modernity's aesthetic formation.

Discourses on national identity have tended to emerge during moments of crisis, in the case of Japanese art, through the process of adopting "new" concepts such as "fine art" (*bijutsu*) and "crafts" (*kogei*). Art historian Yuko Kikuchi relates, as the earliest

example, how the British minister to Japan Sir Rutherford Alcock (1809–1897), when curating Japanese artifacts for the International Exhibition in London in 1862, described the lack of "art" in Japan, while admiring Japan's high level of "crafts."[23] Alcock wrote: "In all the mechanical arts the Japanese have unquestionably achieved great excellence,"[24] but, at the same time, he acknowledged that "there are only two Fine Arts possible to the human race—sculpture and painting—the Japanese can put forward no valid claim to be considered artists."[25] The global reputation of "Japan as a nation of crafts" started from then. Japan's struggle over the perception that the nation had no "art," in the Western sense, continued for almost half a century, and a number of critical writings gradually solidified the emergence of cultural nationalism, including Okakura Tenshin's series of books *The Ideal of the East* (1903), *The Awakening of Japan* (1904), and *The Book of Tea* (1906); Natsume Soseki's *Sanshiro* (1909) and *Sorekara* (1910); Nishida Kitaro's *Study of Virtue* (1911); and Yanagita Kunio's *Folklore Study* (1913). Along with those works, Yanagi Soetsu expressed "his unyielding determination to fight Westernisation for the sake of cultural nationalism"[26] throughout his Mingei movement. The movement's ultimate goal, to art historian Suzuki Sadahiro, was to reveal the distortion in the Western concept of "fine arts" and retrieve humanity in the field by highlighting "crafts" that have historically been left out from the field of art in a perfunctory manner.[27] In other words, the Mingei movement revealed the discrepancies in the process of Japan's modernization, which the nation-state had modeled from Euro-American countries since the Meiji Restoration, the status gap between the Orient and the Occident, and the value inversion between the handmade and the machine.

The concept of "cultural nationalism" was crystallized, for instance, in 1882 in the writing of Okakura Tenshin (1863–1913), the first president of the Tokyo School of Art (Tokyo Bijutsu Gakko): "Oriental civilization is extremely different from Occidental civilization, therefore there is no doubt that there are such differences in art, as art reflects the taste of the people."[28]*Nishijin* highlights the image of difference, with Japan as a nation of crafts and Kyoto as the historic center of their production, a recurrent "premise" that emphasizes "crafts" as a unique characteristic of Japanese art and Japan itself, but one that was nonetheless constructed as the result of Japan's struggle over the modernization process. The film situates Nishijin within the concentric circles of Japan and Kyoto as the center of cultural authenticity, and conjures up the memory of such struggles as Japan vs. the "West," crafts vs. fine art, and particularity vs. universality, by visualizing the impasse of the tradition.

Nishijin, as Memory of Postwar "Japanese" Realism and Grassroots Movement

The "cultural nationalism" portrayed in *Nishijin*, however, needs to be analyzed in the context of postwar cinematic modernism. Dogase Masato points out the necessity of

reading the postwar Japanese cinema in a specific ideological paradigm, that of "postwar modernism."[29] Analyzing Ozu Yasujiro's films from the late 1940s to the '50s, especially those centering on bourgeois family life, such as *Late Spring* (*Banshun*, 1949), *Early Summer* (*Bakushu*, 1951), and *Tokyo Story* (*Tokyo monogatari*, 1953), Dogase reexamines the meaning of the films, their deployment of Japanese traditional values and aesthetics. He revisits the 1950s criticism of Ozu, such as "Ozu getting into a rut and lacking a critical view,"[30] countering those harsh assessments with "Ozu's active rejection to participating in the 'contemporary' current of *modernism* in the postwar period."[31] According to Dogase, the Japanese film industry's desire to venture into the international market, triggered by the successes of *Rashomon* (1950) and *Ugetsu* (1953) at the Venice International Film Festival, became the central force of "postwar modernism" in Japanese film history. He highlights that the position of the Japanese film industry as an exporting business was even viewed as a national project, when the nation-state itself was desperately seeking to renew its modernized image, once destroyed with the defeat in 1945, in the new international postwar alignment. In this context, Dogase argues that the film industry established a dual set of values in the process of its production, specifically a division of "films for the Japanese" (*Nihonjin no Nihon eiga*) and "films for foreigners" (*kaigai no hito ga rikaishiyasui eiga*), and he rationalizes Ozu's work as the former.

The question for us is where the film *Nishijin* was located in such industrial and social conditions. Matsumoto stated in an interview that his "poetics of cinema" series was produced under the significant influence of the postwar European art cinema:

> I liked the French cinema differing from Hollywood cinema. I realized the boredom of the well-made, but rather predetermined films, which can only represent illusion....I was also influenced by short films that were usually not screened in movie theaters. I was, for instance, inspired by Alain Resnais's *Guernica* (1950) and even mesmerized by the limitless potential of cinema, the film that was totally different from typical feature films. Since then, I extended my knowledge on the possibilities of cinema and, at the same time, developed my capacity in judgments and a sense of values (by seeing those films) during the postwar period.[32]

Matsumoto also highlighted the influence of "poetics of cinema" by listing the works of European filmmakers, such as Joris Ivans and Albert Lamorisse:

> At the beginning of Japan's economic recovery, I realized it is no longer possible to express the needs of the time without dealing with internal problems [*naimen no mondai*]. I encountered great filmmakers' works such as Joris Ivans's *The Seine Meets Paris* (1957) and Albert Lamorisse's *White Mane: The Wild Horse* (1953) and *The Red Balloon* (1956), when I was contemplating the issue.[33]

Nishijin's cinematic memory has its roots in the postwar "art cinema" in Europe. "Art cinema" as cinematic modernism emerged in the postwar period, and is characterized by particular technical, stylistic, and industrial aspects, set against classical Hollywood style. Borrowing David Bordwell's definition, Russell J. A. Kilbourn summarizes three principles of art cinema, particularly as it relates to (1) a realism, different from "classical

realism"; (2) "authorial expressivity," in Bordwell's term, a film drawing attention to itself (self-reflexivity); and (3) uncertainty of meaning.[34] The genealogical influence—cinematic memory—from European "art cinema" to "poetics of cinema," and further to Matsumoto's "documentary," was brought by the cultural contingency of Matsumoto's encounter with those films from Europe.

Nishijin offers a realism that is entirely different from the "classical realism" that was prevalent in the movie theaters at the end of the war. The film's visual image, on the other hand, is unsynchronized with sound, and introduced instead with a rather poetic narration. Even in the sequence with semi-synchronized sound, the expression is often playful. In the most memorable sequences, for instance, the executives of the Nishijin weaving industry are in conference over strategies for reversing the decline in their business. The camera shoots them from the back in a pan shot and from the top looking down on their middle-age balding heads. [Figure 17.14 and 17.15] Their droning discussion over such banalities as how to modernize the production system, how to promote their products to a wider consumer base, and how to recruit new workers for such demanding work, is recorded and later edited into a loop of repetition, which overlaps with those images during the meeting. The sound emphasizes specific expressions in their utterance and remixes them repetitiously so that they begin to sound like verbal tics, or a recording stuck on a scratched sound groove. In this sequence, the camera avoids showing those executives' faces, again preempting the audience's identification as it did with the craftsmen and their body parts.

The "poetics of cinema" trilogy also has meaning in the context of domestic film genres, the particular history of "educational cinema" (*kyoiku eiga*) in postwar Japan.

FIGURE 17.14:   *Nishijin* (1961). At the executives' meeting, the camera captures their heads from the back. Although the film refuses to identify those present by avoiding shooting their faces, it nonetheless satirizes their mindset through editing their speech.

FIGURE 17.15: *Nishijin* (1961). At the same meeting, the camera shoots the heads from above. As a result of this caricature, the film was criticized by the Nishijin industry after all.

During World War II, the Japanese Film Law officially required all movie theaters to screen (1) a feature film, (2) a news film, and (3) a "culture short" (*bunka eiga*). Both the Film Law and "culture cinema" were ideas borrowed from Nazi Germany (1933–1945), and the latter was a direct translation from "Kulturfilm," the nonfiction films that the production company UFA (Universum Film AG) produced from the 1920s to the 1930s, in later years as a part of Nazi Germany's propaganda apparatus. The demand for the "culture cinema" in wartime Japan came to an end with the disappearance of the Film Law in 1945, and, instead, the expression "educational cinema" substituted for the wartime genre, which was a subtle reminder of Japan's alliance with Germany.

The category of "educational cinema," however, was not newly invented after the war, but rather existed even during wartime as one of the subcategories of short films. The Japanese short film history, in other words, was fully established during the war under the two categories of "culture cinema" and "educational cinema." The former was arguably defined as a short nonfiction film often screened in movie theaters, and the latter specified a short film particularly designed for educating school-age children at school or outside theatrical circulation.[35] When the former disappeared in the postwar period because of the lifting of screening regulations, many of the filmmakers of "culture cinema" shifted to making the "educational cinema," and the film production company Shinriken-eiga, where Matsumoto first worked, was one of those companies to produce such "educational films" in the 1950s.

Nishijin's distribution mirrored that of many "educational cinema" films, and it was shown to audiences outside the usual theatrical circulation. The film functioned as a medium transmitting knowledge, much the same as other examples of educational cinema. But, the question here is what "education" meant in postwar Japan. The apparent

wartime propaganda messages were now gone, but the cinema's function of propagating "messages" and, moreover, the contemporary audiences' expectations toward the film genre—that is, the collective *memory* attached to the specific genre—were still in evidence, albeit diminished. Film historian Yoshihara Junpei indicates that the image of educational cinema in the postwar period became much wider and elusive among filmmakers, and the key concepts of education became "peace" and "democracy." Yoshihara highlights the leading producer of educational cinema Kano Ryoichi's 1947 manifesto as follows:

> We, directors of short films, assert that "educational cinema" must depart the narrow definition of "short films for school-age children" on both levels of theme and form to the cinema with various categories being useful for the education of true peace and democracy.[36]

Kano indeed listed the following films as subgenres of educational cinema: news film, documentary film (*kiroku eiga*), science film, PR film, and film for school-age children (*jido eiga*).[37]

Viewed in this light, the film *Nishijin*, while being neither directly about people's antiwar sentiment (peace) nor supporting the Nishijin workers' labor movement (democracy)—one sequence shows the empty office of the weavers' labor union—shares the progressive political beliefs of the democratic educational movement from the prewar period, *tsuzurikata kyoiku* (education by writing composition). As I earlier described, the film depicts the "pain" of the Nishijin craftspeople with a rather conspicuous montage of someone being treated with a folk remedy and images of people praying for relief. This sequence not only reveals the internal conflict between the weavers and the management but, more important, also highlights the impetus for the film itself in the production and financing by the Association for Viewing Documentary Film in Kyoto. Not coincidentally, many of the association members were employees of the Horikawa Hospital near Nishijin, which treated the weavers' chronic work-related pain. Some fifty doctors, nurses, and administrators urged the association to make a documentary on the workers' plight. While the film has some resemblance to the anticorporation documentaries in the 1970s, Matsumoto and the association softened the political tone of the film, and even recruited Nishijin's textile companies as sponsors. The association ultimately wanted to create a progressive film movement modeled after the *tsuzurikata kyoiku*, encouraging community participation in cultural production and the circulation of texts, and local discussion forums. Indeed, the association was able to catalyze grassroots participation, selling micro shares of 80 yen (approximately $5 in today's US dollars) to the local people to help fund the film. Of course, the relatively high cost of filmmaking rather predictably doomed any hope of recouping the investors' money or managing any return for members' shares. Despite the prestige of the Venice award and high praise from domestic critics, the film was a commercial failure. The film's executive producer and the organizer for the Association Asai Eiichi had to flee from Kyoto to Osaka to avoid debt collectors. Within a year of the film's release, the association was

bankrupt. Angered over the film's depiction of an industry in decline and the suggestion of rampant exploitation of the weavers, Nishijin's textile industry responded by pressuring the association to reedit the film with added footage, releasing a parallel version, *Orimono no machi, Nishijin* (*The Weaving Town, Nishijin*, 1961), which presumably portrayed their industry in a better light.[38]

As I have stated, the film's raison d'être harks back to the *tsuzurikata kyoiku* educational movement of the early 1950s, particularly in its opposition to the centralized control over education of the American-backed postwar government. While the literary education movement started from the 1930s with educators such as Sasaoka Tadayoshi in Kochi and Ashida Keinosuke in Hyogo, the movement, often decentralized and based in local areas, was suppressed by the military government with its totalitarian control of education during World War II. The movement was, however, again spotlighted in the 1950s, along with the popularity of the book *School of Echoes: The Record of the Students in Yamamotomura Junior High in Yamagata* (Yamabiko gakko: Yamagata-ken Yamamoto-mura chugakko seito no seikatsu kiroku), an anthology of schoolchildren's compositions edited by the educator Muchaku Seikyo (b. 1927) in 1951. Employing a strategy of inclusive education—collecting data from one's everyday life, writing it in ordinary language, revising the writing with a teacher, assembling it as a collection with other students' works, and then reading and discussing it together—the literary movement acted as a counter movement to the centralization of ideology (the emphasis on democracy) and language (erasure of local dialect), the key pillars for the nation-building project of the postwar government. The popularity of *tsuzurikata kyoiku*, with its focus on narratives of the individual and the local, rather than the national, was also linked to its anti-US sentiment, its grassroots opposition to the top-down principle of the US occupation, specifically the goals of democratizing the Japanese through media, such as the CIE film project, and reforming the school system. *Nishijin*'s evocation of the alternative cultural production championed by *tsuzurikata kyoiku* represents a rare instance of cross-media transfer of a postwar grassroots movement.

Conclusion

Memory works in *Nishijin* at least in two ways. The underlined representations of Japanese craftspeople remind us of the national identity, reiterating the national memory of Japan as a place of highly refined crafts, the memory of which is nonetheless constructed through the modern history of the Japanese struggle over the novel concept of "art." The film also functions as a memory archive, storing postwar values and ideology, revealing the film industry's (along with Matsumoto's own) desire for acknowledgment outside Japan, and also recalls the largely unrecorded history of the Japanese people's resistance toward the unification, under the US-backed government, of the education and political systems. The film's images of weavers' bodies melding with the mechanized rhythms of the looms record both the pain and dignity in their expertise. In Matsumoto's

"poetics of cinema," the *physical* here profoundly registers what has not been written and, therefore, could have easily been forgotten.

Notes

1. Matsumoto Toshio, *Nishijin, in Matsumoto Toshio jikken eizoshu 1, shi to shiteno eizo* (Tokyo: Dekkusuentateinmento, 2005).
2. Russell J. A. Kilbourn, *Cinema, Memory, Modernity: The Representation of Memory from the Art Film to Transnational Cinema* (New York: Routledge, 2010).
3. Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, trans. Kathleen Blamey and David Pellauer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004).
4. Susan A. Crane, ed., *Museums and Memory* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2000).
5. Ian Hacking, *Rewriting the Soul: Multiple Personality and the Sciences of Memory* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995).
6. Pierre Nora, ed., *Rethinking France*, vols. 1–4, trans. Mary Trouille, under the direction of Pierre Nora; trans. directed by David P. Jordan (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999–2010).
7. Maureen Turim, *Flashbacks in Film: Memory and History* (New York: Routledge, 1989).
8. Kilbourn, *Cinema, Memory, Modernity*, 6.
9. Ibid.
10. The film was introduced as *The Weavers of Nishijin* in 2008 in the UK, according to the film review in IMDB. I, however, use the current title, *Nishijin*, since this is the original Japanese title and I do not think the film is exclusively about the weavers. http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1090211/ (accessed February 18, 2012).
11. John W. Dower, *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1999).
12. Alison Landsberg, "Prosthetic Memory: The Ethics and Politics of Memory in an Age of Mass Culture," in *Memory and Popular Film*, ed. Paul Grainge (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), 144–161.
13. Richard Terdiman, *Present Past: Modernity and the Memory Crisis* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993). Terdiman explicates the term a "memory crisis" with an example of the people in France in the period after the 1789–1815 revolutionary upheavals. During the period, "the uncertainty of relation with the past became especially intense," and "people experienced the insecurity of their culture's involvement with its past, the perturbation of the link to their own inheritance" (3).
14. Ibid.
15. H. D. Harootunian, "Visible Discourse/Invisible Ideologies," in *Postmodernism and Japan*, eds. Masao Miyoshi and H. D. Harootunian (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1989), 68.
16. Dogase Masao names this social context in the Japanese film industry as "Japan's postwar modernism" in his analysis on Ozu Yasujiro's postwar family melodrama depicting the bourgeois class. Dogase Masato, "Ozu eiga no sengo to modanizumu," in *Imeji to shite no sengo*, eds. Tsuboi Hideto and Fujiki Hideaki (Tokyo: Seikyusha, 2010), 155–177.
17. Morishita Akihiko wrote about this association in depth, and his essay is available to read in the following Kobe Design University's web page. Morishita Akihiko, "Eizo bunka no soshutu: Kyoto 'kiroku eiga o miru kai' no katsudo o furikaeru; Part 1 Mitai eiga o

miru: Shochuki no jishu joei katudo to sono choten to shite no 'Senkan Pochomukin' joei," (2008), http://kiyou.kobe-du.ac.jp/08/thesis/05-01.html (accessed February 24, 2012).

18. Yoshihara Junpei, *Nihon tanpen eizo-shi: Bunka eiga, kyoiku eiga, sangyo eiga* (Tokyo: Iwanamishoten, 2011), 193–194.

19. Dogase indicates the Federation of Economic Organization officially published an article "Eiga no yushutsu shinko-saku ni kansuru yobo iken" (The request regarding the promotion for the export of films) in *Kinema Junpo* (January 1954). Dogase, "Ozu eiga no sengo to modanizumu," 160.

20. Matsumoto Toshio, "Komentari onsei," *Matsumoto Toshio jikken eizo-shu vol. 1, Shi to shite no eizo* (Tokyo: Uplink, 2005).

21. Morishita, "Eizo bunka no soshutu."

22. Sato Tadao, "Matsumoto Toshio no eiga-shi 'Nishijin,'" *Eiga Hyoron 18*, no. 8 (1961): 66.

23. Yuko Kikuchi, *Japanese Modernisation and Mingei Theory: Cultural Nationalism and Oriental Orientalism* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004), 89.

24. Sir Rutherford Alcock, *The Capital of the Tycoon: Narrative of a Three Years' Residence in Japan*, 2 vols. (London: Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts, & Green, 1863), 280.

25. Sir Rutherford Alcock, *Art and Art Industries in Japan* (London: Virtue and Co., 1878), 103.

26. Kikuchi, *Japanese Modernisation*, 79.

27. Suzuki Sadahiro, "Joho gijutsu kakumei to kogei no shorai: Mingei undo o tegakari toshite," in *Dento kogei saiko Kyo no uchi soto: Kako hakkutsu, genjo bunseki, shorai tenbo*, ed. Inaga Shigemi (Kyoto: Shibunkaku Shuppan, 2007), 526.

28. Okakura Tenshin, "Sho wa bijyutu narasu no ron o yomu," *Okakura Tenshin zenshu*, vol. 3 (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1979–1981), 7.

29. Dogase, "Ozu eiga no sengo to modanizumu," 163.

30. Ibid., 156.

31. Ibid., 167.

32. Kaneko Yu, *Firumumekazu: Kojin eiga no tukurikata* (Tokyo: Ato ando kurafuto, 2011), 79.

33. Ibid., 87.

34. Kilbourn, *Cinema, Memory, Modernity*, 12.

35. Yoshihara, *Nihon tanpen eizo-shi*, 129.

36. Ibid., 130. Kano's manifesto was originally published in the journal *Eiga Kyoshitu* 1 (February 1947).

37. Ibid.

38. Morishita, "Eizo bunka no soshutu."

CHAPTER 18

∙∙∙

BY OTHER HANDS: ENVIRONMENT AND APPARATUS IN 1960S INTERMEDIA

∙∙∙

MIRYAM SAS

As I sit down to write this essay in Berkeley, California, the earth shakes hard, then goes quiet. The Internet has been shut down, and I have been waiting for maintenance to come get it working again. I jump up from my desk, run to a doorway. I do not know if it is going to shake again. I pick up my cell phone: working. I call my family, go back to my desk.

With the recent disasters in Tōhoku-Fukushima, with the rise of global warming, we increasingly realize the fragility of the structures and infrastructures of daily living, the vulnerability of the natural and technological environment that surrounds us. Even a minor disruption like my 4.0 shake reminds me how much my human connections depend upon their virtual and technological environments for continuity. When 1960s Tokyo was being rebuilt on a massive scale, when memories of the "city of ruins" were much closer at hand,[1] the sense of being enveloped in a larger network of structures and in an emergent technological landscape developed in increasingly palpable and imaginative forms. Technological changes in urban space affected the conceptual and physical experience of daily life, and artists worked to invent forms and construct media that could bear up to this altered sensibility. Even something as simple as the construction of ever-taller buildings and underground passageways, as in Shinjuku in the 1960s,

undeniably changed the experience of space and dimensionality. As Isozaki Arata put it: "Up until the 19th century, it was the utmost one could do to feel the city by walking in a straight line. But in contemporary cities, because one can walk not only left and right, but also climb up and dive down, an extremely three-dimensional frame has been generated for the first time as a structure through which one can apprehend the city. Through these conditions, systems of space have been transformed."[2]

The scale of environmental and technological transformations reached a peak in the 1960s, and intermedia art in Japan emerged as a reflection on the experiential dimension of this changing urban space in the "age of information." The works discussed in this essay, each in its own way, are efforts to cope with and respond to these transformations. By tracing the development of intermedia through several key works and events, each of which confronts aspects of the changing systems of space in the mediated environment, we can come to a more nuanced perspective on what is or is not "new" in new media's ways of viewing contemporary changes in sociocultural and infrastructural landscapes. Of course, artistic work between and across technological media began in Japan well before the term "intermedia" came to prominence, at least as early as the advent of cinema in Japan.[3] Yet I argue that it is useful to revisit the rise of what came to be called "intermedia" in the 1960s for what it can contribute to the understanding of both historical and contemporary media practices. Ideas of "environment" and "apparatus" became key terms in intermedia artists' grappling with the broader totality of the systems and structures of high-growth capitalism, with their effects on what was once known as the "human."

The work of prominent filmmaker and theorist Matsumoto Toshio appears in several events connected to the emergence of intermedia art in Japan. Yet Matsumoto's proto-intermedial experiments began with his very earliest film *Ginrin* (*Silver Wheels,* 1955–1956), a color PR film commissioned by a division of JETRO to advertise Japanese bicycles abroad. He collaborated with key members of the group Jikken kōbō (Experimental Workshop), such as Yamaguchi Katsuhiro and Kitadai Shōzō, as well as with industry specialists like Tsuburaya Eiji, a maker of Godzilla's special effects.[4] The revised version of *Ginrin* has been relatively recently found and carefully restored.[5] A "cinema poem," in Matsumoto's words, made of images and music with no narration, it also features composer Takemitsu Tōru's first film soundtrack. *Ginrin* shows a moment of close collaboration between the corporate-government institutions and avant-garde aesthetic experiments. The either-or rhetoric of resistance (critical distance) and co-optation (complicity, collusion, incorporation into corporate culture) as a framework has constrained understanding of experimental works up to and including the 1970 Osaka Expo. This film instantiates a much more common mode of negotiating the situation of being embedded in larger historical and economic structures. *Ginrin,* in a way that is extended and developed in later, explicitly intermedial events, takes the specific possibilities and constraints of its situation and frames an allegorical reading of this situation within the work itself.

Ginrin's use of superimposition and its fascination with the mechanism of the bicycle wheel—like Ozu's famous spinning truck wheel, seeming to evoke a reflexive figure for cinema[6] —emerges out of a long history of earlier explorations of the dissolution of unified perspective and the fragmentation of viewer experience. From the focus on mechanisms

in futurism and cubism to the fragmentation of narrative views in Shinkankaku-ha, in association with French symbolist film theory, many examples in the prewar avant-gardes evoke the rise of modern urban space through a decentralization and fragmentation of visual perspectives. In *Ginrin,* isolated handlebars whirl through space; geometric forms configure and break off. The gear wheel turns and animates in a geometric abstraction as the screen divides into four, then two. Metal wheels whirl and shimmer in the light (see Fig. 18.1), flying through a space made to feel expansive, to extend beyond the screen, by the metallic "plinks" and high reverberations of Takemitsu's score. Multiple riderless bicycles float through the air, unconnected with any ground. The visual perspective refracts into vertical bars of light, only some of which are connected to any object. When the boy who opens the frame narrative reappears (at the opening of the film he was seen reading a book about bicycles, which launches this more abstract segment), he sees women collecting bicycle wheel rims from a white expanse where they lie like abandoned hula hoops, in an abstract pattern. Bikers appear, some showing only their legs at the top of the frame, the light shimmering on the spokes—in a range of scales, some smaller, some bigger. The boy walks among them, before them. These multiple and repeated figures of bikers crossing the screen call to mind most strongly the image of a zoetrope, from the "gadget-and-apparatus" phase at the origins of cinema's illusion of movement.

The wonders of the bicycle (and its associated relaxed lifestyle) come to be equated here—for foreign consumption—with the wonders and pleasures and leisure of cinema itself. As the panoramic landscape passes by—the lateral movement across surfaces rather than movement into depth—one follows the view from the camera as if mounted on a moving bicycle. The foreground blurs. The transition from color to grayer tones and then to more vibrant greens and cerulean blues, and the refraction of light through the
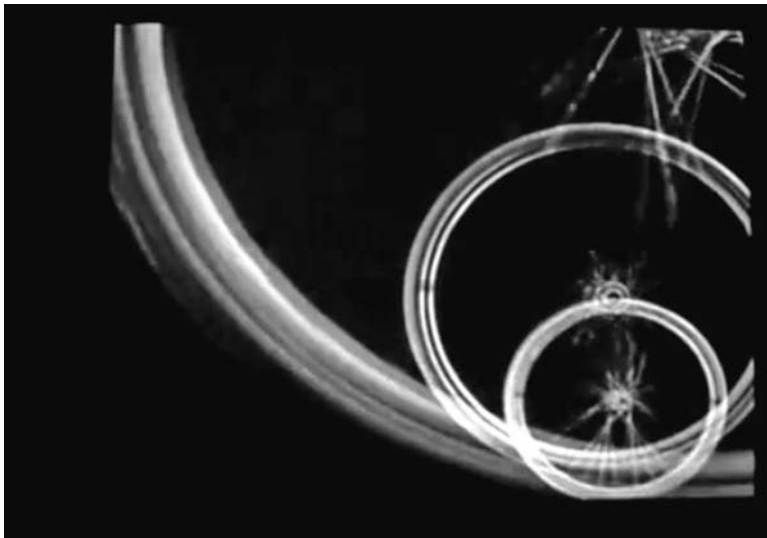
FIGURE 18.1 Image of the bicycle wheels at minute 5:26: still from Matsumoto Toshio, *Ginrin* (1955).

trees as the camera moves from sky to ground, all become part of *Ginrin*'s meditation on the visual experience of cycling: the diffraction of the light becomes an extension of the work of art director Yamaguchi Katsuhiro's "Vitrine" series in his Jikken kōbō exhibitions. The distinctive pigment scheme of this early Japanese color film—on a version of Eastman Kodak color film stock that would be discontinued in 1959—becomes part of the lasting effects of this narratively simple and somewhat sappy film, augmented by the sponsors' later addition of footage of Mount Fuji.[7] From the sponsors' viewpoint, *Ginrin* showcases the simple pleasures of color cinema and the cycling apparatus, both as ways of experiencing the (in this case) natural environment, the "beauty of nature." Yet at a deeper level, the effects of scale parallel the effects of speed: with the parallax view, with mechanical objects whirling in space, the film reflects on the experience of the technologically mediated environment. Yamaguchi's "Vitrine" glass appears again just before the film closes down its poetics (in the extant, revised version of the film) with the boy waking up from his dream on his cycling book, fantastically titled in English, "Bicycle of Japan."

Ginrin represents a historically important moment of innovation, framing collaborations between artists across media with an interest in the apparatus and mechanism as they affect the physical experience of the environment. Like later intermedia events and works, the making of *Ginrin* is enabled by an alliance serving the disparate interests of industry, government, and the arts, as JETRO provided an opportunity for avant-garde artists to deepen their experiments with mechanism, color, and light, lovingly preserved in the National Film Center's recent restoration. *Ginrin* thus opens some central themes and perspectives that become crucial for later works of intermedia. At a further remove, it also marks a key step in Matsumoto's movement toward his influential theories of subject-object relations and projection in expanded cinema.

Matsumoto recently commented on the importance of Yamaguchi Katsuhiro's "Vitrine" series for his later work (see Fig. 18.2). He describes that work's kinetic qualities:

> When a viewer shifts the line of sight, or when the viewer moves, the shapes and colors of the forms on the other side of the various kinds of glass—laced glass [*mōru garasu*] which creates a wave form, or diamond-shaped glass—crumble apart and rejoin and move. It is not a matter of asking which is the real picture, but rather that the scenes unfolding with the movement of the gaze, the totality of the experiences of continuity of seeing by the viewer are themselves the work. [8]

The description here of the fragmented totality, the gaze in motion that creates a series of experiences to create a composite work, becomes a precedent in the development of Matsumoto's interrogation of the relation of cinema to its object in his famous theories of documentary and avant-garde cinema, a key influence on a generation of upcoming directors, artists, and cinephiles.

Matsumoto's remediated photographic work *Ishi no uta* (*The Song of Stone,* 1961) and his contemporaneous theories of *eizō* (mechanically reproduced image), articulately analyzed by Yuriko Furuhata in her forthcoming book, crucially embody his emergent theories of the relation with the object, and show how those theories connect to a growing interest in environment, landscape, and apparatus, as well as cinematic form. Here
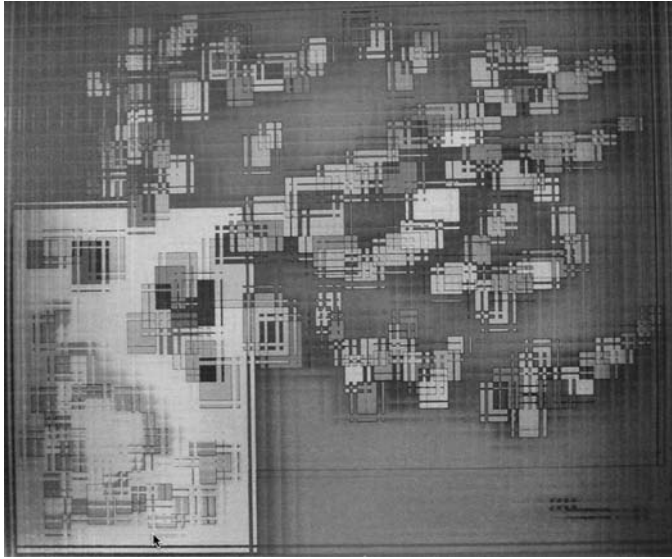
FIGURE 18.2 Yamaguchi Katsuhiro, "Vitrine" (1952).

I will argue for an emergent centrality of ideas of environment and apparatus that transforms the understanding of both art and cinema by the time of the Osaka Expo in 1970.

THE DIALECTICAL RELATION BETWEEN
AVANT-GARDE AND DOCUMENTARY

French poet Francis Ponge wrote of his method in his 1942 *Le parti pris des choses,* "What matters to me is the serious application with which I approach the object." He had written earlier, "Always go back to the object itself, to its raw quality. . . . Recognize the greater right of the object, its inalienable right, in relation to any poem."[9] "I choose as subjects the most indifferent objects possible . . . where the guarantee of the need for expression appears to me (instinctively) to reside in the object's habitual mutism."[10] *Le parti pris des choses,* translated as *The Voice of Things,* has as its heart a long prose poem about a small stone, a pebble, so that when we think of Ponge today we usually think of him as the one who wrote the stones, who gave voice to pebbles. German-Jewish poet Paul Celan similarly was haunted by tiny figures of objects like stones, shells, and nuts, impenetrable or sprouting or transformed: "Es ist Zeit, daß der Stein sich zu blühen bequemt, / daß der Unrast ein Herz schlägt. / Es ist Zeit, daß es Zeit wird." (It is time the stone tried to bloom [made an effort to flower], / that unrest had a beating heart. / It is time it were time.)[11] In Celan's work, stones become linked to time, to the counting of time, to metamorphosis. Often in poetry stones become figures for the hardness of language as it moves in time,

the materiality of words and letters themselves. I think of Beckett's methodical Molloy with his sixteen sucking-stones, which he transfers from one pocket to the other, trying to invent a method so that he does not suck on the same one twice.

In postwar Japanese cinema theory, too, the relation to *objects,* to the "mutism" of objects, was a central question. The term *eizō* (mechanically reproduced image) opens a space of mediation for Matsumoto in his theoretical writings between inner and outer worlds, subjectivity and objectivity not as separate spheres but as a dialectical relation. In the film *Ishi no uta,* stones come to signify in a special way for Matsumoto this relation to the image, to embody figuratively the object-relation problem of cinematic praxis. In "Zen'ei kiroku eiga-ron" (On avant-garde documentary film), Matsumoto points to the limitations he perceives in 1920s avant-garde cinema as focusing excessively on the inner world.[12] "They are lacking the toughness [*kibishisa*] to bring the inner and outer worlds into relation, unceasingly and subjectively."[13] The relation to be framed between the inner and outer worlds must be framed *subjectively*. Avant-garde documentary films, according to Matsumoto, need to document not only the "object" outside themselves but also the process of search for a methodology of framing a relation to that object.[14]

In "Eiga geijutsu no gendai-teki shiza," Matsumoto writes:

> A superior documentary image [*kiroku-teki eizō*] does not stop at simply recording the object, but it also records the very process of searching into/toward the object. (That is where its secret lies.) In the same sense, the drama (of making) made by excellent documentary images is not the same as the dramatic quality that belongs to the object. It is clearly the "drama of searching" for the drama of the object, and is thus always a" "subjectified drama," an "expressed drama." However, this is none other than the drama of "*eizō*" [the image] and cannot be expressed by literature or theater.[15]

What constitutes a "subject" and what constitutes an "object" is questioned more broadly in the changing frame of the 1960s discursive milieu. Isozaki Arata calls the environment itself a "subject" (*shutai*), in a way to be discussed more fully below. For Matsumoto, the stones are a crucial figure for the dialectical relation between photography and moving image (between media), and the relation between subject and object mediated by the image (*eizō*). Dialectics, as a form of montage construction that also illuminates contradictions and sets up colliding elements—overcoming each side of the contradiction while preserving what is overcome—comes to be figured most concretely in the hacking and sculpting of the "living" stones themselves.[16] When one thinks back on *Ginrin* in the light of this later formulation, it is clear that the handlebars, gears, and wheel rims are, at the imaginative limit, themselves animated into a kind of "subjectivity," a subjectivity that is visualized most clearly in the play of light and color; or, speaking more modestly, one can say that they are a concretized image of a realm of projected sensorial fantasy (and perhaps even, in the sponsors' intention, with the aim of infusing these partial objects with fetishistic powers). In the face of this "subjectivized" environment, the human bodies in *Ginrin* seem to be themselves mechanized objects in varying scales, fit to the structure and motion of the gear wheels. These unnamed people in the

film do not smile as they ride, but one might almost say the bicycle parts are rather the ones at play.

As we have seen, Matsumoto rejects the distinction between the cinematic document as record of the object in "reality" and the interpretation of aesthetic experiments as inherently about the "interior." This relationship comes to be allegorized quite directly in *Ishi no uta*.

> While it may seem on first glance that documentaristic films that try to sharply cut out (*kiritoru*) the exterior world and avant-gardistic films that try to delve deeply to pull out (*hikizuridasu*) the inner world are absolutely different kinds of film, in fact they overlap *like positive and negative images*... Or rather, they are in the kind of relationship where the more one tries to grasp and think about one, the more one has to direct one's eyes toward the other.[17]

Elsewhere, he takes it a step further:

> We need to aim for the negation of negation [*hitei no hitei*], or the sublation [*Aufheben*] of existing documentary film and avant-garde film; in other words, to grasp the outer and inner worlds as a whole in their conflicts and coherences, and aim for the possibility of a new film that would be the synthesis of both sides.[18]

The figure of "positive" and "negative" as the poles of relationship, a fully photographic metaphor, yields here to a vision of the "negation of negation"—in other words, Hegelian *Aufheben*. Negation of negation takes a philosophical term for a specific dialectical relationship and here translates it into visual terms.

Ishi no uta as a whole has a very contradictory (or palimpsestic) quality, with a humanist, nostalgic voice-over narration that works in contrastive parallel with the materiality of the images and the concreteness of the music. Yet if one were to leave aside for a moment the full significance of the film's humanist/empathic/ethnographic side, with its long shots of landscapes (the transformations of the landscape by the workers in the quarry) and its narration about the "hometown," and were instead to focus most intently on the moment that forms the climax of its most materialist and dialectical moment— when we see the human figure in the negative and positive prints, pulsing in photographic reversal—this climactic moment can come to embody vividly Matsumoto's central question of the complex relation of subject to the object mapped onto the relation of cinematic documentary and avant-garde (see Figure 18.3).

Matsumoto shoots *Life* photographer Ernest Satow's original photographs frame by frame to "animate" the photographs, agitate them, and place them in ghostly superimposition. The work has an intermedial relation through Akiyama Kuniharu's soundtrack with the broader *musique concrète* movement at Sōgetsu Art Center: Akiyama uses the sound of the quarry as well as instrumental sounds to punctuate the concrete "construction" of this work. I am struck by the architectonics of these images, their "muteness" (in Francis Ponge's sense) but also their symbolic resonance: making what cannot speak be nonetheless alive, and yet also resistant to capture either by language's significations or by human consciousness.
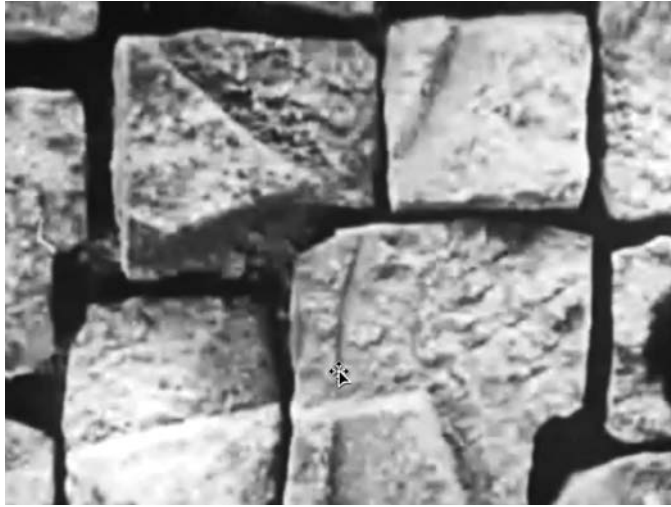
FIGURE 18.3 Matsumoto Toshio, *Ishi no uta* (1961).

At many points in the film, the sound of hammers on stones overlays the quick montage of black-and-white images of the stonecutters doing their labor. Zooms and pans show the work of the camera as if it, too, were a method of slicing stones in the photographic image. Hands become a central focus, as Matsumoto repeatedly gives close-up shots of the hands working on the stone. The hands might return one to a sense of the artisanal, the roman-ticized laborer, except that these are relentlessly mediated hands, black-and-white photo-graphed hands, shifting in a rhythm that transcends its "human," fleshly quality, like the legs on bicycles of *Ginrin*. Here it is rather haptic qualities of cinematic viewing that come to the fore: the experience of apprehending these hands and pulsing black-and-white images and sounds in rhythmic superimposition highlights the embodied perception of the viewer "touched" by cinema at the intersection between subject and object.[19] Meanwhile, the stones are every bit as corporeal as the hands, in a way all the more emphasized by the voice-over descriptions of the stones' "life." Like Takemitsu's music in *Ginrin,* Akiyama Kuniharu's soundtrack here gives a sense of an expansive space beyond the screen, with its open and resonating chimes and echoing hammer blows. Intense staccato movements of montage alternate with other slower, more meditative and silent pans across the scene around the quarry, as the voice-over tells of the anthropomorphic language used of the stone—"killing" the stones, letting them "live," the "warmth" of their forms, so that when a stone form is complete, the locals would say, "It has come to life."[20]

White stones separated by black cracks switch to solarized images of black stones with white lines, haunted by the white shadow of the man in the negative seen from above (see Fig. 18.3). The rectangular forms of the stones project—positive and negative, nega-tion of negation—*Aufheben* in the form of retinal afterimages. A standing figure moves at one-second intervals from one "frame" of stone to another. The stones concretize the materiality and the dialectical searching of Matsumoto's *eizō*. High and low tones

in Akiyama's music echo the ghostly mood, not the ghost of tradition or folklore, as some parts of the film and voice-over might imply, but here, the ghost image "burn-in"[21] of reproducibility, the materiality of the photographic and cinematic images linking the intra-psychic and the external audiovisual environment.

Through his theories of *eizō* and cinematic praxis in the early 1960s, Matsumoto participates in a broader cultural focus on "landscape" and "environment"[22] —subjective and objective landscapes, intra-psychic and infrastructural landscapes, both of which contain elements of the (Marxist) concrete and that can also become irrational. The multitude of stones can create a figure for the multitude of humans (like Teshigahara's and Hanada Kiyoteru's "sand"), the humans' combination of plasticity and object-ness in their use by capital.[23] The architectonics of *Ishi no uta*'s landscapes, its living stones, allegorize the masses of workers but also map the movement of power as imaged within and structuring intra-psychic reality—or as Matsumoto most clearly phrases it, the "umbilical cord between inside and outside."[24] Holding in mind Matsumoto's vision of *eizō,* emblematized in the image-person in negative moving against a background infrastructure of black-and-white stones, we can now turn to explicit "intermedia" experiments as such in the later 1960s that most specifically aimed to interrogate the dynamics and impacts of the urban-technological environment and, at times, to "thrust the products of the environment" back on the viewer.

Matsumoto along with his collaborators and associated critics in the early 1960s, through their experimental documentary works and theories of subject-object relations, opened the way to later artistic movements and events that directly addressed the problem of the technological transformations in urban space and art's responses to the experience of these broader "totalities" and dynamic systems. Matsumoto's work, included in the latter event discussed here, addresses the problem of the phenomenological experience of "being" in the age of information and mass mediated images. Other artists, connected to Matsumoto through a web of artistic associations and venues (including Akiyama Kuniharu, Yuasa Jōji, and Ichiyanagi Toshi), further theorize this line of thought and push its central problems in new directions through their discussions of environment and intermedia experiments.[25] The following pages thus take up two key events that addressed the problems of intermedia and "environment," events (rather than individual artworks or theories) that aimed to create or generate collectives of artistic activity commensurate with the expansive "totality" of systems and infrastructures beyond the individual artist or viewer's grasp. They thus suggest a changed framework for both artists and viewers to understand the role of artistic practice in the space of "intermedia."

From Space to Environment

The exhibition *From Space to Environment* (see Fig. 18.4), held in 1966 in Ginza's Matsuya department store by the "Environment Society," aimed at nothing less than
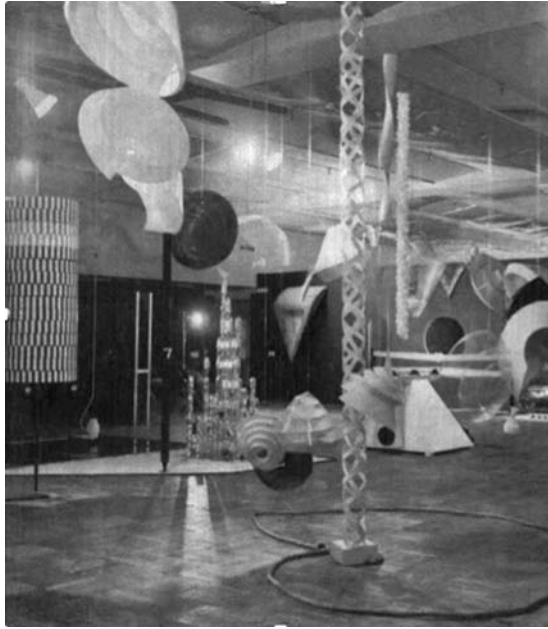
FIGURE 18.4 Exhibition *From Space to Environment* (1966).

transforming the "concept of place" into a "kinetic, chaotic 'environment' that incorporates the whole of the viewer and the work" (see Fig. 18.4). More literally, the organizers claimed that the sense of place had *already* been transformed in these ways, and they aim to search for such a "chaotic place of collisions" for their work that would be commensurate with this new sense of space and environment.[26] With the participation of thirty-eight of the most well-known and innovative artists from many fields,[27] the exhibition posits a "severe self-disintegration [*jiko hōkai*]" that pertains not only to artistic disciplines and media, not only to the works to be shown, but to the visitors/viewers as well. No longer, the exhibit's manifesto claimed, would any simple form of "synthesis" (*sōgō*) be possible,[28] as earlier movements (such as Jikken kōbō) had advocated. Instead, the "many genres of 'art' must destroy themselves in order to be reorganized under new systems," and the viewers, too, "in the face of unavoidable self-dissolution, are either boldly or passively whirled into, or swallowed by, and cannot but participate in the 'place' created by artwork."[29]

Such a vision of inner collapse by art forms and viewers is supplemented by a vision of an expansive and encompassing "environment," a "place" intimately linked to concepts of changing urban space. In environmental design, the manifesto claimed, the city itself was not a sum of fixed parts but a "subject [*shutai*][!] called *environment* in which all the parts are organically and dynamically linked." Environment here is defined as an "act of surrounding," or the "state of being surrounded," with an emphasis on movement, and thus "a set of dynamic relations between human being and surroundings."[30] In this context, we might reread the closing negative/positive imagery of *Ishi no uta* not only as

a literalization of Matsumoto's subject-object theory, but also as a prescient image for such dynamic relation between human and surroundings—the human figure moving against a subjectivized, shifting plastic and kinetic environment.

Springing from an excitement about McLuhan's theories of the externalization of the sensorium, the artists of the Environment Society showed in quite a different manner what Matsumoto was also so clearly theorizing: a new kind of relationality between humans and their environment, or between subject and object, in which, as Yamaguchi Katsuhiro phrases it,

> If we were to expand our thoughts to the idea that today's human life is built upon going beyond concrete human form and individual functions, we would realize that human beings are already not confined in their consciousness and senses as limited by their physical flesh, nor within the functions of their bodies restricted to a certain number of physical kilograms; instead they are existing and expanding out within the very environment of this contemporary civilization....Human beings themselves transform into a part of the environment, and gradually become homogeneous with it, such that everything that makes up the environment and the environment itself is becoming the bodily, material functions of human beings. By thinking this way, one can grasp each type of non-personifiable communication [such as even the flashing signal of an airplane's warning light] as the very function of the self.[31]

Yamaguchi takes the interdynamic relation between subject and object and extends it to frame an argument about infrastructure. The opposition between *kankyō* and humans in its banal form no longer holds, not because of some simple ambiguity of terms nor even because of a direct application of McLuhan's theory. Rather Yamaguchi pushes McLuhan's theory into a more intriguing challenge to the bounds of subjectivity: *the human expands* to the point of an odd exteriorization of scale, such that the "body" of humans no longer is framed in fleshly or sensorial limits. The "body" of the technologized surroundings becomes the extended realm of the human body, while the human is deeply permeated with and transformed into *kankyō*. The deeply digging externalization of Matsumoto's theories here yields to an image of the technological infrastructure mirrored within (and mirroring) the human body. On one level, it is an image of deathlessness—a powerful extension of the human sensorium, making the environment itself a subject, a communicating signal. Yet this extended definition of the human dramatically also evacuates the "person-like-ness" (personifiability, personly verisimilitude) of the person (that is, its mimesis of the human itself), and thus destabilizes the ontological heteromorphism between the machinic/technological and human functions. Yamaguchi envisions a radically continuous space both of contiguity and structural analogy between the newly framed human and the environment, such that even the flashing warning lights of the airplane seen in the sky overhead come to be understood as communicative functions of this newly defined "self." According to Yamaguchi, human beings have already come to exist in this situation of extension and expansion, a state of projection (or the introjection of a projection) of human form onto the mechanical surroundings, of the image/information age onto/within subjectivity's frame in a
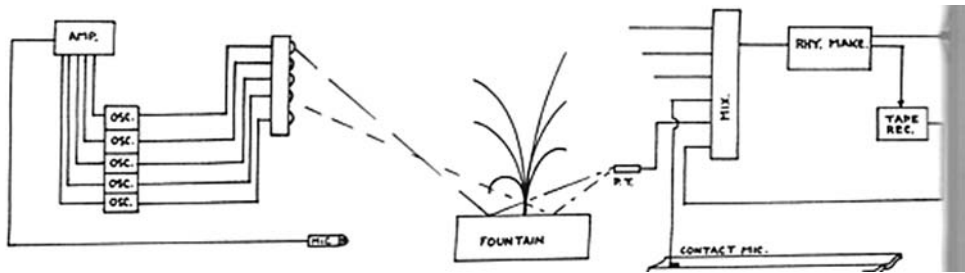
FIGURE 18.5 Akiyama Kuniharu, *Environmental Mechanical Orchestra No. 1* (drawing by Roger Reynolds), from the exhibition *From Space to Environment*. Courtesy of Roger and Karen Reynolds Archive.

way radically different from earlier forms of apostrophe and the Pygmalion-like personification of "nature."[32]

One paradigmatic example of a work displayed at *From Space to Environment* is Akiyama Kuniharu's apparatus *Environmental Mechanical Orchestra No. 1* (see Fig. 18.5). In this work, a microphone took the ambient sounds of the visitors to the exhibition walking toward the apparatus and put them through an amplifier and a series of oscillators in order to convert the amplitude of these wave forms to light signals; the lights then flashed toward a fountain, which diffracted them on the surface of water. The bouncing light signals were then picked up by a light sensor (PT) whose signal moved into a mixer, mixed with additional signals from sounds of another contact microphone on the floor, and then transmitted to a "rhythm maker" (the whole constructed by Okuyama Jūnosuke) to structure the emitted sounds. These sounds went into a tape recorder and were projected by a speaker back onto the visitors.[33]

"The important features," as composer and later CROSS TALK Intermedia co-organizer Roger Reynolds phrased it, "are the use of materials produced by the environment and the fact that these products are then *administered, perhaps even flung back* at their makers."[34] While later "interactive" artworks, such as those displayed at NTT's Inter-Communication Center in the 1990s, resonate with this description (and the issue of the relation between corporate funding and technological art comes to the fore in that case as well), the emphasis here is strongly on the collective rather than the individual "interactive" agent, and on the process of envelopment and resonance of the individual within a broader nonhuman environment. The drumlike sounds, bounces, and short gong-like booms and toots one hears as a result have the quality of an electronic heartbeat, a play of rhythms that moves in a kind of steadily flowing yet irregular stream—no long silences, but an odd mix of high and low sounds that do not seem to have any correlation to one another, and that seem, at the risk of personification, not to "pay attention" to one another.[35] Yet by using terms like "attention" and "heartbeat," one already moves into the realm of the listener/viewer's experience, the haptic substitution of the listener's body for the machinic production here, that takes the sounds from the viewers and passes it through a precisely non-indexical process before sending it back to the viewer for reabsorption.

Electronic Mechanical Orchestra No. 1 foregrounds the largely unconscious, rarely highlighted background of "noise"—sonic noise, shadow noise—produced by the bodies of

exhibition visitors, what they generate differentially by their collective presence and sheer numbers. Even when visitors move politely and relatively quietly (and by all accounts the exhibition was extremely crowded), their existence provokes an oddly abrasive environment, a veritable barrage of light and sounds that this piece captures and amplifies, significantly, with its visible mechanical apparatus. The piece thus mirrors the urban situation and the affective disturbance of the "information age," even while modeling this "administering" back of the crowd upon itself. Other notable pieces in the exhibition included Ay-O's finger boxes (see Fig. 18.6), hung on a wall, which allowed visitors to stick their fingers into dark spaces for unexpected sensations (a sharp nail, a void, or a squishy soft object, among others). Ichiyanagi Toshi's interactive work emerging from the field of sound design invited visitors to approach a tall box to peer into its kaleidoscopic and kinetic lights: their spatial proximity was then converted into low, theremin-like sounds through an apparatus also designed by Okuyama (see Fig. 18.7).

Events like *From Space to Environment* provoked some criticism in two directions, both related to the problems of environmental design: on the one hand, Haryū Ichirō wrote that the exhibit was too much like a "thronged adult amusement park," and that the environment of the interior of the department store comes to seem an "artificial zone" of exhibition that ultimately loses out to the environment of the surrounding reality of "1966 Tokyo Ginza."[36] KuroDalaiJee (Kuroda Raiji) recently wrote that works of intermedia in events such as this one had to lack the "scents [odors] of everyday life" in order to "be tolerated in an exhibition held at a strictly regulated department store," and for him, unlike the atmosphere of Shinjuku, Sōgetsu Art Center (where the performances associated with the exhibition were held) also preserved an

FIGURE 18.6 Ay-O, "Finger Boxes," from *From Space to Environment*. Courtesy of Roger and Karen Reynolds Archive.

FIGURE 18.7 Ichiyanagi Toshi, from *From Space to Environment.* Courtesy Okuyama Jūnosuke, and Roger and Karen Reynolds Archive.

atmosphere in which "the political and the fleshly were eliminated [*haijo,* removed, cleaned away]."[37]

While this does hold true by comparison with the messy atmosphere of some performance practices and street/body art, or the go-go dancing version of Shinjuku visible in works like Okabe Michio's *Crazy Love,* nonetheless it is possible to follow the exhibition's alternate emphasis on interaction, materiality (of the machine as well as the viewer), and the bodily apprehensions of the viewer as they provoke us to turn our attention behind the scenes, to the systematicity of the technological infrastructure and its material means. In this view, intermedia events provoke a reconsideration of that materiality and its relation to the abstract/conceptual systems as a problem of the subject's experience of mediated urban environment.

Key to the success of the exhibit *From Space to Environment* and many other sound-based events of the time was the participation of sound engineer Okuyama Jūnosuke. Participants describe how composers would come up with an idea and Okuyama would figure out what equipment was needed and build the circuitry to make it happen, and happen reliably, without fail. Art critic Tōno Yoshiaki, in an interview with architect Isozaki Arata, reflects on this shift in the process of artistic production via such intense inclusion of technological/engineering components. Okuyama and other engineers become the "hands" on the work (we think of the highly mediated hands of the stonecutters spliced together by Matsumoto), as Tōno puts it:

> While art up until now has been made by the individual artist taking responsibility through to the end and leaving the marks of (the dirt of) his/her own hands, here, many parts are left to the hands of others. This is not only because industrial materials

cannot be worked by the primitive manual labor that has been used up to now, but also because [today] the artist thinks of an image strictly in the state of a conceptual plan, and after that leaves the production process to others' hands. In other words, in the end, up until now humans and material objects [*buttai*] encountered [struck one another, collided] in a kind of emotional, humanistic relation, and from there something was produced. By contrast, [today's artistic productions] interpose a concept [*kannen*] in between [the artist and object, in that relationship] like a transparent film [or screen, *tōmei na maku*].[38]

The transparent film that separates the artist from the material objects of the work means that a deep infrastructural layer involves "other hands," such as those of Okuyama, to bring a work into being; and increasingly, the conceptions of the works confront that very problem of creation by "other hands," the questions of infrastructure and supporting environment and institutions, at the center of their aesthetic projects. That is, the use of "other hands" is not a mere technical assist, which clearly has been going on for a long time, but becomes a key to the thematic and aesthetic projects of the artworks, as they reflect on issues of infrastructure and environment and their effects on subjectivity in the contemporary late capitalist moment. Akiyama's crowd orchestra apparatus; Ay-O's piece that quite literally takes the "other hands" of the audience to the center of the experience, in finger boxes; and Ichiyanagi's works with space and surrounding that draw the audience closer with a light apparatus and then make low humming sounds emerge from the work, so the sensation of the audience's proximity is converted into an "undercurrent" of sound—all these art "environments" take the issue of the dynamics of *kankyō* to the center of the work and reframe it as a problem both of subjective experience and institutional structuration, human sensorial expansiveness and projection of the technological within and without.

For Matsumoto in *Ishi no uta,* the environment as landscape comes to be framed through a dialectical image of *eizō,* living stones, as an interrogation into the "umbilical" (oddly biomorphic) relations between "inner" and "outer" realities. *From Space to Environment,* especially in works like Akiyama's—and the rhythmic asynchronics here in some ways echo and are extended from those he produced from the stonecutters for the soundtrack of *Ishi no uta*—translates the concrete ambient specificity of the environment at any particular moment into a newly mediated sensation "flung back" at the audience, processing a set of lights and sounds, so that viewers come to be treated back to the "atmosphere" or environment that the collective mass of their own bodies produces, as they move through the exhibition space. These sounds are passed through an apparatus that strikingly defamiliarizes and makes conspicuous the intensity of impact of that disordered movement, that collective presence. Yet as the concept of "intermedia" reaches its most explicit manifestation in the late 1960s, the problems of environment come to be articulated yet more explicitly in tandem with the infrastructural framing and the transnational migration of the idea of intermedia itself. Now as we turn to another event, CROSS TALK Intermedia from 1969, not only the exteriorized human sensorium but what one might call a dynamic and colliding "institutional" subjectivity/infrastructure enters the explicit thematics of the work.

From Environment to Apparatus

Intermedia works frequently take larger structures of the environment as their raw material and reexamine the relationship between mechanical reproduction and "liveness" or singularity. They provoke reflection on the expansive scale of urban space that leads to information overload, durational exhaustion, and the colliding chaos of overlapping media images in the "contemporary" age. To approach these works and events as transcultural media practices brings forward the apparatus and social context in which the works are generated. The emphasis shifts away from individual auteurs and toward collectives and collaborations: one takes a closer look not only at audiences but also at behind-the-scenes jiggering: sponsors, engineers, and managers. The role of the artist changes by this approach, as one looks at a spatial and institutional mapping of culture.[39] Individual works are restaged in multiple venues to differing effects depending on their contextual networks. The role of nation ("Japanese artist" / "American artist") changes, as the artists themselves commute by airplane from Tokyo to New York, and by bullet train to and from Osaka and Kyoto. What happens to media theory and intermedia art when these kinds of issues—infrastructural issues—become incorporated, centrally, into the deeper aesthetic projects and the conceptualization of the works, when they begin to play a part in reconfiguring art itself and redefining specific media?

The event known as CROSS TALK Intermedia (CTI), organized by American composer Roger Reynolds, musician and designer Karen Reynolds, Japanese composer Yuasa Jōji, and critic Akiyama Kuniharu, was held from Wednesday to Friday, February 5–7, 1969, at 5:30 each evening, in Yoyogi National Olympic Gymnasium (see Fig. 18.8). CTI is one good case study to bring forward to look more broadly at the relation between technology and art, apparatus and medium, under the rubric of intermedia; this essay opens that larger exploration through its focus on early intermedia's grappling with environment and infrastructural systems in expansive-scale artistic productions. This intermedia art is not concomitant with cinema, but is inextricable from developments in cinema as well as in other arts. Ishizaki Kōichirō argues in the special issue of *Bijutsu techō* on CTI that the development of intermedia in Japan would not have been possible without the detachment of cinema from its dark theater context, and the challenges to cinematic form that came up through concurrent experiments with projection and screening in expanded cinema.[40]

There is a territorial squabble over the term "intermedia," especially in the United States—individual camps manage the threat to individual media's "sovereignty" by trying to claim intermediality as a specific challenge and therefore expansion of their own particular art, be it music, theater, film, or painting. In the 1968 issue of *Arts in Society: Happenings and Intermedia,* editor Edward Kamarck complains that the 1965 issue of *TDR* on happenings takes happenings too much as an extension of theater (though happenings can often be "anti-theatrical"): he makes a strong claim for the more fair and encompassing term intermedia. Both terms are often used in conjunction or even, at times, interchangeably, as in the *BT* special issue on CROSS TALK
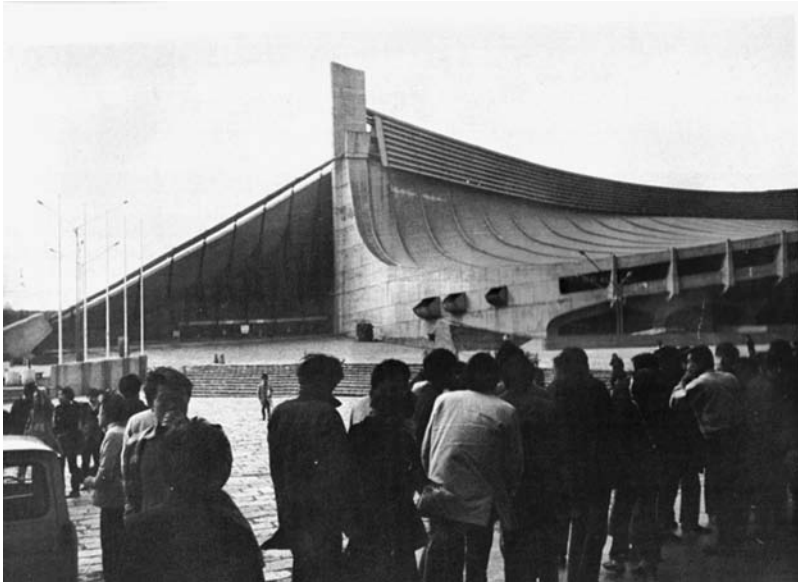
FIGURE 18.8 Yoyogi Olympic Gymnasium on the first night of CROSS TALK Intermedia (February 5, 1969). Courtesy Roger and Karen Reynolds Archive.

Intermedia. A US journalist in 1969 more pointedly defines intermedia art as another term for what used to be called electronic music.[41] In the well-designed and informative CTI program box set, architect Tange Kenzō puts forward the idea of "meta-media" as a counterpart to intermedia. From an architectural perspective, he is interested in what he calls "meta-disciplinary" work, which leads him to think about environmental design and to envision the "formless monument," in his plans for Expo '70, encompassing both the "physical and non-physical elements of the environment."[42]

The development of the idea of intermedia has intimately to do with the experience and imagination of urban space in the so-called age of information. We see the centrality of the city space as key player in so many places in the 1960s and beyond, from Nakahira Takuma and *Provoke* photographers' exploration of cityscape and reality as "document," to Akasegawa's later *Tōmason* works and hyperart. When CTI happens, the fourth and biggest event in the CROSS TALK series,[43] in Yoyogi Olympic Gymnasium, underground arts come emphatically above ground. Tange in his conversation with Tōno puts it this way: "Buildings, for a person on the go, can be felt as though they were points in a total environment. Architecture is nothing but a point floating in a whole. This applies to other art forms in which all the components dissolve themselves and become inseparable from a *total environment*." For Expo '70, Tange told Tōno, he wanted to generate not a building or a fixed structure but an "environment that will act as an apparatus, an apparatus that will generate events [*hassei sōchi*]."[44] Often the term "totality" (*zentaisei,* 全体性) comes up and becomes a key word in relation to those environmental art creations: the meaning to this totality, however, is

clearly *not* a synaesthesia or synthesis as in the nineteenth-century art theory,[45] nor the *Gesamtkunstwerk,* but rather an idea of totality that implies or requires a certain invisibility, blind spots, speed, fragmentariness for the subjective structures of perception. Envelopment again becomes a key term, as in *From Space to Environment*: one is enveloped in the environment but denied a perspective of mastery over it. There is a total reality that inevitably escapes the subject, and the artwork should aim to face this outside of the subject and to orient toward that very situation of being enveloped. Writing on CROSS TALK, Ishizaki Kōichirō uses this idea to describe John Cage's "Winter Music" (1958) performed by Cage and David Tudor along with Takahashi Yūji and Ichiyanagi Toshi at Sōgetsu Art Center (October 9, 1962, and again without Takahashi on October 12, 1962), in which, he says, Cage, "by stopping at the minimum of the act of composition, revived in the audience the (other) senses that take part in the totality of the world."[46]

Multi-Projection and Totality

Before going further into a discussion of the politics of intermedia and the apparatus/social network required to launch "Intermedia" as a CROSS TALK event, it is worth taking a moment to return to the theories of Matsumoto Toshio as he describes what he understood in the multiple-projection work of Stan VanDerBeek—both of them went on to participate in CTI—from his visit to Stony Point's Movie Drome in 1968:

> The particularity of the contemporary moment is that various phenomena that at first glance appear overcrowded and lacking connection, parts of a multilayered process of violently changing flux, contribute to the making of one chaotic totality [*konton to shita zentai*]. However, we cannot be the kind of subject [*shutai*] that can fully see through those things that are beyond the self [on the other side of ourselves, *jiko no mukō gawa ni,* like this chaotic whole]. Rather we are limitlessly fragmented, and we are enveloped within that chaotic environment [*kankyō*]. How can we look at such a reality as it is [*aru ga mama*] and from there move toward grasping the connection between self and reality in a *total* way? When I think in this vein, the problem of multi-projection clearly arises as one possible approach [*tegakari*]. In fact, as I glimpsed in the Movie Drome, the experience of becoming involved in the complex (composite) aggregate of multiple images that repeatedly permeate and collide with one another oddly can contend with (countervail) the feeling of Being in the contemporary age.[47]

Again, the issue of totality is defined as I described before: a flux of overcrowded elements that is beyond the self, as a part of the situation of the contemporary moment that needs to be in some way matched, or countervailed, or brought into relation with the experience of cinema. In addition to highlighting this idea of totality, and the aim of art to approach a situation of grasping this reality "as it is" (*aru ga mama*), one notes the

terms of environment (*kankyō*) here that envelops the subject and yet is "on the other side of" the subject, beyond the subject.

In Matsumoto's discourses of this time, he also explores the idea of reproduction, and replication (mechanical), and hence the relation between technology and "life." For Matsumoto, in the work of VanDerBeek the questions of liveness, and "one-timeness" (*ikkaisei*) as well as simultaneity, are central: "Up until now film was based on the principle of *fukusei-saisei* [reproduction, duplication] and replaying [bringing back to life], but now, with the birth of expanded cinema, that common sense has been torn apart and a new concept of cinema has been born that is based on the [principle of] one time only [*ikkaisei*]."[48] Here, the characters of *saisei,* reproduction/playback, seem to generate in his sentence more and more "births," so that the issue of life itself in relation to the technological means comes to the fore alongside the issue of projection's singularity.

The artists of CTI are similarly haunted in their technological experiments by the idea of "life." Tōno talks, in opposition to the old idea of artists as the guardians of the humanistic in the face of technology, of how some artists have "begun to take up technology as a new skin."[49] Liveness is at issue in the CTI performances: the live composer stands in the middle of the giant apparatus set up in the Yoyogi stadium, operating the ring modulators, making the sound levels rebalance or sweep around the auditorium.[50] Live performers push the giant balloons around the stage that then become the "screens" for Matsumoto's "Projection for Icon" (see Fig. 18.9). One reviewer wrote that the balloons felt like giant clouds and the "Icon" piece sounded like a storm. Indeed, it is hard not to hear the carefully balanced five-track dynamics of electronically generated white

FIGURE 18.9 Matsumoto Toshio, "Projection for Icon" in CROSS TALK Intermedia. Courtesy Matsumoto Toshio. Photographer unknown.

noise as the buzzes and high chirps of some insect-like creature in a rainstorm or oce-anic rush. At certain moments its deeply booming low "thunderclaps" hurt the ears of the three thousand people who came to hear it—as did some other pieces on the other two nights, projected through the $41,000 of sound equipment donated by Pioneer ($252,000 in today's dollars): thirty-two speaker enclosures with more than a dozen speakers, ten pairs of them behind the audience; dozens of auxiliary amps and portable tape decks; and a special mixer built by Pioneer engineers. Salvatore Martirano's piece, "L's G.A.," used helium to alter a voice, and a gas mask; in Robert Ashley's "That Morning Thing," female singers who were to represent a chorus of frogs wore taillights over their eyes (see Fig. 18.10). Technological art is shot through with the idea of biological life and also haunted by the prospect of disaster. Some might say that the mechanical/mecha-nized sounds and lights threw the listeners back on their own corporeal and phenom-enal experience of duration and the limits of hearing/seeing, as well as the effects of the large crowd's physical presence). Group Ongaku's[51] piece, "441.4867 – 0474.82.2603 – 712.9374," used chance and predetermined rules to transfer light into sound, the elec-tronic into the live: as each player hammered the letters of the title ("amplified dream") in Morse code, "heaving glissandi" represented dashes, or thumping on the piano with elbows and forearms represented dots, while there was a propeller blown by fans acti-vating control devices that could override the human actions, and five tape recorders played sounds from record blanks that had been "selectively melted" (see Fig. 18.11).[52] It is hard not to see and hear overtones of disaster in the melted records, Morse code, blue and white flashing lights. Matsumoto aptly noted that one of the most interest-ing aspects of VanDerBeek's expanded cinema in the past had been its "black humor

FIGURE 18.10 Robert Ashley, "That Morning Thing" in CROSS TALK Intermedia. Courtesy Roger and Karen Reynolds Archive.

```
           C R O S S   T A L K   I N T E R M E D I A

                  FRIDAY, 7 FEBRUARY, 1969, 5:30


  1.  441.4867 - 0474.82.2603 - 712.9374  *  (1969)        GROUP ONGAKU
               5 musicians, 3 pianists, 6 stereo tape              Shiomi
               decks, CDS relays, transistor radios,              Mizuno
               RF transmitters, 14-channel audio                  Kosugi
               system


  2.  "SHE LOVES ME, SHE LOVES ME NOT,..."  *  (1969)      David Rosenboom
               2 musician-actors, 2 percussionists,
               witch doctor, visuals, SCR drivers,
               electronics fiber optics, 14-channel
               audio system


  3.  POEM-FIELDS  *  (1968)                               Stan VanDerBeek
               9-16mm projectors, 9-35mm projectors

      DIGITAL PROCESS (1967)                               Gordon Mumma
               4 stereo tape decks, cybersonic control
               system, 14-channel sound distribution
               system with sequencer


  4.  KWAIDAN  *  (1966)                                   Toru Takemitsu
               2-channel tape, visuals, 14-channel
               sound distribution system


  5.  L's G.A.  (1968)                                     Salvatore Martirano
               gassed-masked politico, helium bomb,
               2-16mm projectors, 2-channel tape,
               14-channel sound distribution system

          FILMS:  Ronald Nameth
          TEXT:   Abraham Lincoln, M.C. Holloway


          * indicates world premiere
```

FIGURE 18.11 Program for one night of CROSS TALK Intermedia (English).

or images of annihilation raised to the level of a compulsion."[53] The sounds are loud, painful, sirenlike at times; the durations are deliberately designed to tax the performers and the audience, pushing beyond human limits.

There are many intriguing aspects of CTI beyond the scope of this essay's focus: Hijikata Tatsumi was supposed to have danced in it, and did contribute an essay to the program, but backed out at the last minute, so that his work ultimately remained "underground." His feat had been to get the manager Egawa Saburō, the event manager from Million Concerts, Ltd.—one of those people who engaged in delicate negotiations with corporate, government, journalistic and artistic interests—to procure a giraffe from the Tokyo Zoo to perform in Hijikata's piece. The politics of intermedia in this event is a key element, as evidenced by all the people involved in these negotiations. Both Yuasa and Reynolds recount the details of the negotiations in their writings, focusing on this as much or more than on the works themselves (well documented in

the program). CROSS TALK was funded by USIS (United States Information Services), essentially a covert propaganda / "public diplomacy" agency founded by the Eisenhower administration during the Cold War. The intent of USIS in giving CROSS TALK the $7,000 it did (about $43,000 in today's dollars) was to draw in the Japanese students and intellectuals, or as Reynolds put it in his confidential memo to the Institute for Current World Affairs, "Foremost on their scale of values was not the furtherance of avant-garde 'art'—needless to say—nor the transmission of American values and ingenuity, but capitalizing on an unusual opportunity for reaching a generally antagonistic segment of the Japanese public: the same young students and intellectuals who, as a matter of habit, demonstrate against American bases, visi[t] Nuclear Ships, and take part in 'Struggle '70.'"[54] Reynolds goes on to mention that "interests of very divergent sorts were served to the ample satisfaction of all concerned—the US Government, avant garde experimentalists, competing electronics firms, foundations, soft-drink manufacturers, and airlines."[55] Is this, then, the products (or producers) of the environment "flung back at their makers" and thus, as Reynolds optimistically concludes, the way "individuals can turn the establishment to their own ends"?

CROSS TALK received ample press coverage in Japan and some abroad. Pan Am waited for their mention in four prominent journals before paying event manager Egawa back for the plane tickets for the American composers. It is very much the kind of thing that the anti-Expo '70 factions had been protesting: this collaboration, or rather collusion, or (more simply) tricky set of embedded negotiations between business, government, the mass media industries, and the avant-gardes. Clearly Matsumoto, Tange, and others fell on the other side of this divide, and went on to participate fully, though self-reflexively, in Expo '70. But for the purposes of this argument, the apparatus enabling the festival and the focus on apparatus within the festival are telling mirror images of one another. That is, the very manipulation and envelopment of the crowd, the "roar of the crowd,"[56] the sounds of the crowd itself become one of the important elements of the event—which, according to one newspaper review, included an unusual amount of heckling as well (see Fig. 18.12). The circular seating and the mass audience, as well as the in some ways forbidding or emotionally resistant forms of the sounds and performances, or their sheer length (Robert Ashley's "That Morning Thing" segment was an hour long), created a strong desire to participate—and hence to shout at / heckle the performers. Further, the audience for this free event, as another reviewer wrote, was not the typical polite concert audience; many looked more like the kind of students and youth one would see in a demonstration in Shinjuku.[57]

CROSS TALK would be oversimplified if one just identified its contribution to "media" with McLuhan's famous work, which had been translated into Japanese a few years earlier—the idea of its focus on media being itself the message. But it does represent a step in the conceptualization of media where the apparatus—including the technology (circuitry, ring modulators, photocells) and the social and managerial apparatus (Olympic stadium managers, Sony, TEAC, the director of the American Cultural Center Donald Albright, Porter McCray of the JDRIII fund), Pepsi, Pan Am, Bijutsu techō, as well as numerous Japanese and American artists and critics—are not just integral as a

FIGURE 18.12 "Roar of the crowd" inside the Yoyogi gymnasium. Courtesy Roger and Karen Reynolds Archive. Photographer unknown.

background support to creating the environment in which the artworks can be made, but in some ways, I would argue, *are* the art and work of intermediality, and thus, one might argue, become key to understanding the critical potential around "media and environment" held in this event. Some of the works created at that time remain and can be seen or heard in some form, like Roger Reynolds's film *Ping* with Beckett's text, which originally included a simultaneous projection of a sixteen-millimeter film with Maro Akaji (Sekiji at that time), shot by Katō Kazurō, and a Beckett text projected from multiple slide machines in shifting fonts and positions, in Japanese and English,[58] or Yuasa's "Icon on the Source of White Noise" piece on CD; but many works were live, onetime constellations dependent precisely on the space—not just on live performance, but on the configuration of the speakers on Okuyama's fourteen-channel system, the installation of the speakers and mikes—and were themselves about *environment,* about sound and relationality, surrounding and circulating around (and in some ways even bypassing) crowds of people in spaces that had to be *big,* loud, with information overload and sometimes the experience of overwhelm, exhaustion, durational and sonic burnout. The experience of overstimulation breaks the circuits of the limited humanist frame, and though this can just feel confusing, disorienting, even frustrating, this might also be read as a part of the concept/theory of the "information age" that this event suggests, within the frames of the "meta-media" or meta-disciplinarity and the emergence of environmental art as Tange and others had articulated it.

Indeed, scale and expansiveness were already crucial elements theorized in the Isozaki-Tōno dialogue around *From Space to Environment.* In the current situation, Isozaki says, "Exessively huge objects are made: the relation between those gigantic things and humans has completely changed our sensibility of scale. Further, the

FIGURE 18.13 Sound engineer Okuyama Jūnosuke (at CROSS TALK Intermedia). Courtesy Okuyama Jūnosuke, and Roger and Karen Reynolds Archive.

numbers of things manufactured has increased enormously, so that human beings are entirely surrounded by artificial products rather than having a one-to-one relation with objects. . . . The personal, something like the individual constitution [*taishitsu*] or the smell of the body are washed away first, and only the system as abstraction can survive in the end."[59] The huge scale of the events of CTI allow for a situation of "envelopment" in such systems in an environment where there is a meta-medial reflection on these systems. Okuyama (see Fig. 18.13) and Egawa Saburō become something like the new "auteurs" of intermedia, inasmuch as they are key negotiators of the systems and infrastructures that constitute the event.

The Politics of Apparatus

In one telling anecdote about the first CROSS TALK event at Asahi Hall (November 13, 1967, moving back in time), the event happened to take place during a major demonstration, and as a result, the speakers and equipment needed for one of the pieces were "trapped in Ginza" and could not make it to the hall.[60] To cope with this, the organizers sent a driver to the American Embassy, to cut speakers and amplifiers out of the home audio systems of embassy personnel in the embassy's apartments just before the show. The composers went crawling around hooking them up at the Asahi Hall, all around the audience. The piece was Yuasa's "Icon," the same one that later played with Matsumoto's

"Projections" at CTI. Key to the piece is that it has two scores, "one specifying pitch, dynamic, and temporal relationships, and in the other, the source of each sound as well as its pattern of movement." Yuasa had started with "white noise"—that is, "a total sound spectrum including all possible individual frequencies," something like the sound equivalent of a "totality," or the noise equivalent of "white light." Yuasa writes, "One can filter white noise so as to include certain bands of frequencies, sometimes called 'colored noise.'" In other words, as he puts it, "Members of the audience are surrounded by sounds in the same manner as they are in the actual space of daily living. Individual bands of colored noise shift to the left or right of the viewer. As they shift, band width and dynamic level are slowly reduced or increased so as to create the aural illusion of an expanding (or contracting) spatial horizon."[61] This constant shifting and changing of varying elements could not be done without the proper surrounding speakers: Yuasa gestured with his hands how the individual speakers should be adjusted during the performance for dynamic levels; some Japanese participants were incensed by the inappropriateness of the Americans having, in effect, "overridden" what was meant to be.

But although one can read this as a demonstration of the indifference of the CROSS TALK organizers to the political demonstration, which, along with the police barricades it provoked, was primarily a hindrance to their show (this reading would certainly have some validity), one can also read it as a harbinger of a kind of shift in focus: the alternative tactic that has to do with remaking the apparatus of media, taking the objects and people and institutions at hand and trying to turn them into something else, reconstructing them for ends they were not made for. Tōno opposes leftist radical thought to CTI's optimism about technology in his interview: "Seen from the viewpoint of the Zengakuren, technology as a vehicle of information is a possession of the establishment."[62] Even if these artists too, are or become part of the establishment, though, one might read these practices of taking the media apparatus "into their own hands," this active "tinkering" with the environment in the name of a "totality" that transcends the individual, as part of a transition in discourses and models for rethinking the media environment under late capitalism, approaching the remaking of an embedded media environment rather than taking its forms as a given.[63] Beyond modeling active tinkering in or on the environment, confronting a media environment that a priori goes beyond the self or individual could perhaps be linked from today's perspective to recent theories of paranoid knowledge under capitalism in which "the uncertain demarcation of the subject…might function as a way of understanding a set of controlling technologies, practices, and ideas."[64] There are many instances in which the relation of the individual to an ungraspable "totality" or total institutional system gets conceived within the avant-garde under the sign of failures of the subject, as several recent feminist and Marxist critics have explored.[65] Thus, we can see more clearly the relevance of the environment/apparatus experiments of CROSS TALK for contemporary criticism on global media practices, and CROSS TALK's multivalent relation to its environment as part of an attempt to "match and contend with" the complex historical situation from which it emerged.

Japanese intermedia experiments, from early proto-intermedial experiments like *Ginrin* and *Ishi no uta* to those under the official banner of Intermedia, represent a

radical attempt to negotiate the "heteromorphism between human capacities and machinic functions."[66] In discourses of the time, machines and systems and environments become "alive" in a complex way, haunted by biomorphic allegories, while the so-called human is by turns overwhelmed, emptied out, destroyed, virtualized, exhausted, and then swirled/overwritten into a "vast chaotic totality" (Matsumoto), which it is oddly nonetheless necessary to confront, "face up to," and even "countervail." Systems, devices, and apparatus appear as elements of a vivified, structured (and sometimes "organic" or "symbiotic") landscape that breathes and becomes "subject," even as artists track, without much lament, the fading out of the "smell of the human" and the mark of "human fingerprints," instead taking on technology as a "new skin." Animation comes to the fore as a key medium in the coming years, and this may be no surprise: as Nakahara Yūsuke wrote about some early experiments in art animation, "through the material imagination" (*busshitsu-teki no sōzōryoku*), technological processes combine with thought, drawing, and line to make something that "flies out or is dashed out of the sensibility of everyday life" into "another dimension" (*nichijōteki na kankaku kara tobidashita ijigen no mono*).[67] A fascination with dimensionality and other-dimensionality comes to the fore. "Animation's true sphere is found in the critical laugh born out of freely breaking everyday time and space," Matsumoto also wrote, noting the "*dépaysement* of illustration" as a part of that potential.[68]

Artists of the 1960s delineate the relation between the technological image and the revised version of the "human" by layering dimensions, reducing, evacuating, and even eviscerating the realm of dimensionality (Zero Jigen), or by emphasizing *kyo* (virtuality/emptiness), as in Tōno's theories of environment. At times, they propose models of multiplicatory relations, as in Matsumoto's "mutually cross-violating relation"[69] or manga artist and critic Ishiko Junzō's notion of the "multiplicatory 'AND' [*to*]": "I understood that the composite term intermedia ... aspired to totalize the relational structure of perception and cognition."[70] Totalizing the relational structure of perception and cognition is tantamount to what Tōno and Isozaki articulated in their claim for an externalization of the senses, or like the postwar *Provoke* photographers' writing of the systematized aggregate of interlocking gazes that envelop and supplant the photographer.[71] Such an interlocking gaze is already present in prototype form in Yamaguchi's "Vitrine," here expanded beyond the individual spectator's experience (*taiken*) of fragmentation and disorientation, of multiplicity, to a broader and more massively scaled opening of the technological aesthetic of apparatus/environment. In intermedia, it is not a single human but human sensorium externalized and multiplied on a grand scale. In Matsumoto and Yuasa's "Projection for Icon," this scale involves massive, four-meter balloons being pushed back and forth by performer/operators before over three thousand people, as the tiny Yuasa Jōji, like the Wizard of Oz, manages dynamic levels on a console (perhaps designed by Okuyama) at the center, fragmenting/reducing the totality of white noise to some of its constituent colors in an apparatus/event generated with the collaboration of dozens of institutions, structures, and collectives of individuals. "Projection for Icon" opens the meaning of projection

beyond the main meaning of multi-projection in expanded cinema's "one-timeness" (*ikkaisei*) to a projection outward as an envisioning of what Matsumoto had theorized as the experience of the chaotic totality that superimposes and collides. As the projective capacities of the human to analogize itself to the technological (sensorium) and of the technological/virtual world to embody the "human" collide and overlap, Japanese theorists of the 1960s intermedia arrive at an idea of the environment that is both mental and material/objective, intra-psychic and sensorially exterior. Through these theories, they map and construct relations to social and cultural transformations in order to make an art commensurate with the "feeling of Being in the contemporary age."[72]

NOTES

1. Isozaki Arata coined the phrase "future city as ruins" as part of his architectural theory related to postwar Tokyo. Isozaki Arata and Tōno Yoshiaki, " 'Kankyō ni tsuite': Bijutsu, kenchiku, toshi, kyo" [On "environment": Art, architecture, city, virtuality], in *Bijutsu techō* special issue on *Kukan kara kankyō e* [From space to environment] (November 1966): 95.

2. Ibid.

3. Daibō Masaki (Waseda University) detailed the use of recorded sound alongside visual images at the advent of cinema in Japan in "Umbilical Links or Discontinuities: Reconsidering the Early Japanese Sound Cinema in Terms of Phonofilms," *Cinema across Media* conference, University of California, Berkeley, February 26, 2011.

4. Often one begins the narrative of "intermedia" work with the group Jikken Kōbō, led by Takiguchi Shūzō. Jikken Kōbō held their first exhibition in 1951, and in their manifesto for that exhibition they state: "The purpose of this exhibit is to integrate/consolidate/synthesize [*tōgō*] the various spheres [disciplines/*bunya*] of art, reaching an organic combination that could not be realized within a gallery, and to create a new form [or style, *keishiki*] of art with social relevance closely tied to daily life." *Jikken kōbō to Takiguchi Shūzō* (Tokyo: Satani Gallery, 1991), 102. Matsumoto reminisces that a famous person like Tsuburaya probably agreed to participate with young artists like Matsumoto to gain more experience with the special effects that could be done with early Kodak color films. Matsumoto Toshio, "Eizō hyōgen no jikken: 1950 nendai, 60 nendai o chūshin ni," p. 78. http://ias-server.musabi.ac.jp/mov/charles/ATT00015.pdf (accessed March 24, 2011).

5. See Tochigi Akira, "Matsumoto Toshio kantoku, *Ginrin* (1956) no dejitaru fukugen o kataru." *Tokyo kokuritsu kindai bijutsukan kenkyu kiyō* 15 (2011): 74–89; and Sakamoto Hirofumi, "Sengo jikken eizō: Media āto shi," in *Media āto no sekai: Jikken eizō 1960–2007*, ed. Shinsuke Ina (Tokyo: Kokusho Kankōkai, 2008), i–xxvii.

6. Among other possible such instances, I am alluding to the opening of Ozu's *Umaretewa mita keredo...* (I was born but..., 1932).

7. The film was shot on Eastman Kodak's early single strip negative color film (type 5248) and then carefully restored by making a positive film, digitizing it, restoring the color, converting this to a negative film to separate into tricolor separation, digitally combining

these three colors, then making a color negative from this digital version. See Tochigi, "Matsumoto Toshio kantoku, *Ginrin*," 78.

8. Matsumoto recalled his intermedia practices in the 1960s at a talk given at Kanagawa Kenritsu Kindai Bijutsukan, Hayama, on March 12, 2006, "Eizō hyōgen no jikken: 1950 nendai, 60 nendai o chūshin ni," p. 57. http://ias-server.musabi.ac.jp/mov/charles/ATT00015.pdf (accessed December 3, 2012).

9. See Francis Ponge, *Le parti pris des choses* (Paris: Gallimard, 1942), and Ponge, *Mute Objects of Expression*, trans. Lee Fahnestock (Brooklyn, NY: Archipelago Books, 2006), 39.

10. *Mute Objects*, ibid

11. Paul Celan, "Corona," in *Poems of Paul Celan*, trans. Michael Hamburger (New York: Persea Books, 1989), 58–59.

12. See translation by Michael Raine in *Cinema Journal,* Vol. 51, No. 4 (Summer 2012): 144–154.

13. Matsumoto Toshio, "Zen'ei kiroku eiga-ron," in *Eizō no hakken—avangyarudo to dokyumentari* (Tokyo: San'ichi Shobō, 1963), 51.

14. Most simply, he puts it this way: "To capture the so-called outer world without leaving anything out, one must capture the inner world without leaving anything out, and to accurately grasp the inner world, one must accurately grasp the outer world, therefore in order to document in whole the relation between the two, one must *logically process their dialectical relation in detail* as a truly new method of documentary." Matsumoto, "Zen'ei kiroku eiga-ron," 52–53.

15. Matsumoto Toshio, "Eiga geijutsu no gendai-teki shiza" [Contemporary perspectives on the art of film], in *Eizō no hakken—avangyarudo to dokyumentari* (Tokyo: San'ichi Shobō, 1963), 14.

16. In "Eiga geijutsu no gendai-teki shiza," Matsumoto presents one of his most comprehensive theoretical formulations of the relationship between avant-garde and documentary, and his understanding of the dialectical relationship between subjectivity and the object in these two cinematic modes in his early work. He opens by contrasting Lumière and Méliès, where Lumière comes under the sign of "discovery" (*hakken*) and chance (*gūzen*) and Mélies comes under the sign of fictional creation (*sōzō*). But even in Méliès, the key is that film images can give those imaginings and fictions and tricks "concreteness" (*gushōsei,* embodiment). In other words, the object-like quality of the film image itself is a key to its impact. *Gushō-ka* can mean to exteriorize: film has the power to exteriorize the realm of fiction and fantasy. Many of these ideas of the relation between avant-garde and documentary come through Matsumoto's relation with the critic Hanada Kiyoteru (who formulates many of these issues in nearly indentical terms). For discussion of Hanada's theories and fuller discussion of *Ishi no uta* in English, see Yuriko Furuhata, "Refiguring Actuality: Japan's Film Theory and Avant-Garde Documentary Movement, 1950s–1960s" (PhD diss., Brown University, 2009).

17. Matsumoto, "Eiga geijutsu no gendai-teki shiza," 17–18.

18. Matsumoto, "Zen'ei kiroku eiga-ron," 52.

19. An interesting comparative description of the intervention of the body into the "autonomy of the visual" through an aesthetic of pulsation, a lineage of artworks framed through pulsation (and the *Informe* was an important intertext for Matsumoto and other critics/artists in the late '50s in Japan) can be found in Yves-Alain Bois and Rosalind Krauss, *Formless: A User's Guide* (New York: Zone Books, 1997), 135.

20. Although this anthropomorphism could simply be read as nostalgia for artisanal culture and rural spirituality, I would argue that at a deeper level Matsumoto (so deeply influenced

by the Marxist critic Hanada Kiyoteru) is performing a cinematic exploration into a problem formulated by Marx on the issue of "relations between things" (including *eizō*) or object-relations as "fantastic[ally]" and dialectically infused with social forms; as Marx wrote: "The mysterious character of the commodity form consists…in the fact that the commodity reflects the social characteristics of men's own labor as objective characteristics of the products of labor themselves, as the socio-natural properties of these things.…It is nothing but the definite social relation between men which assumes here, for them, the fantastic form of a relation between things." Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, vol. 1, trans. Ben Fowkes (New York: Penguin Books, 1978), 165.

21. I use "burn-in" here as an alternate term for the retinal afterimage, which appears in the negative, and thus forms an internalized phenomenal relation between positive and negative, in this case of mechanically reproduced images.

22. A word is in order about the specific terms landscape (*fūkei*) and environment (*kankyō*) in these cultural debates. Although some critics have posited an opposition between the terms *fūkei* and *kankyō* based on taking the idea of landscape in its more traditional sense (aligned with European landscape painting), as a relatively taken-for-granted "nature," many critics were using both terms in relatively aligned or similar ways to describe the highly mediated and technologically infused, structured, often urban world of social and architectural and politically valenced infrastructures.

23. Marxist writers frequently open the question of the masses or multitudes and how they should best be seen: as malleable, or as a powerful force due to their collective strength. Thus the figure of carving in stones and the power of a multitude of stones, also "plastic" in their changing forms, can be a resonant figure for this problem. See Hanada Kiyoteru's essay "Suna no yō na taishū" [Sand-like masses], *Hanada Kiyoteru chosakushū*, vol. 3 (Tokyo: Miraisha, 1975); for discussion in English, see Furuhata, "Refiguring Actuality," 26, 37–39. In relation to the concrete materiality of these stone-like masses, there is "capital" as "'almost'—the abstract as such." See Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, cited in a discussion of Marxist abstraction and empiricism in Gayatri Spivak, "From Haverstock Hill Flat to U.S. Classroom," in *What's Left of Theory? New Work on the Politics of Literary Theory*, ed. Judith Butler, John Guillory, and Kendall Thomas (London: Routledge, 2000), 7.

24. The biomorphic qualities of his metaphor here are echoed in the increasingly heightened dialectic in later arts between images of "life" (births, in particular, haunt the theories of technological innovation) and a more device-and-apparatus-centered vision of technological and systemic/institutional infrastructure, an impersonal "totality" that transcends any given being.

25. As filmmaker Miyai Rikurō puts it, "the Fūgetsu-dō café in Shinjuku, a hippie gathering place that was also full of artists and revolutionaries, was a big school for us. Fūgetsu-dō as a whole was very 'intermedia.' It was a mixed-media chaos. It was a melting pot of media, a chaos from which creativity emerged." Interview, November 23, 2011. This vision of Shinjuku artist culture as inherently intermedial could evoke the criticisms of some critics who would see intermedia as a more "cleaned up" (corporatized) artistic vision. Certainly the rhetorics of cleanliness and "fleshly smells," technomorphism and biomorphism haunt the discussions of intermedia, but my aim here is to destabilize the given opposition between the two poles of this description, and hence is more in alignment with Miyai's vision here.

26. Enbairamento no kai [The Environment Society], "'Kūkan kara kankyō e' ten shushi" [The aim of the exhibition *From Space to Environment*], *Bijutsu techō* special issue, November 1966, 118. Photograph from *Interia (Japan Interior Design)*, no. 46 (January 1967); reproduced in Yoshimoto Midori, "From Space to Environment: The Origins of Kankyō

and the Emergence of Intermedia Art in Japan," *Art Journal* 67 , no. 3 (September 2008): 25–46, which contains a thoughtful introduction and analysis of the exhibition.

27.   The participants include Takiguchi Shūzō, Tōno, Nakahara Yūsuke, Takemitsu, and Akiyama, among many others. The exhibition used a space in Matsuya and also included a performance at Sōgetsu Art Center.

28.   This issue of synthesis (*sōgō*) is a key term in many debates of the period, as critics either reject the idea of synthesis (as here) or try to deepen the philosophical understanding of the term along the lines of Matsumoto's theories above. See " 'Kūkan kara kankyō e' ten shushi," 118.

29.   Ibid.

30.   Ibid. The manifesto, likely penned largely by Takiguchi, given that his statement in the back of the special issue echoes it nearly verbatim, points out that though the Japanese words *shi'i, shūi,* and *ijō,* as well as *kankyō,* can be translated as "environment," they feel the English term more strongly connotes the active and dynamic interaction they intend.

31.   Yamaguchi Katsuhiro, untitled, writing in the special issue of *Bijutsu techō,* "Kukan kara kankyō e" (November 1966): 36. For another perspective on the flashing vehicle lights, see Donald Norman's *Turn Signals Are the Facial Expressions of Automobiles* (New York: Basic Books, 1993).

32.   Yamaguchi, "Shikake," *Bijutsu techō* special issue (November 1966): 36.

33.   Part of the significance of this conversion of wave forms to digital numerical forms and back is captured well in writings on the heteromorphism of the machinic in analyses of fiber optics networks. "Though medical fiber optics are still looking-glasses, fiber-optic networks use glass to relay light pulses that must be translated into voltages: rather than magnifying images, they relay data in a non-indexical manner." Wendy Chun, *Control and Freedom: Power and Paranoia in the Age of Fiber Optics* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2006), 16.

34.   Roger Reynolds, "From Space to Environment-I," letter to the Institute of Current World Affairs (December 24, 1966), 8, emphasis mine.

35.   Although each moment of the "Orchestra" would be unique, depending on the visitors' specific sounds and density, one can hear a recorded version of the piece today on the CD *Obscure Tape Music of Japan Volume 6: Tape Works of Kuniharu Akiyama* (Edition Omega Point, 2007).

36.   Haryū Ichirō., "Jiko hōkai no shinwa—'Kūkan kara kankyō e' ten hihyō." *Dezain hihyō* 2 (March 1967): 12.

37.   KuroDalaiJee (Kuroda Raiji), *Nikutai no anākizumu = Anarchy of the Body: 1960-nendai nihon bijutsu ni okeru pafōmansu no chika suimyaku* (Tokyo: Guramubukkusu, 2010): 216, 149.

38.   Isozaki and Tōno, " 'Kankyō ni tsuite,' " 91–92.

39.   Recent work on Sōgetsu Art Center, and work in the "Visual Underground" conference in September 2011 on Shinjuku Bunka Center and Sasori-za in the space of Shinjuku, are part of such a broader, spatial as well as institutional mapping of culture.

40.   Ishizaki Kōichirō, "Geijutsu o norikoeru mono—busshitsukan kara no kaihō" [Going beyond art: Liberation from materiality], *Bijutsu techō,* special issue, *Intāmedia to wa nani ka* [What is intermedia?], vol. 21, no. 311 (April 1969): 75–94, esp. 92.

41.   Thomas Pepper, "Sound Composers Use Technology to Achieve Art: Films, Lights, Electronics, Theater and Dance Are Used to Create What May or May Not Be Music," *Baltimore Sun*, February 23, 1969, D1.

42. The CROSS TALK Intermedia program box was well designed by musician Karen Reynolds and is fully bilingual. It is currently available in private collections as well as a few select libraries in Japan and at the Museum of Modern Art, New York. See Tōno Yoshiaki, "An Interview with Tange Kenzō," sixth page (unpaginated); fourth page (unpaginated). Key to the thinking about CROSS TALK Intermedia, since it directly corresponded in time with preparations for Expo '70 in Osaka, were reflections on earlier world expos, such as Brussels (1958) and also Montreal. The Xenakis / Le Corbusier collaboration in Brussels '58 was influential for critics at this time, as (for example) Iannis Xenakis was collaborating with Takemitsu and Takahashi Yūji in compositions for Expo '70; Akiyama Kuniharu published critical writing on Xenakis's "mathematical thinking" in *Bijutsu techō* in 1969.

43. There were three CROSS TALK events prior to the 1969, consisting mostly of new music but with strong overlap in participants and uses of technology with the 1969 intermedia event. They took place on November 13, 1967 (CROSS TALK 1, with participation by Takahashi Yūji, Mizuno Shūko, Yuasa Jōji and others); January 22, 1968 (CROSS TALK 2, with participation by Ichiyanagi Toshi, Roger Reynolds, music of Salvatore Martirano and others); and March 16, 1968 (CROSS TALK 3, with participation by Matsudaira Yoriaki, Īmura Takahiko [the film *Shelter 9999,* which had first been presented in 1967 at Filmmakers' Cinematheque in New York], and music of Alvin Lucier, Milton Babbitt, Larry Austin, and others). There were also CROSS TALK numbers 5 and 6, and various separate but associated events, such as a performance of Erik Satie's eighteen-hour marathon piano piece *Vexations* in its entirety, and open rehearsals with question and answer for other musicians and students.

44. Tōno Yoshiaki, "An Interview with Tange Kenzō," fourth and fifth page (unpaginated), translated in the program (modified), emphasis mine. More fully, "An apparatus that will generate events woven together by people and space."

45. See Polina Dimova, "'Beautiful Colored, Musical Things': Metaphors and Strategies for Interartistic Exchange in Early European Modernism" (PhD diss., University of California, Berkeley, 2010).

46. Ishizaki, "Geijutsu o norikoeru mono," 86. He goes on, writing on "the thought of Cage who, by forcing silence into the loquacity of composed sound, sent the audience back to the world in which they lived, built a bridge over the gap between art and everyday life, between objectivity and subjectivity that modern art had conceived; and by clearing that threshhold away, by placing the work in the relationship with the external space, took an extreme step toward the era of multimedia/composite media [*fukugō media*]," 87.

47. Matsumoto, "Ekusupandiddo shinema no tenbō" [Prospects for expanded cinema], originally published in *Bijutsu techō,* no. 316 (August 1969); repr. in *Eiga no henkaku* (The revolution in cinema) (Tokyo: San'ichi shobō, 1972), 172.

48. Ibid., 175–176. Here he is describing the way VanDerBeek moved around when he was projecting part of the images, and linking it also to the way screenings were done in Cage's and Kaprow's happenings.

49. Tōno Yoshiaki, "An Interview with Kenzō Tange," in CROSS TALK Intermedia program, interview's second page (unpaginated). Also sixth page: "The new generations, however, will take on a new skin, incorporating electronics and computers in their work." Tōno here to some extent shows a political wariness nonetheless of technological euphoria, and an ironizing stance toward the "Progress and Harmony" motto of Expo '70. However, his solution to such euphoria is this oddly biologizing metaphor of the incorporation of technology into the body.

50. Composer Toda Kunio, in the *Asahi Shinbun* evening edition (February 22, 1969), wrote that the mechanical sound distributors and ring modulators in the center, operated by the composers, became the star of the show.

51. Group ONGAKU included Mizuno Shūko, Kosugi Takehisa, and Shiomi Mieko.

52. The CROSS TALK Intermedia program box set contains detailed descriptions of this wide array of ambitious pieces and their conceptual and technological innovations, which then itself becomes a thematization of the relation of "information" (too much to absorb on the spot) and technologically mediated experience.

53. Matsumoto posed this in contrast to VanDerBeek's later, more optimistic/romantic tendencies. Matsumoto, "Ekusupandiddo shinema no tenbō," 177.

54. Roger Reynolds, "Cross-Talk Intermedia I," letter to Richard Nolte of the Institute of Current World Affairs (RR-20: the twentieth letter in the series), p. 9. Accessed in the collection of Roger and Karen Reynolds.

55. Reynolds concludes, optimistically, that this instance of using these institutions, turning them to one's own ends, provided a model for Japanese collaborators of how this could be done.

56. This citation comes from Roger Reynolds's letter photo caption in "Cross-Talk Intermedia I."

57. Ueno Akira, writing in the *Mainichi Shinbun* evening edition (February 21, 1969), called it a "grand scale 'racial' migration from Shinjuku to Yoyogi," again somewhat belying the view that would separate political Shinjuku too strongly from corporate-linked intermedia.

58. Ping is now partly visible in Ross Karre's short on its restoration process, "PING Migration." See http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q-ZEmodEziQ (accessed December 13, 2011).

59. Isozaki and Tōno, " 'Kankyō ni tsuite' " 92–93.

60. The story of this event was recounted by Roger Reynolds, interview with the author, August 30, 2011.

61. Program for CROSS TALK 1 (November 13, 1967), pp. 7, 8.

62. Tōno Yoshiaki, "An Interview with Kenzō Tange," 6 (unpaginated).

63. See Sianne Ngai on "paranoia" as being about the situation of late capitalism beyond the individual. "While the vague or amorphous definition of a 'total system' suggests a certain failure on the part of the subject to *conceptualize* a social whole, one could argue that it is only in such failures—or in failure in general, which Robyn Wiegman describes as 'the unavoidable consequence of imagining political transformation'—that a conceivable totality manifests itself." Wiegman, cited in Ngai, *Ugly Feelings* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005), 330.

64. Timothy Melley, "Stalked by Love: Female Paranoia in the Stalker Novel," *differences* 8.2 (1996): 95, cited in Ngai, *Ugly Feelings,* 319.

65. These include critics from Fredric Jameson and Gayatri Spivak (on capital) to Sianne Ngai and Judith Halberstam (on paranoia).

66. I call *Ginrin* proto-intermedial for its relationship with / emergence out of Jikken kōbō collaborations, and *Ishi no uta* because of my argument that the theoretical dialectic it embodies links directly with the vision of environment that intermedia artists attempted to construct through their events. For the citation see Mark B. N. Hansen, *New Philosophy for New Media* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2004), 270.

67. Nakahara Yūsuke, "Animēshon firumu no bigaku" [The aesthetics of animation film], *SAC Journal* 21 (December 1961): unpaginated; from the opening pages 1–2.

68. Matsumoto Toshio, "Sannin no animēshon 2," *Nihon dokusho shinbun* (January 1, 1962): 8, cited in *Kagayake rokujūnendai: Sōgetsu āto sentā no zenkiroku* (Tokyo: Firumu āto-sha,

2002), 331. More fully, Matsumoto writes that Manabe Hiroshi's "Cinepoem Work No. 1" is "an effort to express the anti- or non-realism of illustration's *dépaysement* as the madness of the urban by flinging illustration out in the street."

69. Matsumoto Toshio, "Ore tachi wa minna kichigai Piero da," *Dezain hihyō*, no. 6 (July 1968): 42, cited in Ridgely, "The 3-D Future versus a 4-D Present at Expo 70," forthcoming article.

70. "I understood that the composite term intermedia, unlike the idea of addition of different genres like the old idea of composite art [*sōgō geijutsu*] designated an AND, a " と "not only between one genre of art and another but across various other conjunctions, for example, between art AND technology, or environment AND art, life [*seikatsu*] AND art, media AND message, aspiring to totalize the relational structure of perception and cognition. Around 1960, happenings, events, and concrete poetry had been a groping [*mosaku*] toward an attempt to transcend in a mode of multiplication the shared/common lacks or common intentions of established genres." Ishiko Junzō, "Geijutsu wa sangyō kyōryoku no tame ni aru no ka—kurosutōku intāmedia sōhyō" [Does art exist to collaborate with industry? Thoughts on Crosstalk Intermedia], *Eiga hyōron* (April 1969): 81–84.

71. See M. Sas, *Experimental Arts in Postwar Japan: Moments of Encounter, Engagement, and Imagined Return* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2010), 183.

72. Matsumoto, "Ekusupandiddo shinema no tenbō," 172.

VIRAL CONTAGION IN THE *RINGU* INTERTEXT

CARLOS ROJAS

Reproduction. Reproduction. Reproduction. Reproduction.
A virus's instinct is to reproduce. A virus usurps living structures in order
to reproduce itself.

—Koji Suzuki, *Ring*

A thing in *para*, moreover, is not only simultaneously on both sides of the
boundary line between inside and out. It is also the boundary itself, the
screen which is a permeable membrane connecting inside and outside.

—J. Hillis Miller, "The Host as Critic"

As if narrating a scene out of his 2002 film, *The Ring*, American director Gore Verbinski ominously describes how, in 2001, "they just sent me the tape—a really bad-quality tape, which was horrifying."[1] He adds that the tape was "the worst quality videotape I had ever seen—the dub of a dub of a dub. I couldn't even read the subtitles."[2]

The videotape in question was a copy of Hideo Nakata's *Ringu* (Ring, 1998), which was being pitched to DreamWorks Pictures for a potential English-language remake. Even as Nakata's film was providing the basis for a new Hollywood version, it was already an adaptation in its own right, having been partially inspired by Chisui Takigawa's 1995 tele-movie, *Ringu: Kanzenban* (Ring: The Complete Edition), which itself was based on Koji Suzuki's 1991 novel, *Ringu* (Ring).[3] Following *Ringu*'s enthusiastic reception in Japan, an independent agent reportedly sent a sample tape to one of the studio's development executives, who made a copy for two of his producers, who in turn sent Verbinski the degraded "dub of a dub of a dub," about which he subsequently complained so enthusiastically.[4]

Produced for a little over a million dollars, Nakata's *Ringu* was released in Japan as part of a double feature with its own sequel, *Rasen* (Spiral, directed by Joji Iida), and, had they

been a single work, the approximately $13 million they earned at the domestic box office would have made them the highest-grossing Japanese horror film ever. DreamWorks optioned the rights to the film for $1.2 million and then invested nearly $50 million more to produce *The Ring*, which went on to earn nearly a quarter of a billion dollars in global box office returns.[5] The resulting commercial success of the Hollywood block-buster helped encourage a new wave of sequels and adaptations, together with an entire subgenre of psychological horror films. Known as J-Horror, this genre is composed not only of Japanese films but also of foreign remakes and adaptations and is distinguished from violent "slasher" films by their more reflective fascination with—as one critic suc-cinctly puts it—"recurring visions of ghostly schoolgirls, dark water, viral curses, and disrupted families."[6]

Not only does Verbinski's bootleg copy of *Ringu* illustrate the reproductive logic underlying the cinematic franchise within which Nakata's film was embedded, it also mirrors the figure of the haunted tape at the heart of the work itself. *Ringu* famously revolves around a video that kills its viewers in precisely seven days—unless they manage to first make a copy and show it to someone else. In theory, the result is a self-perpetuating chain in which the video passes infectiously from viewer to viewer, manipulating its viewers in order to reproduce itself. In practice, however, each new copy of the video differs in perceptible ways from the preceding one, just as each new iteration of the *Ringu* narrative inevitably strays from those that preceded it. This itera-tive logic contributes to the dramatic suspense behind Nakata's film while also providing the driving force behind the continually evolving *Ringu* intertext itself.[7]

Nakata's 1998 film, for instance, was based on a 1991 novel by Koji Suzuki, which was followed by two sequels, *Rasen* (Spiral, 1995) and *Rupu* (Loop, 1998) together with a prequel, *Birthday* (1999). The trilogy in turn inspired a Japanese tele-drama (1995), a Japanese radio drama (1996), two television miniseries (1999), a Korean-language film (*The Ring Virus*, 2000), a myriad of *manga* series (by Kojirou Nagai, Misao Inagaki, Meimu, and others), and even a video game (*The Ring: Terror's Realm*, Sega Dreamcast, 2000). Nakata's 1998 adaptation of *Ring* was released on a double bill with Joji Iida's adaptation of *Spiral*—though, given the comparatively tepid response to the latter work, his producers asked Nakata to direct a *new* sequel to his earlier adaptation, titled *Ringu II* (1999). Following Verbinski's 2002 English-language adaptation, DreamWorks invited Nakata himself to direct an English-language sequel, *The Ring 2* (2005), featur-ing a completely new storyline. A third installment in the American franchise, *The Ring 3D*, is slated for a 2014 release.

Mediating between the 1998 Japanese version of *Ringu* and the 2002 Hollywood block-buster it helped inspire, Verbinski's "horrifying" bootleg video can be compared to a virus, and as such it draws attention to the viral underpinnings of both films. Suzuki's original novel had posited that the pernicious video was, quite literally, viral in nature, and while this microbiological plotline was elided from both Nakata's and Verbinski's cin-ematic adaptations, it does resurface in Kim Dong-bin's 2000 Korean-language remake.

Viruses are paradigmatically interstitial figures, positioned, as a character in Suzuki's *Ringu* puts it, "on the border between living and non-living things."[8] Consisting of little

more than strands of genetic material, viruses lack the ability to produce proteins or reproduce themselves without relying on a host organism, and consequently scientists sometimes refer to them as being positioned at the very "edge of life" itself.[9] It is, however, precisely this quality of possessing a sort of "borrowed life"[10] that has helped transform viruses into powerful symbols of reproductive fecundity, generating a body of discourses that attribute animistic qualities to a wide range of sociocultural phenomena. Here, I will take these viral implications of Verbinski's bootleg copy of *Ringu* as my entry point into an analysis of Nakata's film and of the broader cultural context within which it is embedded.

Paratexts

> More than a boundary or a sealed border, the paratext is, rather, a *threshold*, or—a word Borges used apropos of a preface—a "vestibule" that offers the world at large the possibility of either stepping inside or turning back.
>
> —Gerard Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*

Nakata's *Ringu* is framed by static. The film begins with a paratextual sequence identifying the work's title, producers, distributors, author, screenwriter, and director, whereupon the entire screen devolves into empty static. After a few seconds, this static resolves into a tight close-up of a broadcast of a Japanese baseball game, and as the camera slowly pulls back it reveals that the game is being displayed on a television in a bedroom, where two teenage girls are exchanging stories about a killer videotape.

The static-filled screen at the beginning of *Ringu* marks the structural limits of the film, while at the same time anticipating one of the central themes of the work itself. In particular, *Ringu* revolves around a haunted video that is itself both framed and contaminated by static, and while these static distortions may be seen as indexical traces of the process of mechanical reproduction that yielded the video in the first place, they also symbolize the porous boundaries that exist between the video proper and the broader context within which it is embedded. As an analogue technology, video recordings necessarily carry discernible traces of the reproductive process itself, discrete distortions that mark the distance between the copy and its origin. In practical terms, therefore, the static visible in the *Ringu* haunted video constitutes a tangible reminder of the video's technological origins, as well as an anticipation of the chain of copies that the video threatens to engender. More abstractly, the video's distortions mirror the virulent effects that it itself has on its viewers. Each time a victim is seen dying as a result of having watched the video, for instance, the moment of death is presented as though viewed through a low-resolution photographic negative (see Fig. 19.1), suggesting that the video's victims have somehow entered the representational space of the video itself.

FIGURE 19.1:   Tomoko at the moment of her death.

Source: Hideo Nakata's *Ringu*, 1998.

Ringu's haunted video is first introduced in the film's opening narrative sequence. One of the girls, Masami, is telling her friend Tomoko about a boy who tried to record his favorite television show while on vacation with his parents on Japan's Izu Peninsula. Not realizing that television channels in Izu are set to different frequencies from those back in Tokyo, the boy ended up recording from what in practice should have been an empty bandwidth. Rather than mere static, however, what he saw when he subsequently tried to watch the tape was instead a series of mysterious scenes culminating in an image of a woman informing him that he would die in seven days—and sure enough, a week later he was found dead. Upon hearing this story, Tomoko appears genuinely distressed, confessing that she and some friends recently watched a similar "weird video." Now it is Masami's turn to be dismayed, though Tomoko initially tries to laugh it off and claims she was merely pulling her friend's leg. The girls continue to banter back and forth, until the ringing of a telephone jolts them back to solemnity.

In this sequence, the girls introduce the haunted video via a set of stories, while repeatedly disavowing the reliability of those same stories. Masami, for instance, dismisses her own account as being "just a rumor," while Tomoko states that her claim to have watched the tape was merely a "joke." Their descriptions, in other words, are simultaneously generated and disavowed by the discursive environment within which they themselves are positioned, and to the extent that the stories are to be believed, they imply that the video originated out of an undifferentiated electromagnetic field, the traces of which remain visible in the static distortions that frame and contaminate the resulting video.

Following this opening sequence, the focus of Nakata's film shifts from the two girls to Tomoko's aunt, a television reporter by the name of Reiko Asakawa. Asakawa has been assigned to investigate a story about a deadly videotape that allegedly kills its viewers

and, while she initially dismisses the account as a mere urban legend, she begins taking the topic more seriously after learning that her own niece and several other high school students have died almost simultaneously under mysterious circumstances. Asakawa's quest to uncover the cause of her niece's death eventually leads her to the same Izu Peninsula rental cabin where Tomoko and some friends had spent the night a week before their demise. There, Asakawa finds the haunted tape tucked away at the end of a shelf of rental videos in the administrative office of the cabin complex, and it initially catches her eye precisely because it is in an unlabeled, white case.

The same lack of an immediate paratextual frame that draws Asakawa's attention to the haunted tape implicitly underscores the significance of the contextual environment within which the tape is discovered. As the camera pans back and forth across the rental shelf, it reveals that all of the other tapes are in colorfully decorated boxes, with most of them being Japanese rereleases of well-known foreign films. The two tapes positioned first in Asakawa's line of sight, for instance, are the early 1980s classics *Raiders of the Lost Ark* (1981) and *24 Hours* (1982) (see Figure 19.2).[11] These happen to be the same two titles Hiroshi Takahashi singles out in the film's screenplay, just as Spielberg's *Raiders* is one of the four titles Suzuki mentions in the corresponding scene from the novel (with the other three being *Star Wars* [1977], *Friday the 13th* [1980], and *Back to the Future* [1985]).[12]

While the overlapping lists of Hollywood movie titles noted in each of these three iterations of the *Ringu* narrative might appear to have little in common with the figure of the fictional haunted video itself, they do speak to issues of technological and cultural reproduction and are of critical relevance to the narrative as a whole. In particular, each of these Hollywood blockbusters was released during the first decade of the modern video era, which could be dated back to the introduction of the VHS video recorder

FIGURE 19.2: Shelf of rental videos at the Izu Peninsula rental cabin office.

Source: Hideo Nakata's *Ringu*, 1998.

in 1977 and which granted consumers the ability to conveniently copy films and other audiovisual texts.[13] Furthermore, each of these Hollywood films went on to inspire vast franchises that included countless sequels, adaptations, homages, and spinoffs, including the sorts of foreign editions that appear on the Izu cabin rental shelf. Just as *Ringu*'s conceit of the haunted video reflects the specter of video recording technology, the complex chain of adaptations and remakes within which each iteration of the work is embedded is a product of the same conditions of cultural production that generated the Hollywood blockbusters visible on the rental shelf. In place of a paratextual frame identifying the haunted videotape per se, therefore, the contextual environment of the rental shelf points to the intertwined phenomena of mechanical and cultural reproduction that underlie both the haunted video and Nakata's film itself.

When Nakata's camera zooms in on the unlabeled video tape, it abruptly switches to a grainy, flickering footage resembling that of a repeatedly dubbed video, suggesting that Asakawa's discovery of the haunted tape is perceived as if through the figurative gaze of the tape itself (see Figure 19.3). The distortions that contaminate this footage of the discovery of the tape mirror the static found in the video itself. In fact, when Asakawa tries to watch the tape, she initially thinks that there must be something wrong with the VCR since all she sees is blank static. As the screenplay explains,

> At first it looks like nothing has happened—then Asakawa realizes that she is now viewing *recorded* static instead of broadcast static. She watches, waiting, but the static continues unbroken. Asakawa looks down at the remote, is about to press fast forward, when suddenly the picture on the screen clears and for a moment she thinks she's looking at the moon.[14]

FIGURE 19.3:   Shot of the videotape containing the haunted video.

Source: Hideo Nakata's *Ringu*, 1998.

This static is positioned at the very margins of the video itself, functioning both as a limit point of the video's status as a meaningful text and as an indexical trace of the electromagnetic field out of which the video originated in the first place. Rather than signifying an *absence* of content, in other words, the static visible at the beginning of the video is part of the text itself, a product and reminder of the electromagnetic static out of which the video ostensibly originated in the first place.

After several seconds of static, the haunted tape finally begins to display recognizable images. We see what appear to be clouds moving across the face of the moon, followed by a woman combing her hair in the mirror. There is also a shot of Japanese characters and letters crawling around like insects, followed by a close-up of a human eye inside which there appears a reflection of a Japanese character.[15] The sequence culminates with a shot of a well located in the middle of a small clearing, after which the tape reverts back to empty static. Looking drained, Asakawa turns off the television set but continues staring at the blank screen—a reflection of her face clearly visible in the dark glass. Suddenly, she notices what appears to be a reflection of a woman dressed in white standing behind her, but when she spins around to look she finds there is no one there. Instead, a white telephone starts ringing.

The warped reflection of Asakawa's face that appears on the convex surface of the television screen symbolizes her figurative entry into the televisual space occupied by the haunted video, even as the video's virulent contents are themselves inexorably worming their way into her own psyche. Conversely, her glimpse of what appears to be a reflection of a white-clad female figure in the television screen foreshadows the video's own intrusion into the "real" world. This passage from the video world to the outside world is realized most dramatically near the end of the film—when a television is seen playing the final scene from the haunted video and then proceeds to show an additional segment not visible in the original video. In this supplementary segment, a woman dressed in white crawls out of the well and lurches toward the camera. Even after reaching the plane of the television screen, she literally crawls out of the television and toward the viewer. This scene was not present in Suzuki's original novel, and Nakata acknowledges that he was inspired by a similar scene in David Cronenberg's classic sci-fi film *Videodrome* (1983). Nakata's depiction of Sadako's traversal from a televisual sphere into the "real" world, therefore, could also be seen as a metaphor for the intertextual movement of representational motifs from one work to another—and, more generally, a figure for the continual circulation of the *Ringu* narrative between different works and media.

The telephone that rings after Asakawa watches the video provides a link between the domain of the video and that of the outside world. Throughout the film, similar telephone calls follow each initial viewing of the video, and collectively they not only mark the video's intrusion into the fictional space of the film but also provide the inspiration for the title of the work itself. Suzuki used a transliteration of the English word *ring* for his 1991 novel, and as the narrator of his 1995 sequel, *Rasen* (Spiral), observes at one point,

> He [the novel's protagonist] was most familiar with [the word's] use as a noun to mean "circle." But he also knew that it described the sound a bell or a telephone

makes; it could be a verb meaning "to cause a bell or a telephone to sound," and by extension, could mean calling someone on the phone or summoning someone by means of a bell."[16]

Each of the subsequent adaptations and remakes of the 1991 novel has used a variation on this same title. Kim Dong-bin's 2000 Korean-language remake, for instance, was titled *Ring: Virus*—using a Korean term, 慣 (*ring*), that is a transliteration of the English term *ring*, though one that is not normally used to refer to telephone calls. When Verbinski directed his American adaptation, meanwhile, he retransliterated the Japanese transliteration back into English, and when the Hollywood version was released in Japan, the retransliterated title was transliterated yet again back into Japanese, though this time with the addition of the definite article that had been added to the title of the American version: *Za ringu*. The result is a process of translingual circulation comparable to the children's game of "telephone," in which a phrase is repeatedly passed from one child to another, undergoing a series of compounded deviations along the way.

The static distortions and telephone calls that frame the haunted video can be seen as paratextual elements marking the limit point of the video as a meaningful text, even as they symbolize the conditions of possibility out of which the video emerges in the first place. Gerard Genette distinguishes between two kinds of paratexts: *peritextual* material, which is directly linked to the primary text, and *epitextual* elements, which are physically separate from the text but nevertheless contribute to the discursive context within which the work is received.[17] In *Ringu*, the video static and the telephone are both positioned simultaneously inside and outside the video as such. The static obscures the contents of the video while gesturing to the technological origins of the tape itself. Conversely, the telephone call initially distracts the fictional viewer's attention from the video while conveying a message that seems as though it originated from within the video itself.[18] As paratextual elements, the static and telephone are simultaneously proximate to and distinct from the haunted video, in that they contain information that is relevant to understanding the video's significance even while remaining functionally independent of the video as an autonomous text.

The basic plot of Nakata's film revolves around an attempt to reunite the video with its figurative paratextual origins—which is to say, the contextual information that might help explain, and thereby contravene, the video's virulent power. The contents of the haunted video are revealed to be the psychic projections of the spirit of a young woman by the name of Yamamura Sadako, who several decades earlier had been buried alive in a well on the site of the Izu cabin complex where the video was found. To the extent that the video functions as a concrete manifestation of what Freud calls repetition compulsion, or the involuntary reenactment of an unresolved trauma, the plot of *Ringu* itself revolves around an attempt to uncover this traumatic origin (and, quite literally, unearth Sadako's body from the bottom of the well) in the hope that this will help bring an end to the video's insidious pattern of self-replication. In Suzuki's earlier novel, meanwhile, this psychic/psychological explanation is interwoven with a microbiological one, in that Sadako is revealed to have been infected with smallpox just before she was thrown into

the well, and this same viral presence then infects the imagery that her spirit psychically projects onto the Izu videotape. As a result, the viral traces of Sadako's presence are presented as being simultaneously outside and inside the video—functioning both as a severed epitext that the novel's protagonists struggle to recover and as an internal peritext that is always already contained within the tape itself. Positioned at the very margins of the text as a coherent entity, these paratextual elements underscore the productively destabilizing nature of these textual boundaries themselves.

The block of static at the beginning of *Ringu*, therefore, could be seen as a symbol of this elided viral presence in the film. Just as a virus is figuratively positioned at the conceptual borders between animate and inanimate matter, this static limns the boundaries of the cinematic text as a meaningful entity. The static, in other words, is significant precisely insofar as it signifies an *absence* of meaning. It symbolizes the text's reproductive potential precisely insofar as it is presented as an indexical trace of a *failure* of (mechanical) reproduction. It is, finally, a paradigmatic paratext precisely insofar as it complicates the question of the text's relationship with its immediate environment.

PARERGONS

> *Parergon:* neither work (*ergon*) nor outside the work [*hors d'oeuvre*], neither inside or outside, neither above nor below, it disconcerts any opposition but does not remain indeterminate and it *gives rise* to the work.
>
> —Jacques Derrida, *The Truth in Painting*

One of the key clues that leads Asakawa to the haunted videotape is her discovery of a packet of photographs her niece had left to be developed before her death. As Asakawa flips through the photos, she notices that in one image of Tomoko posing with her friends in front of a rental cabin, the teenagers' faces are all grotesquely blurred, to the point of being virtually unrecognizable (see Figure 19.4).

The significance of these faces, it turns out, lies not so much in what they represent, but rather in what they *don't*. The blurred faces constitute a representational aporia that encourages a reassessment of the significance of the semiotics of representation within the film as a whole. In this sense, the blurred faces may be compared to anamorphic images that only become intelligible when viewed from an oblique angle or through a special lens or mirror. In Hans Holbein's celebrated portrait *The Ambassadors* (1533), for instance, the rigorously mimetic (even hypermimetic[19]) double portrait of two "ambassadors" surrounded by their worldly accouterments stands in stark contrast with an indistinct white mass hovering in the foreground. Though positioned in the center of the painting, this amorphous blob does not become recognizable unless the painting is viewed from a sharply oblique angle, whereupon the blur resolves into a perfectly proportioned and crisply rendered image of a human skull (see Figure 19.5).

FIGURE 19.4: Photograph of Tomoko and friends posing in front of the Izu rental cabin.

Source: Hideo Nakata's *Ringu*, 1998.

FIGURE 19.5: Hans Holbein the Younger, Jean de Dinteville, and Georges de Selve (*The Ambassadors*). Photo credit: National Gallery Picture Library.

One way of reading Holbein's painting would be to see it as an existentialist critique of the trappings of social status that are depicted in the work's surface plane of representation. More abstractly, however, the anamorphic image in the foreground invites a critical interrogation of the perspectival attitudes presupposed by the work itself. While the representational conventions of single-point receding perspective presupposes a unitary viewing position directly in front of the work, Holbein's painting instead postulates (at least) two distinct perspectives, each of which yields a radically different understanding of the work and its implications. If the painting is viewed from the front, the two ambassadors and their material surroundings occupy the focal point of the image, while if it is viewed at a sharp angle from the far right of the painting, the two figures fade into a foreshortened blur as the image of the skull emerges as the new focal point of the work. Jacques Lacan, in an influential discussion of the painting, notes the irony that it presents "the subject as annihilated" precisely at a historical moment when "the subject emerged and geometral optics was an object of research." He compares the work's figurative erasure of the subject to an act of symbolic castration, but adds that this elision also symbolizes more specifically "the gaze as such, in its pulsatile, dazzling, and spread out function."[20] For Lacan, the gaze—like the phallus—is positioned at the margins of the Self, anchoring the subject's self-conception precisely insofar as the gaze constantly threatens to become figuratively severed from the subject. Holbein, by requiring the viewer to approach his painting from two distinct perspectives, figuratively transforms his work into a symptom of this severed gaze itself, illustrating necessary possibility that viewers may become separated from the perspectival position to which they have been assigned.

By a similar logic, the teenagers' distorted faces in the Izu cabin photograph can be seen as a visible manifestation of the mark that the haunted video has left on their psyches. More generally, these distortions also symbolize the traces that *all* cultural artifacts may leave behind on the consciousness of their viewers—as they affect, in subtle and profound ways, viewers' memories, attitudes, and beliefs. The anamorphic logic of the rental cabin photograph, therefore, lies in its ability to depict, at a strictly representational level, the location of the haunted tape, while suggesting, at a metarepresentational level, the video's psychic impact on its viewers as well as the film's psychological impact on its audience.

There is a similar self-referential twist in *Spiral*, Suzuki's sequel to *Ring*, which picks up where *Ring* leaves off. Asakawa, who at the end of *Ring* is last seen driving down the highway with the haunted tape and a VCR in the front seat, determined to have his elderly parents view and copy the video to lift the curse from his son, is now in a coma following a car crash, as a new set of protagonists continue trying to unravel the mystery of the deadly videotape.[21] They study the video, collect information on its victims, and even sequence the DNA of the virus with which all of the victims are found to have been infected. At one point, the protagonists gain access to Asakawa's personal computer, where they find a series of files collectively labeled *ring*, containing a narrative account of the reporter's investigations into the origins and significance of the haunted tape. This narrative is presumably equivalent to the content of Suzuki's preceding novel, except that its uncannily precise details give its fictional readers the impression that they personally experienced the actual events in question.

The reason for the text file's mimetic power, it turns out, is that it has become contaminated by the same viral presence that had infected the original video. Suzuki briefly introduces this theme of viral infection in *Ring* but develops it in significantly more detail in *Spiral*, in which he observes that viruses are "a strange form of life: they lack the power to reproduce on their own. On that score, they actually fall somewhere between the animate and the inanimate. What a virus can do is burrow in the cells of another living creature and use them to help it reproduce."[22] Later, the narrator of the novel suggests that it is precisely viruses' indeterminate ontological status that permits them to jump from one representational medium to another:

> A virus was something that inhabited the gray area between life and non-life, something that amounted to little more than information, whose very nature it was to effect dramatic changes in itself in response to its environment. That it should switch from the form of a video to the form of a book didn't come as much of a shock.[23]

While this passage is ostensibly describing viruses' ability to move between visual and textual media, it also aptly describes the way in which the *concept* of the virus moves between the fields of biology and culture. The English word *virus* is etymologically derived from a Latin term for poisons or noxious substances (*virus*) and was used to describe an agent causing an infectious disease as early as the beginning of the eighteenth century,[24] nearly two centuries before the discovery of "actual" viruses near the end of the nineteenth century. Even after the term began to be used to refer to microscopic organisms, it continued to be used in a more metaphorical sense to refer more generally to pathogens or poisons. More recently, the concept of the virus has been used to describe cultural phenomena that reproduce themselves as if possessing a life of their own, with variants of the concept spreading infectiously across a wide variety of conceptual domains.

As the protagonist of *Spiral* comes to realize the virulent nature of Asakawa's contaminated text files, he discovers with alarm that someone has published the narrative contained in those files as a stand-alone volume. The resulting novel goes through multiple printings as it quickly climbs the best-seller charts, even providing the inspiration for a major motion picture. The protagonist expresses concern that this is only the beginning of an ineluctable dissemination of the virus throughout the global media sphere:

> … And then the movie would hit the video rental shops, and then it'd be broadcast on TV. The images would spread far more quickly than they ever could have through one-copy-at-a-time dubbing. This would be reproduction at an explosive rate.[25]

The novel's vision of irrepressible cultural reproduction is apocalyptic, and prophetic. Published in 1995, the same year that Suzuki's *Ring* was first adapted for television, *Spiral* presciently anticipates the cultural phenomenon that the *Ring* intertext had only begun to become. The fictional virus's ability to evolve from one medium to another mirrors quite precisely the *Ringu* narrative's ability to spread infectiously through a wide

variety of media, languages, and regions—ranging from fiction to television, cinema, video games, and beyond.

Spiral's emphasis on the viral dimension of the haunted video illustrates the viral quality of what Richard Dawkins calls memes, or "viruses of the mind."[26] Dawkins introduced this concept of the cultural meme in his 1976 book *The Selfish Gene*, in the context of his more general argument that individual genes, rather than entire organisms, are the primary units of natural selection. He argues that genes function as virtual viruses that figuratively parasitize their host organisms in order to help maximize their own chances of survival and self-reproduction. Dawkins then proposes the concept of the meme as a cultural correlate of the gene and cites as examples "tunes, ideas, catch-phrases, clothes fashions, ways of making pots or of building arches." He quotes a colleague to the effect that

> memes should be regarded as living structures, not just metaphorically, but technically. When you plant a fertile meme in my mind, you literally parasitize my brain, turning it into a vehicle for the meme's propagation in just the way that a virus may parasitize the genetic mechanism of the host cell.[27]

Dawkins's use of a colleague's quote to describe the parasitic nature of memes is ironically apt, as it points to the way in which his concept of the meme had already begun to assume a meme-like life of its own, parasitizing the brains of Dawkins's own interlocutors. In fact, Dawkins's concept of the meme eventually became such a powerful meme in its own right that Dawkins himself recalls feeling "a little alarmed" at how overenthusiastic readers have taken the concept far beyond what he claims to have been his own "original modest intentions."[28]

Dawkins elaborated on his original concept of the meme six years later, in his volume *The Extended Phenotype*, the primary thesis of which is that a gene's phenotypic expressions are not limited to an organism's observable traits but rather may also include the organism's effects on its immediate environment. In passing, however, Dawkins also revisited his earlier discussion of memes, noting that he originally had not differentiated carefully enough between abstract memes and their perceptible phenotypic expressions. Given the general concerns of the latter volume, however, he could also have made an inverse point regarding the fundamental interconnections between memes' immediate phenotypic expressions (e.g., "tunes, catch-phrases," etc.), and their own "extended phenotypes," which is to say the broader cultural and intellectual environment within which they are positioned.

One implication of this attention to a memetic "extended phenotype" is that it demands a reassessment of how we understand the relationship between a cultural text and its immediate environment. Jacques Derrida explored a related issue in his analysis of what he calls the *parergon*—a term he borrows from Kant's discussion of elements positioned at the margins of a cultural work (an *ergon*). Derrida argues that the supplementary status of the parergon renders its position ontologically indeterminate, in that it is an element that "inscribes something which comes as an extra, exterior to the proper

field…but whose transcendent exteriority comes to play, abut onto, brush against, rub, press against the limit itself and intervene in the inside only to the extent that the inside is lacking."[29] Like a frame around a painting, the parergon is simultaneously inside and outside the work, affirming the work's status as a cultural artifact precisely by virtue of its position in the contextual environment against which the work is implicitly defined.

By a similar logic, the blurred faces in the rental cabin photograph in *Ringu* help shift the viewer's focus from the image as such to the parergonal frame within which it is located. In particular, the faces underscore the viewer's role in bringing cultural texts like the photograph into existence, even as he or she is inevitably marked by those same texts themselves. The viewer, in other words, plays a critical role in creating and maintaining the parergonal frame that constitutes a cultural work as such, even as the viewer is, in the process, drawn into the cultural work itself.

Parasites

A parasite is neither the same as nor different from that which it parasites. The possibility of fiction cannot be derived.

—Jacques Derrida, *Limited Inc*

While Asakawa's gaze is initially drawn to the hideously deformed faces positioned at the center of the photograph, there is another, more subtle, distortion at the outer

FIGURE 19.6: Photograph of Tomoko and friends posing in front of the Izu rental cabin, with partially erased date stamp visible in the lower right-hand corner.

Source: Hideo Nakata's *Ringu*, 1998.

margin of the same print—a faint, horizontal ripple in the lower right-hand corner of the photograph (see Figure 19.6).[30] This initial shot of the photograph is only held for an instant before the camera cuts away, and when it returns a few seconds later for a tight close-up, the relevant corner of the print is no longer visible. There is another close-up shot of the print when Asakawa arrives at the cabin, as she compares the photographic image to the scene in front of her, but here too the lower right-hand corner is cropped out of the frame.

Although the original content of this elided portion of the image remains effectively invisible to viewers of the film, it may nevertheless be readily inferred from the photograph's immediate context. The other prints in the roll are all marked with a bright orange date-stamp that reads *'97 08 29*, or August 29, 1997 (see Figure 19.7). Assuming that the blurred face photograph was taken after the others in which the teenagers' faces appear normal, the obscured date stamp presumably corresponds to the dates August 29 or 30. The systematic elision of this date stamp from the film's various shots of the rental cabin photograph, however, paradoxically draws the viewer's attention to the significance of the elided date, together with more general considerations of the historical context within which the photograph (not to mention the film as a whole) is positioned.

Apart from the date stamps that are fleetingly visible in the other photographs of Tomoko and her friends, Nakata's film contains no other direct reference to the year in which the work is set. The film does follow Suzuki's novel in including a series of captions specifying the dates of the unfolding action—but while Suzuki's headings specify the day, month, and *year*, Nakata's corresponding subtitles note instead the day, month, and *day of the week*. The opening sequence in the girl's bedroom, for instance, is

FIGURE 19.7: Photograph (with date stamp) of Tomoko and friends posing at the Izu rental cabin complex.

Source: Hideo Nakata's *Ringu*, 1998.

dated September 5 in both the novel and the film, but while the novel specifies the year (1990), the film instead notes the day of the week (Sunday). It turns out, however, that September 5 actually did not fall on a Sunday in either 1990 (the year noted in the novel) or in 1997 (the year that appears in the photograph's date stamp in the film). Instead, the most recent year prior to the 1998 release of the film in which the dates and days of the week specified in the film's subtitles line up was in 1993.

To the extent that the elided date-stamp of the rental cabin photograph mirrors the more general omission, in the film as a whole, of any direct mention of the *actual* year in which the work was presumably set,[31] we may treat the double elision as a second-order anamorphic distortion that invites a provocatively off-center perspective on the work as a whole. For instance, one result of the film's implicit recalibration of the novel's original date headings from 1990 to 1993 is that the new temporal span of the film coincides almost precisely with the final weeks of the inaugural run of the Biosphere II project. Located on a three-acre plot in central Arizona and featuring a diverse array of natural habitats, Biosphere II was conceived as a replica of the earth's own biosphere, and on September 26, 1991, a crew of eight men and women were locked inside the hermetically sealed enclosure. For the next two years they attempted to survive using only the renewable resources available to them within the miniature biosphere, enduring a series of crises ranging from severe oxygen shortages to infestations of fire ants, until the mission concluded on September 26, 1993—which is to say, just four days after the (presumptive) date of the final scene in Nakata's film.

Of course, one might object that neither the photograph's elided date-stamp nor the process of elision itself are actually part of the film proper but rather are merely incidental artifacts of the filmmaking process as such. The apparent erasure of the photograph's date stamp, for instance, may have been purely accidental, just as the implicit recalibration of the novel's date headings may have been merely the result of an attempt to make the setting of the work appear more indeterminate. On the other hand, there is suggestive evidence within the work itself that would appear to invite this sort of "parergonal" reading. Nakata's entire film, after all, is in effect a master class of cinematic close reading, as we repeatedly see the protagonists pouring over the haunted video, breaking it down, and analyzing it frame by frame. At one point, they even play part of the video backward in slow motion, uncovering what appears to be a Japanese phrase embedded within what had seemed to be merely random background noise. Suzuki's novels, meanwhile, carry this emphasis on textual analysis even further. In *Ring*, for example, even the periodic flickers of darkness in the video are found to be potentially meaningful (they are revealed to be artifacts of Sadako's blinking of her eyes when she originally saw the scenes contained in the video); in *Spiral*, the protagonist is an amateur cryptographer who spends much of the novel deciphering a variety of "texts" that would not normally be seen as having a linguistic dimension (such as the DNA of the ring virus); and in the third volume of the trilogy, *Rupu* (Loop), this attention to close reading is given another turn of the screw when it is revealed that the fictional protagonist of *Spiral* ultimately managed to "read through" the virtual world he inhabited and make contact with the "real world" outside.

Released the same year as Nakata's *Ringu*, *Loop* reveals that the events described in *Ring* and *Spiral* all took place within a virtual world located within a network of super-computers. According to the novel, this virtual 'biosphere' known as the Loop project, was initiated in the 1950s not far from the location where the actual Biosphere II would be created in the 1990s,[32] and its goal was to model the evolution of life on earth from its origins up to the present. The idea of the project, as the narrator explains, was to

> create life within the virtual space of the computers, pass on DNA from generation to generation, and incorporate the mechanisms of mutation, parasitism, and immunity, thereby creating an original biosphere to simulate the evolution of life on earth.[33]

Like the eponymous protagonist of Jorge Luis Borges's story "Pierre Menard, Author of the Quixote" (who set about recreating the precise historical conditions under which Cervantes composed *Don Quixote* so that he, Menard, might "produce a few pages which would coincide—word for word and line for line—with those of [Cervantes's novel]"[34]), the fictional designers of the Loop project manage to model their virtual lifeworld so accurately that the virtual world ultimately yields a contemporary human society virtually identical to the real one. Just as Borges's narrator discovers that Menard—in creating a text that is verbally identical with its seventeenth-century model—has in fact only succeeded in "repeating an already extant book in an alien tongue,"[35] Suzuki's narrator similarly discovers that the engineers of the fictional Loop project—in creating a precise computer simulation of the evolution of life on earth— have in fact produced an uncanny replica of the world that becomes overrun by a cancerous virus that makes it necessary to terminate the entire project. Just before they pull the plug, however, one of the fictional inhabitants of the Loop world (who happens to be the cryptographer protagonist of *Spiral*) manages to decipher the secrets of both the ring virus and of the virtual world he inhabits and, furthermore, is able to make a phone call out to the "real" world. Echoing quite precisely the boundary-crossing phone calls in *Ring* (which provide a bridge between the spectral world of the haunted video and the fictional plane of the *Ring* text itself), this final phone call in *Loop* fractures the representational field of the virtual Loop world and, in turn, permits the ring virus to escape into the "outside" world.

This fictional premise that the parasitic ring virus from the Loop world has managed to cross over into the "real" world mirrors intersecting reassessments within biology and philosophy regarding the significance of viral parasitism. Recent microbiological and genetic evidence, for instance, suggests that viral processes may have played a critical role in the evolution of life. A comparison of the genomes of closely related species reveals that their genetic differences lie primarily not in the actual coding sequences of their genomes, which are often remarkably similar, but rather in their noncoding, "junk" DNA. Microbiologist Luis Villarreal points out that much of the latter junk DNA is actually viral in origin, and although this noncoding DNA is highly stable in evolutionary terms it is also strongly correlated with distinctions at a species level. He suggests that one potential explanation for this apparent paradox is that a frequent cause

of species divergence may have been the viral colonization of an organism's genome, the effects of which are primarily visible in the noncoding sequences of the organism's DNA. Viruses, as Villarreal points out, reproduce very rapidly and furthermore feature a comparatively high rate of genetic mutations per generation, making them in effect engines of genetic diversification. They are capable of generating new genes that under special conditions (namely, when an RNA-based retrovirus infects an organism's stem cells) may in turn be written back into the organism's "own" genome. The implication, therefore, is that while some viruses may be harmful to their hosts, in more general terms viruses have played a critical role in driving the evolutionary development of those same host organisms.[36] Indeed, as a character in Suzuki's *Ring* confidently observes, "What's certain is that [viruses] have been intimately connected with the appearance and evolution of life."[37]

Derrida reaches a similar conclusion in his analysis of the "parasitic" uses of language. In a famous discussion of John Austin's speech act theory, for instance, Derrida notes Austin's attempts to cordon off certain domains of language use that he deems to be "not serious, but in many ways *parasitic* upon its normal use." While Austin cites examples such as words uttered by an actor on stage or read in a poem as paradigmatic examples of what he calls "certain kinds of ill, which infect *all* utterances," Derrida by contrast proposes that *all* utterances are in fact predicated on a condition of "general iterability," wherein each utterance is a partial citation of earlier ones and consequently necessarily contains the possibility of iterative deviations.[38] The "parasitism" that Austin sought to exclude from his theory of performative speech acts, therefore, is precisely the quality that makes language use possible in the first place.

These parallel reflections on the inherent productivity of biological and linguistic viral processes, in turn, come together in a recent discussion of what is known as the RNA world hypothesis. Initially proposed by microbiologist Carl Woese in the 1970s, this theory—to which Suzuki's *Loop* alludes elliptically when it notes that the Loop's nascent ecosystem was initially seeded with virtual RNA that provided it with "the ability to self-replicate"[39]—posits that prior to the development of proteinaceous cellular life there existed "an era of nucleic acid life." The nucleic acid life consisted of proto-organisms consisting primarily of primitive ribonucleic acids, and Woese argues that the critical innovation that permitted the emergence of cellular life took place when these nucleic acid compounds developed the ability to produce (amino acid-based) polypeptide chains, which could then be folded into proteins. The significance of this development, he explains, lies in the introduction to the nascent lifeworld not only of proteins but, more importantly, of a process of symbolic representation wherein "nucleic acid sequences become symbolically representable in an amino acid 'language.'" Woese explicitly compares this development to humans' acquisition of language and argues more generally that most major evolutionary advances have developed out of similar moments when "some existing biological entity (system) gains the capacity to represent itself (what it is and/or does) in some symbolic form," thereby producing a "new world" of evolutionary potential, a "vast and qualitatively new phase space for evolution to explore and expand."[40]

The evolutionary process Woese proposes here also describes quite aptly the narrative logic of Suzuki's *Ring* trilogy itself, in that each new volume in the series adds a new metatextual twist to the work that preceded it, and thereby grants the narrative a new field of symbolic representation within which to expand. From a literary narrative of a quest for the origins of a virally infested videotape to a novel *about* a narrative of a quest for the origins of the viral video to a novel about a virtual reality whose contents corresponds to the preceding novel about a narrative of a question for the origins of the viral video, each iteration of the trilogy deviates from that which preceded it. This series of inversions not only is a formal element of Suzuki's original trilogy but also describes the cultural logic of the *Ringu* intertext as a whole, as each new cultural iteration of the narrative transforms the texts that preceded it into paratextual elements within the new text's contextual universe.

Coda

> The tape, occupying a point between the animate and the inanimate, began to resemble a virus.
>
> —Suzuki Koji, *Spiral*

The bootleg copy of *Ringu* that Verbinski received in 2001, therefore, can be seen as both a symbol and a symptom of viral reproduction. Even as it helps transmit the *Ringu* narrative from one cultural host to another, it simultaneously functions as a reminder of the reproductive context within which each different iteration of the narrative is necessarily positioned. In the case of the Hollywood blockbuster that the Verbinski's bootleg video helped engender, for instance, part of this cultural context was precisely the partial *elision* of the work's own textual history. Given that Suzuki's novel was not translated into English until 2004 and Nakata's film was not officially released in the United States until 2003 (DreamWorks had purchased the film's international distribution rights in 2001 when they secured the remake rights, but then deliberately delayed the US release for nearly two years), those earlier Japanese texts initially remained tantalizingly elusive to most American viewers of Verbinski's film. In the interim, American fans of *The Ring* curious about its Japanese origins typically had to resort to illicit copies of Nakata's film obtained over the Internet or elsewhere. In fact, DreamWorks itself alluded to this popular fascination with the work's Japanese predecessor when it used "novel packaging" to release the DVD version of the Japanese *Ringu* in the US (the same day, incidentally, that it released the DVD and video versions of the Hollywood remake), "making it look like one of the bootlegs snapped up by US fans obsessed with the original."[41]

More concretely, Verbinski's bootleg video also anticipated some of the unusual marketing tactics that DreamWorks would use to promote Verbinski's film, particularly one in which the studio planted unlabeled promotional tapes in public locations around the country. Accompanied only by a suggestive note saying something to the effect of "watch

this and die," each of these tapes contained a copy of the film's infamous haunted video, with no other explanation apart from an Internet address at the end of the video that led to a website containing (fictional) testimonials about a deadly videotape. This website turned out to be one of several that had been developed as part of a studio-orchestrated marketing campaign to help generate interest in the film itself.[42]

Like the haunted videotape in the rental cabin scene in *Ringu*, it is precisely the unlabeled promo tapes' general *lack* of a paratextual frame that invites a more general reflection on the contextual environment within which they are positioned. In particular, to the extent that these decontextualized copies of the (putatively) haunted *Ringu* video were part of what is known as a viral marketing campaign designed to encourage the autonomous reproduction of paratextual discourses relating to the film, they succinctly encapsulate the regime of iterative reproduction around which the work itself revolves.

A similar regime of iterative reproduction, meanwhile, characterizes the cultural logic of global Hollywood. In the face of the growing global hegemony of Hollywood cinema, many nations have set up a system of quotas limiting the number of foreign films that may be introduced in any one year—though even with these strict quotas in place, Hollywood blockbusters frequently end up earning the lion's share of foreign box office earnings. For advocates of national film industries, this is an alarming trend, as it threatens the economic and cultural viability of film industries positioned outside of the hegemony of global Hollywood. Even as these national film industries respond to the challenge posed by Hollywood's market clout by either strategically remaking Hollywood films or carefully cultivating a cinematic aesthetic at odds with the one conventionally associated with Hollywood, Hollywood has increasingly adopted a strategy of investing in coproductions in order to circumvent strict national film quotas. The coproduction strategy allows Hollywood studios, together with producers operating independently of actual studios, to leave their mark on foreign national cinemas (and, of course, take a cut of their proceeds). The result is a process of viral parasitism, wherein Hollywood effectively infiltrates film markets that are attempting to assert their independence, using them to reproduce and extend its own influence.

Notes

1. Cited in "Biography for Gore Verbinski," *The Internet Movie Database*. http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0893659/bio (accessed July 2010).
2. Cited in Thomas Arnold, "*Ringu* Calls *Ring* Fans to the Video Store," *USA Today*, October 25, 2002, 16D.
3. Koji Suzuki, *Ringu* [Ring], trans. Robert B. Rohmer and Glynne Walley (New York: Vertical, 2004). In this essay, I translate the novel's title as *Ring*, while referring to Tanaka's 1998 film by its transliterated title, *Ringu*. When speaking of Verbinski's remake, I of course use its actual English title, *The Ring*.
4. See Tad Friend, "Remake Man," *The New Yorker,* June 2, 2003; David Kalat, *J-Horror: The Definitive Guide to* The Ring, The Grudge, *and Beyond* (New York: Vertical, 2007), 6.

5. *Box Office Mojo,* http://boxofficemojo.com/movies/?id=ring.htm (accessed October 15, 2011).

6. David Kalat, *J-Horror*, 12.

7. For a useful discussion of this iterative logic underlying the *Ringu* intertext, see Julian Stringer, "The Original and the Copy: Nakata Hideo's *Ringu*," in Alastair Phillips and Julian Stringer, eds., *Japanese Cinema: Texts and Contexts* (London: Routledge, 2007). I borrow the term "Ringu Intertext" from Daniel Herbert, *Transnational Film Remakes: Time, Space, Identity* (dissertation, University of Southern California, 2008).

8. Koji Suzuki, *Ring*, 213.

9. E. P. Rybicki, "The Classification of Organisms at the Edge of Life, or Problems with Virus Systematics," *South African Journal of Science* 86 (1990): 182–186.

10. M. H. V. van Regenmortel and M. W. J. Mahy, "Emerging Issues in Virus Taxonomy," *Emerging Infectious Diseases* 10 (2004): 8–13.

11. In Nakata's film, the tapes carry the Japanese translations of the movie titles.

12. See Takahishi Hiroshi, *The Ring*, trans. J. Lopez, 1995; Koji Suzuki, *Ring*, 64–65.

13. VHS video recorders were first introduced into the United States market in 1977, the same year as the release of *Star Wars*.

14. Takahishi Hiroshi, *The Ring*.

15. The character is 貞, which means "chaste" and is pronounced *sada*, which is short, in this context, for *Sadako*, the name of the young woman whose spirit is revealed to have created the video.

16. Koji Suzuki, *Spiral*, trans. Glynne Walley (New York: Vertical, 2005), 22.

17. Gerard Gennette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, trans. Jane Lwein (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 4–9.

18. When Asakawa picks up the phone, she hears the same high-pitched squeal that was audible during one of the scenes in the video, while in other instances people who watch the video receive a phone call in which a woman's voice informs them that they will die in seven days.

19. Jurgis Baltrušaitis, *Anamorphic Art*, trans. J. J Strachan (Cambridge: Chadwyck-Healey, 1976).

20. Jacques Lacan, *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*, ed. Jacques-Alain Miller, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: W. W. Norton, 1981), 88–89.

21. There are many significant differences between the novel and the film, including the fact that the novel's equivalent of Reiko Asakawa is actually called Kazuyiki Asakawa and is a man rather than a woman. In the interest of simplicity, however, I will gloss over these differences in my discussion here, except insofar as they are relevant to my general argument.

22. Koji Suzuki, *Spiral*, 171.

23. Koji Suzuki, *Spiral*, 256.

24. See the Oxford English Dictionary entry for "virus."

25. Koji Suzuki, *Spiral*, 276.

26. See Richard Dawkins, "Viruses of the Mind," in Dawkins, *A Devil's Chaplain: Reflections on Hope, Lies, Science, and Love* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2003), 128–145.

27. Richard Dawkins, *The Selfish Gene* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

28. Richard Dawkins, "Chinese Junk and Chinese Whispers," from the "Foreword" to Susan Blackmore, *The Meme Machine*, reprinted in Dawkins, *A Devil's Chaplain*, 119–127, 127.

29. Jacques Derrida, *The Truth in Painting*, trans. Geoff Bennington and Ian McLeod (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 56.

30. This horizontal band extends from the light-colored pavement to one of the teenager's dark pants legs.

31. That is to say, if we ignore the date and year stamps that are fleetingly visible in the other photographs in Tomoko's album.

32. Suzuki's novel specifies that the headquarters of the fictional Loop Project was located near the four-state border of Arizona, New Mexico, Utah, and Colorado.

33. Koji Suzuki, *Loop*, trans. Glynne Walley (New York: Vertical, 2005), 98 (translation revised).

34. Jorge Luis Borges, "Pierre Menard, Author of the *Quixote*," trans. James Irby, in Borges, *Labyrinths*, 36–44, ed. Donald Yates and James Irby (New York: New Directions, 1964).

35. Menard is revealed to have produced a partial replica of the original novel, wherein every word is identical yet is endowed with a different set of meanings and connotations.

36. Luis Villarreal, "Can Viruses Make Us Human?" *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 148.3 (2004): 296–323; and Villarreal, *Viruses and the Evolution of Life* (Washington, DC: American Society for Microbiology, 2005).

37. Koji Suzuki, *Ring*, 213.

38. Jacques Derrida, *Limited Inc* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1988). The quotations from Austin are all cited by Derrida and originally appear in John Austin, *How to Do Things with Words* (London: Oxford University Press, 1976), 21–22 (italicized words and phrases are as they appear in Austin's original text).

39. Koji Suzuki, *Loop*, 100.

40. Carl Woese, "On the Evolution of Cells," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 99.13 (2002): 8742–8747.

41. David Bloom, "Tale of the Tape," *Variety*, March 6, 2003, 3, cited in Julian Stringer, "The Original and the Copy: Nakata Hideo's *Ringu*," 300.

42. The URL address on the video was www.anopenletter.com, and during the release of *The Ring II*, the site was revived at a new location, www.an-open-letter.com. Both of these sites were pulled shortly after the conclusion of the marketing campaigns for which they were created, though an archived version of the first site was preserved at the Ringworld fan site, *The Ringworld Forum* www.theringworldforum.com/anopenletter.html, which also contains a discussion of similar promotional videos and websites used to promote the American films: www.theringworldforum.com/promotionsites.html (2001–2007; accessed June 2010). The Ringworld site is no longer available as of December 2010.

....

MEDIA MIX AND THE METAPHORIC ECONOMY OF WORLD

....

ALEXANDER ZAHLTEN

"That we live in more than one world is the formula for discoveries that make up the philosophical excitement of this century."[1] This sentence by Hans Blumenberg restricts the excitational potential of the experience of multiple worlds to a certain time period and, to a degree, to a specific academic discipline. However, the tension of a single world vis-à-vis multiple worlds has a long tradition with many manifestations and meanings. This article will trace the connotations attached to the metaphors of worlds(s) and liquidity, and their interaction with media culture in Japan, especially in connection with the media mix.

Any exploration of the form and inflection "world" and liquidity have taken on in the media culture of Japan must understand it as a discursive motion interlocked with a global trajectory. It must also be recognized in its connection to metaphors such as liquidity, which forms a kind of catalyst and complement in relation to multiple worlds. This attempt will touch upon the broad array of discourses the metaphor has taken effect in, from economy to aesthetics, law, and politics, but it will especially focus on the space of media theory and popular culture that provides some of its most explicit expressions.

The opening quote is also a reference to a certain methodology. Blumenberg is well known as a proponent of what he called "metaphorology." It is his name for the endeavor to trace what he terms "absolute metaphors"—metaphors that become basic premises of our thinking while always remaining irreducible to any "direct correspondence" to our views. Such metaphors have a history, and their subtle transformations bring to light the "metakinetic of historically situated horizons of meaning."[2] However, while the metaphors of temperature, fluidity, and world seem to carry an archaic weight that seems to make them universally applicable, the discursive framework of multiple worlds and liquid futures is neither essentially psychogenic nor mythical in nature. There is little need to point out the religious connotations of floods or of the term "world" (or
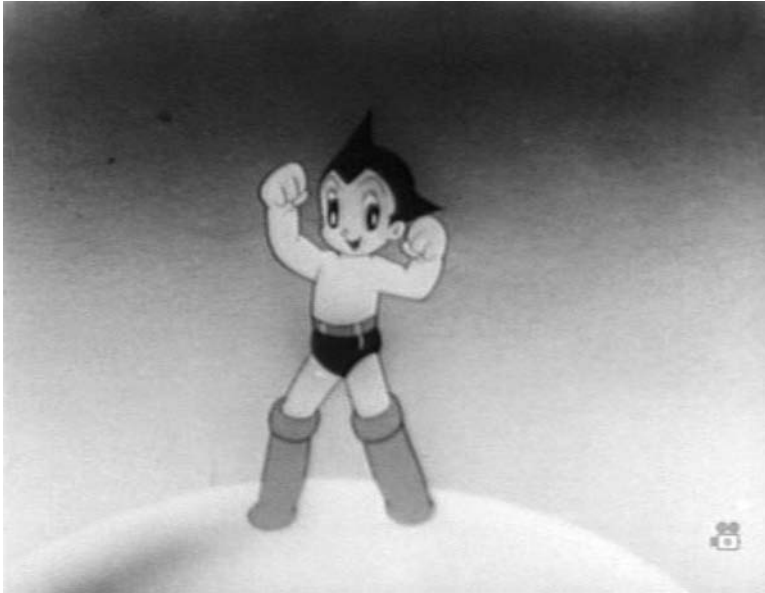
FIGURE 20.1:   TetsuwanAtomu/Astro Boy exceeding the boundaries of the world and of the medium of manga. (Source: Opening sequence to the original Tetsuwan–Atomu (Astro Boy) TV series from 1963.)

of *sekai*), or the way in which such terms may be accessible to cultural essentialists or psychoanalytic approaches. Yet they are not natural but strategic, positioned in the present and aligned toward a possible future. Their current manifestation in Japan, for one, is profoundly connected to that complex constellation of processes commonly termed "globalization" and the media mix.

The density and pervasiveness of globalization-related discourses in Japan seems particularly high, though this is also a question of visibility. Japan has for many decades been, both for self-reflection within Japan and views from the "outside", an arena where discourses of globalization are dramatized. The themes of abrupt modernization and conflict between tradition and modernity, of supposed isolation and exceptionalism, or of identity crisis and self-estrangement are basic to the experiences of modernity, postmodernity, and globalization per se. In a certain sense Japan has become a space, both projective and performative, for experiencing and reenacting the crisis of dealing with the phenomenon of "The World(s)." Such dramatization and commodification of globalization discourses is by no means specific to Japan, but in Japan there has formed an exceptionally high level of know-how in this respect, partially due to the labor of negotiating a position between the tropes of the West and Asia—intellectually, economically, militarily, and aesthetically. It is a know-how the government has recently again attempted to exploit for hard and soft power. For this it has focused on those products that provide the most vernacular and performative explication of globalization discourses, of the negotiation between world and world*s*: the media mix with manga, anime, and games at the center.

Media Mix and Looped Worlds

The media mix work *Higurashi no Naku Koro ni* (Higurashi When They Cry, 2002) may provide one example of how discourses of world play out both intra- and extratextually. Originally published as a *dojin* (not "commercially" produced) game and sold at fan conventions, it quickly branched out into multiple media platforms to become one of the most successful media mix works of the 2000s. *Higurashi* currently comprises thirteen separate manga series, eleven novelization series, forty-five CDs, two anime seasons, three OVAs (original video animations), nine games for PC and several for other game platforms including mobile phones, various pachinko, and pachislo machines, two live-action films and most importantly sheer endless *dojin* versions made by fans in all media, including opera, that are often sold at dedicated *Higurashi* conventions.[3]

The story of *Higurashi* is set in 1983, incidentally just a year before Prime Minister Nakasone Yasuhiro presented the vision of a renegotiation of the relation of Japan and the world to the Japanese parliament that he termed *kokusai kokka nihon*, or "international nation Japan." A boy named Maebara Keiichi moves to the small village of Hinamizawa, where he befriends the local children and experiences an idyllic time. Eventually he begins to investigate some apparent secrets about Hinamizawa's past, and in the end is brutally murdered by his classmates. Then the story begins again: Kenichi moves to Hinamizawa and befriends his peers; suspicious events lead him to investigate, and again the story ends in violence, though this time with slightly different characters being implicated. Then the story begins anew, and the cycle repeats itself in slight variations. It is only after many such loops that we realize that one of the characters is living through each of these specific storyworlds (called *kakera*, or shards, in the context of *Higurashi*) in order to find one that avoids the seemingly inevitable violence. This constellation of repetition and variation repeats itself on the level of the media mix, and there is a deep interrelation of the two. While the chapters for each *kakera* have their own names, the same respective chapters are slightly different between media, and even platforms: The same chapter on the Nintendo DS version has a slightly different development than the one on the PlayStation, and so on.

The looping of minor variations found in *Higurashi*—and many other works of the late 1990s and 2000s, is most probably connected to the intensification of the media mix, but it is also obviously overdetermined. There are connections to discourses on the postwar that proliferated in the 1990s, describing Japan as a country caught in an *owari naki nichijo* (endless everyday, Miyadai Shinji) or as a *warui basho* (bad place, Sawaragi Noi) that is experiencing an endlessly looped postwar that has robbed Japan of a history and a future.[4] Thus the protagonists in such loop narratives are often caught in an effort to break out of these loops, such as the eight *Endless Eight* episodes in the second season of the anime series Suzumiya Haruhi no Yuutsu (The Melancholy of Suzumiya Haruhi, 2006), in which the characters experience almost exactly the same summer vacation, including the repetitive attempts and failures to break through the cycle, for eight straight episodes (or, in the storyworlds of the anime, 15,532 times).

The *gemu-teki riarizumu* (game-like realism) that leads to narratives of near-endless loops and restarts that Azuma Hiroki has proposed as a consequence of game conventions and, to a lesser degree technology, can be seen as another determinant of *Higurashi*'s structure (Lev Manovich has previously and more generally proposed narrative loops as a "new aesthetics of new media").[5] Yet multiple world versions are also a significant development in the genealogy of manga and anime, which have had a long-standing obsession with multiple worlds that can be traced to formative figures for both of these, Tezuka Osamu and *Tetsuwan Atomu* (Astro boy).

While this trajectory began as a concern with extraterrestrial worlds that was—not incidentally—accompanied by an intensifying media mix through representative works such as *Uchu Senkan Yamato* (Space Battleship Yamato, 1974) or *Kido Senshi Gundam* (Mobile Suit Gundam, 1978), from the beginning of the 2000s there has been a marked increase in what we can term "multiple worlds" separated by very minor variations. This is also a system that is part of the ongoing and increasing interlinking of the media industry with fan labor.[6] The modular structure of variated loops provides an ideal pattern for allowing fans to produce their own add-ons, and indeed the makers of *Higurashi,* 07th Expansion, have encouraged such activity, with the game company Square Enix publishing several volumes of *Higurashi* fan fiction.

This model of the looped variation also has significant consequences for the way media consumption is structured. While the currently dominant model of consumption across multiple media platforms is heavily influenced by Henry Jenkins' conception of "convergence culture" and the resultant technique of "transmedia storytelling," there is a very different model at work in *Higurashi*. Jenkins famously proposes, in a kind of top-down transmedia auteurism, that a transmedia story "unfolds across multiple media platforms, with each new text making a distinct and valuable contribution to the whole."[7] Otsuka Eiji proposed a similar, if more consumption-oriented, model in 1989, in which he analyzed the craze for "bikkuriman" stickers that were collected to piece together a larger, underlying narrative that could—in principle—be expanded by the consumers.[8] Interestingly, Otsuka likens this to the use of the term *sekai* (world) in Kabuki, where it denotes respective plays (*sekai*/worlds) that are variations of common stories. However, there is no coherent, non-contradictory single storyworld for *Higurashi*, simply a series of variations. What becomes the object of consumption (and the overlap of consumption and production) is exactly the gap between the different worlds and, in the same vein the gap between different media.[9]

AIR-CONDITIONED WORLDS/FLOODING

Like the strategic metaphor of worlds, real and fictional worlds are created, boundaries and categories are constructed, and environments—be they representational or physical—are formed in an intensely historicizable fashion.[10] This is a long-standing development also connected to the project of the modern and to its experience of

self-positioning: the "discovery" of new geographies, of the extraterrestrial, of a globe that was quickly dwarfed, dismantled, and fragmented. Within this framework, climatic metaphors especially have increased with the experience of multiple worlds in a global context. Since the early twentieth century we can see a multitude of attempts to reduce time periods to the lower degrees Celsius. Walter Benjamin stated that "The warmth is seeping from things," Siegfried Kracauer saw old belief systems as becoming "increasingly cooler...it is only the cooling process which is irreversible," and Helmuth Lethen has more recently subsumed the entire Weimar Republic (and by implication modernity of the early twentieth century) under the primacy of the cool in his book *Cool Conduct*.[11] Jean Baudrillard chose *Kool Killer* to trace the rise of the empty signifier, and more recently Inaba Shinichiro has proposed a "cooldown of the modern."[12] A more programmatic but no less homogenizing streak runs through government slogans such as *Cool Britannia* or *Cool Japan*. The suggestion of a drop in temperature fundamentally aims at strategic refrigeration and is often connected to the trope of multiple worlds, which in turn need to coexist without too much friction. It is a multiplication that reorganizes not only the community's or the individual's relationship to the multiplicity of worlds but also interpersonal distance.

At the end of the nineteenth century "the world," then more often treated in the singular, promised something all-encompassing yet communally inhabitable. Projects to stratify it into an appropriate world format proliferated wildly: the world revolution, the world exhibition—which has had a special significance for Japan and the negotiation of world—the world language (Esperanto) or the world norms (Din).[13] It was the radical friction with "the world" that fueled much of the radical changes in Japan in the latter half of that century, and arguably also the fascination of (not only) the Kyoto school with the phenomenological version of world in Heidegger's philosophy in the next one. But almost immediately "the world" was ready to splinter, and Wittgenstein noted that "The world disintegrates into facts"—or one might also say, again with Blumenberg, into multiple worlds.[14] Fragmentation became a main theme for many theorists of modernity—for none more than for Walter Benjamin—and it would again of course in discourses of postmodernity, in Japan marked by a near obsession with the process of *sai-ka* (differentiation) in the *new aca* (new academicism) discourses of the 1980s and the *sabukarucha* (subculture) debates of the 1990s.

This is a sweeping description, but multiple world terminology itself has rarely seemed able to provoke very differentiated meteorological metaphors. The result has been a very basic temperature-based vocabulary, wedged between immediacy and quantifiability. It helps to form a bridge between the establishment of one world and its dissolving, resulting in the reestablishment of multiple worlds. Contemporary theory, in the face of a perceived intensification of globalization activity, has cast a clear vote. If modernists such as Benjamin and Kracauer theorized refrigerated worlds, the heat has now risen and the frozen seas are melting: both popular and theoretical rhetoric claim that we are in the age of liquefaction. Baudrillard's "hot ecstasy" of communication is one symptom (or instigator), and we can watch as "all that is solid melts into air" (Karl Marx via Marshall Berman)—or rather into some kind of fluid. Liquids now splash at us

from all directions. Ryudo-ka (流動化), or liquefaction, became one of the buzzwords of 1980s economic theory in Japan and has recently experienced a forceful comeback. Zygmunt Bauman establishes a "liquid modernity" that stimulates new options and new insecurities. Bryan Turner sees media as subject to "liquid differentiation," and Manuel Castells proposes a "space of flows" in which both the world and the network society are embedded. According to Castells, these flows are not simply elements of social organization: "…they are dominating our economic, political and symbolic life."[15] Not only that, the ideal state of being itself—in a social, labor-related, and ontic sense—is proposed as that of assimilating to liquid, as Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi famously proposed in *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience*, which has recently gained traction in video game research in Japan.[16] Journalistic and academic phrases habitually envision us as drowning in seas of data or as castaway bodies carried away by (and dissolving in) flows of capital and goods.

As much as these liquidity scenarios speak of destabilization and dislocation, they retain an element of consolation, for they at least potentially reconstitute the emotional experience of *one* world. Connected in the fluidum, an affective totality moves into reach once again. Liquid appears as a medium that can still ensure connection alongside an ongoing or near-complete fragmentation. Embedded in liquid that is imagined as unburdened by a center or differences in density, the amniotic solution even suggests an egalitarian state. This is the vision so many manga and anime since the late 1980s take up in various shades of ambivalence. From the release of Tetsuo and Akira from any bounds of physical or psychic form in the climax of *Akira* (Otomo Katsuhiro, 1982) to
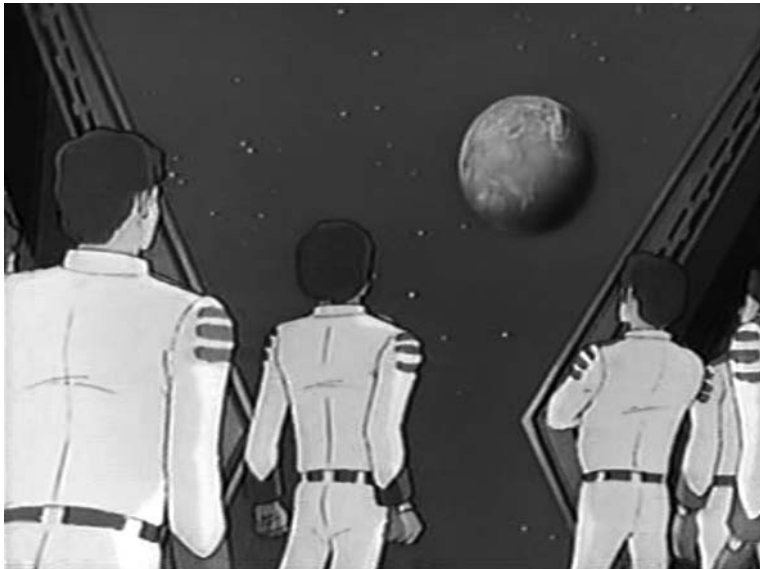
FIGURE 20.2: Sensucommunis: The crew of Space Battleship Yamato stare at the future earth, a planet without water. (Source: Space Battleship Yamato/Uchu–Senkan Yamato (Masuda Toshio, 1977).)

the melting of the human race into a completely interconnected nonindividuated space of the human instrumentality project in *Neon Genesis Evangelion* (1995) and the failed attempt to do so in *Code Geass* (2006), many of the formative works of popular culture in Japan have participated in and expressed such liquefaction discourse.

This is not only the negotiation of an abstract experiential and affective problem. It is the very real promise that neoliberal theory and *its* discourses of liquefaction thrive on: as much as it may cost, liquidity is finally profitable for all. And it is in the multiple meanings of liquidation that the ambivalence and subtle violence of the process of becoming-liquid finds expression. Liquidation: To become liquid, to convert into money, to kill. Nonetheless, almost clandestinely, the liquidated world of worlds is at times shifted into a positive, communitarian vision. The fluid promises as much as it intimidates, and we stare at the melting pole caps with a certain *angstlust*.

Identity/Liquidity

Before approaching the discourses of worlds and liquidity and their consequences for legal and media-theoretical discourse, it is important to examine the affective economy of the liquidity model a bit closer. The idea of the security of a fixed position tied to property and identity is deeply anchored even in postagrarian societies and heavily influences these discourses. Carl Schmitt has written about the "earth-boundedness" of law and the long-standing theme of the open sea as a lawless, unfastened nonspace, far away from the security of property: "The ocean knows no...manifest unity of space and law, of order and locality.... The ocean has no character in the original sense of character, which comes from the Greek *charassein*, to embed, engrave, imprint." [17] The etymological root of the word "pirate" designates, as Schmitt points out, "one who dares."[18]

Identity as a supplier of solidity, exclusivity, and support loses ground in the liquid world. The securing of (commodifiable) identity is outsourced to the realm of copyright law. Here the "preglobal" (Schmitt) criteria of earth-bound law still dominates; here as well there are pirates, although now they are pirates of copyright (and we may ask if it is a coincidence that the most successful Japanese media mix work of the 2000s, *One Piece*, is the story of pirates, and the opening of each episode announces this as the "age of the great pirates"). This transfer of the question of identity—once central to the burgher and the maintenance of order in the modern public sphere—into a more abstract legal and economic sphere is a remarkable process.

As the fear of destabilization has spread along with modernity, the shaking of the earth has begun to carry in addition to its catastrophic consequences a considerable epistemological weight and effect immense social, political and psychological shifts. In a representational sense, it has become deeply tied to the crisis of modernity and its extensions. Werner Hamacher has described how the earthquake of Lisbon in 1755, costing an estimated 60,000 people their lives, had immense effects on philosophical and theological discourse and triggered an outpouring of geomorphic metaphors.[19] More than 100 years

prior to the disaster, Descartes had formulated one of the most influential tenets of modernity—cogito ergo sum—and implanted it into earth-metaphorics: "I am" was the fundamentum inconcussum that alone was able to use the "tremor of doubt" to test the ground and to identify and reject the terre mouvante. Lisbon immediately catalyzed this imagery, and the whole of Europe was flooded with treatises on the philosophical and theological consequences, transforming the earthquake into a key event for the dissemination of the project of modernity. Kant alone reacted with three essays on the subject, and Voltaire famously used it to ridicule Leibniz's god-preserving theory of the best of all worlds in his *Candide*. The significance of earthquakes possesses a similar but differently inflected vector in Japan. The psychiatrist and cultural critic Saito Tamaki has written in depth about what he sees a kind of "earthquake subculture" at work, one that heavily associates the traumatic tremors with radical moments of rupture and transition. This discourse determines the Kanto earthquake of 1923 as the point of departure for modernism in Japan, as cutting off the dominance of the I-novel or *shi-shosetsu* (providing a point of departure for the New Sensationalist School or *Shinkankaku-ha*) and the "rule of the 'I.'" It also had a formative effect on the cinema of Japan, providing a push into modernism for the Tokyo-centered part of the film industry. Saito recounts how architect Isozaki Arata imported twenty tons of rubble from the 1995 Kobe earthquake to the Japanese pavillon at the Venice Biennale, winning the Golden Lion for what Saito sees as having "pulled the curtain down on Japan's postmodernity" and the deconstructivist architecture popular in the bubble era.[20] More recently the earthquake-triggered triple catastrophe of 2011 first elicited responses of a renewed national unity by theorists such as Karatani Kojin or Azuma Hiroki, only to be recanted as in fact providing a push toward intensified fragmentation by the latter.[21] Manga artist and essayist Takekuma Kentaro proclaimed in his blog that the 11th of March was the day that the "endless everyday" had finally ended, breaking the repetitive loop.[22] Be it Isozaki, Saito, Takekuma, Descartes or Kant, the geological tremor of destabilization stands for radical socio-psychological change. When the earth begins to move, disorientation fear is followed by the setting in motion of a very complex set of discourses, and liquidity discourse attaches itself to these.

Copyright

Even if currently the rhetoric of liquidity seems to dominate, the actual power relation to the earthen Other is less definite. The sluggishness of territorial and rigid "earthbound" (copyright) law has recently been the object of much lamentation. The most explicit counterpositions—both in the sense of theoretical critique and consumer behavior— stem from the culture of the Internet. Here we find the highly significant overlap of the liquidity motif and the so-called new media, an overlap that has much to do with what Philip Rosen terms digital utopia discourse. An "ocean of data" and the immense "data flows" lead, once again, straight to the (proposed) liquidation of worlds. Copyright, that is legally protected, economically exploitable and temporally monopolized identity, is

seen as a kind of roadblock, as an illegitimate hand clutching into the liquid/electronic future from the distant, earthbound past. Projects such as Creative Commons attempt to introduce increased flexibility into the copyright system, and similar systems and contracts have proliferated, leading Ito Joichi, former chairman of Creative Commons, to voice worries about "islands of code" that are created in the process (islands, or rather archipelagos, are another set of metaphors increasingly utilized for making sense of the world by theorists such as Massimo Cacciari and Imaifuku Ryuta, and in discourse on games and cell phones in Japan one of the most popular ideas is that of a "galapagosization" of such platforms, leading to the naming of a certain strand of Japanese games as "gala-ge." However, this variant will have to be discussed another time).

Indeed, corporations active in what today is called the contents business are involved in experiments with the potential of more flexible product identity. The Japanese media industry—and we will touch upon possible reasons for this later—plays a pioneering role in this. Even a media conglomerate such as Kadokawa Holdings in 2008 made the step of a partnership with YouTube in which MAD movies (fan-reedited and otherwise altered versions of commercially available audiovisual works) of the anime series *The Melancholy of Suzumiya Haruhi* were allowed to be uploaded on YouTube if Kadokawa granted their consent. When the clips are played, advertisements for selected Kadokawa properties are displayed on the YouTube page. Thus a channelled version of "illegitimate" fan culture is allowed, which can in turn function as advertisement and even distributor of "legitimate" products. Incidentally Kadokawa Tsuguhiko, the CEO of Kadokawa Holdings, is a well-known fan of Lawrence Lessig, the advocate for a flexibilization of copyright laws and co-founder of Creative Commons. Kadokawa has made private donations to Creative Commons, and has indeed taken to arguing for a different aggregate; his book on the future of media, which he sees in the cloud, was published in 2010 and bridges the gap between the metaphoric levels in its very title: *Kuraudo Jidai to "Kuru Kakumei"* (The Age of the cloud and the "Cool Revolution").[23]

The long-established culture of *dojin* media (works produced by non-commercial common interest groups, in the case of manga often alternate versions of well-known characters and stories) and MAD movies in Japan is more or less generally tolerated and even supported by the industry for possibly the same reasons. The semiannual *dojinshi* fair Comiket sports tens of thousands of copyright-breaching magazines, games, musical works and hundreds of thousands of visitors, a scale and scenario as of yet unthinkable in North America or in Europe. Would anyone seriously attempt such an event with American comic books, an avalanche of litigation proceedings would be the inevitable consequence. There is much debate over the question of what the underlying reasons for the *de facto* tolerance toward this fan practice in Japan may be. One possibility is a conscious choice on the side of the industry. The other is a combination of the weakness of anime/manga industry interest groups, resulting in insufficient legal and financial clout to counter these copyright breaches, and the general dearth of Japanese lawyers specialized on intellectual property matters (in comparison the music industry, with JASRAC (the Japanese Society for Rights of Authors, Composers and Publishers) as its legal arm, has been much more vigilant). As a business model it seems, however, to have been

successful; both a strong (though waning) Japanese market and arguably the recent overseas success would seem to testify to the effectiveness of increased fan involvement through production.[24]

Identity and Possibility

The explosion in such noncommercial production in Japan since the 1970s is tied to shifts in the status of identity on the aesthetic level as well. As an example, let us take a look at the aforementioned *The Melancholy of Suzumiya Haruhi*, with special attention to the anime. One of the most successful franchises of recent years, it is crammed with a generous and highly popular dose of what Thomas Lamarre calls (for anime) "autodeconstructive tendencies."[25] One of the main characters is Kyon, who enters a newly founded high school club headed by the dictatorial Haruhi. It is a club Haruhi has founded with the purpose of combating her boredom by locating telepaths, aliens, and generally interesting phenomena. Kyon eventually learns that the other members of the club, unbeknownst to Haruhi, are exactly that: a time traveler, a telepath, and an alien created as a medium by a data entity that itself stems from the "ocean of information."[26] These have assembled because Haruhi, without herself being aware of it, possesses godlike powers of altering reality. If Haruhi becomes too bored with the state of the world—and she perpetually announces her ennui—she could simply create a new, more interesting world, thereby destroying the current world as well as the future world that would otherwise develop out of it. This constructivist drama proves to be even more complex, as Haruhi previously demanded exactly this in her self-introduction at the beginning of the school year: "Would all time travelers, telepaths, and aliens please report to me!" Is the existing world, in which the unusual cast has—unbeknownst to her—assembled to secretly cater to her whims, in fact already a (subconscious) product of her omnipotence? Is the boredom that provokes the potential destruction of the world and, significantly, a constant whirlwind of activity of others to please her, essentially produced by Haruhi herself? And which ontological status does Kyon possess, the boy Haruhi is obviously interested in without being able to admit it? Kyon himself, who also functions as the series' first person narrator, confesses an unhealthy fascination for science fiction and fantastic stories in the very first episode. The narrative, revolving around the ensemble of sci-fi/fantasy characters and the attractive but domineering Haruhi, secretly in love with him, could very well spring from not Haruhi's but Kyon's imagination.

The series goes to great lengths to lift the question of reality to a metafictional level. Typically for the highly reflexive state of popular culture in Japan, different modes of fiction and media materiality are constantly referenced. A trip to a near-deserted island parodies both anime series such as *Detective Conan* and the conventions of mystery novels, again blurring the distinction between convention, imagination, and reality. *Suzumiya Haruhi* also directly parodies *jishu* (self-produced, also non-industry) film when the club members, subject to Haruhi's endless verbal abuse, set out to shoot a
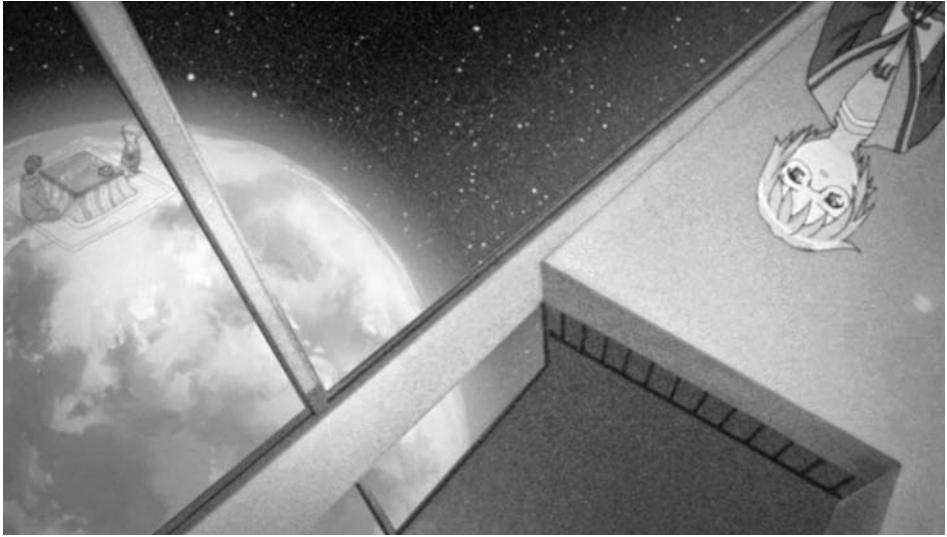
FIGURE 20.3:   The multiplication of worlds creates a disorientation that also affects the formal qualities of the works. (Source: The Melancholy of Suzumiya–Haruhi/Suzumiya–Haruhi no Yuutsu, Season 1.)

movie—with a science fiction/fantasy storyline—on Super 8. And finally, anime and manga are explicitly used as metaphors for the time–space continuum: when the time traveler from the future, Mitsuru, explains the nature of time and reality to Kyon, she likens the flow of time to the image of a flowing stream as it appears in in animation, actually made up of separate frames, and explains her appearance in his time as "sticking an additional page in a manga."

Suzumiya Haruhi and its specific textual strategies aside, the general metafictional aspect of anime has received more attention in recent years. The most prominent example is Azuma Hiroki's by now well-worn "database" model. Roughly, in an environment that has discarded grand narratives, media begin to function according to a database model. Fragments—which may be visual, auditory, or narrative—are freely recombined to create highly temporary but coherent "small narratives." A multitude of "small narratives" are assembled and played out in endless variations. According to Azuma, the pioneer of this development, which he sees as one affecting all of society, was otaku subculture of the 1980s. Azuma has illustrated the model on the grounds of a "character database" that allows one to assemble characters from various well-known fragments to create a positive affective reaction, the now widely discussed and itself thoroughly commodified *moe*. The database model, in tandem with the possibilities of new media, has considerable implications for the relationship of both consumer and producer, and of reality and fiction, essentially dissolving the borders between the former binaries. Azuma sees the dawning of a world based on networks, on the indistinguishability between the sender and the receiver, on the irrelevance of content (*naiyo*) and the primacy of communication. Accordingly he sees narrative (or story) as moving into a highly precarious position; as naturalism is increasingly rejected, and the database and

common media platforms chip away at its relevance, story/narrative flees into metastories (or metafiction), where it is able to exist in diluted form. This supplies a new epistemological framework, where "reality and fiction intermingle (*konzai suru*), story and metastory intermingle, character and player intermingle."[27] What Azuma sees in the future—not at all unsympathetically—is a popular move away from the either/or binary of Aristotelian logic as the framework for negotiating identity.

Suzumiya Haruhi is exemplary for what Azuma regards as typical for the erasure of borders and multiplication of options he envisions. The high (even for anime) degree of intertextual references and the undecidability of the constructivist scenario of *Suzumiya Haruhi* point at complex attitudes toward narrative, identity, and history. And while Azuma's semi-sociological approach focuses on a very specific section of media and society in Japan, *Suzumiya Haruhi* is enthusiastically consumed and in some way understood by fans in many countries—though it should not be forgotten that this is still a specific selection of territories. Indeed the specific degree and avenues of dissemination of such works of popular culture from Japan suggest the popularization of an understanding of history and identity that is highly compatible with liquidity discourse and the media mix. Yet even at this popular level it posseses a complexity which in turn is only barely shared by the economic and legal framework it is—officially—meant to be embedded in. It is therefore especially interesting that anime has become the centerpiece of Japanese government efforts that revolve around the term "contents."

Law

A closer look at the triad of law, identity, and liquidity discourse in Japan can give further indications to the direction the role of identity is taking. This will lead on a brief but relevant detour through Roman law, but lead to the complex negotiation of identity in modern Japan. As mentioned above, at the moment when liquefaction becomes a discursive model the notion of identity becomes a site of confusion. In this section the term "confusion" will provide an important lead to legal frameworks that express a specific stance toward identity vis-à-vis globalization in Japanese law, one strongly informed by notions of nation. While Gottlob Frege's theory of categories was one of the last still founded on the Aristotelian notion of *tertium non datur* (a third is not given) and the claim that everything must be unambiguously allocated to one of two categories, confusion suggests that a third might in fact be given: *tertium datur* allows for an in-between or outside of nonexclusionary categories, a simultaneity or possibly even a perpetual ambiguity. This is what Azuma refers to as *konzai*, an intermingling of concepts without definition—or exclusion. Con-fusion itself suggests as much, a simultaneous unity and separation.

Despite its conceptual relevance in the scenarios of liquidity, confusion itself is by no means a new problem, be it in the realms of identity or property. In Roman law there are two conspicuous legal terms in this context. In conflicts based around goods that have been combined and whose property status is under dispute, Roman law applies the notions of *confusio* and *commixtio*. *Confusio* denotes "the intermixing of similar things

belonging to two or more persons in such a manner that the original portions cannot be distinguished" as, for example, would be the case in the pouring together of two barrels of wine.[28] *Commixtio* on the other hand refers to a case in which the disputed goods can still be separated, in which case the original owners could—if so ruled—retrieve their respective shares, as would be the case with kinds of vegetables or metal alloys. This codification, in place since Justinian, acknowledges a significant problem: When several "owners" contribute something, identity potentially becomes problematic in terms of property and category, both physically and legally. The more complicated case, both because of the acknowledgement of its finality and its vicinity to the question of liquidity, is *confusio*. While *commixtio* allows for an easy solution and a return to separation, *confusio* is an irreversible complication. This complication lurks in all liquidity discourse.

Roman law's elaborate and formalistic treatment of the identity/property problem (with various subdivisions of cases involving *specification*, *accession*, and *adjunction* that will not be treated here) should not surprise. For the expanding Roman empire, a universally applicable legal system was just as important as an appreciation of the intricacies of political, cultural, and economic mixing. It is, at least in its later form, an early product and facilitator of globalization. Much later, when the uneasy patchwork known as the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation attempted to catch up with an increasingly networked and supra-regionally operating Europe, Roman law was used as a foundation of legal reassurance and by extension a tool for the promotion of trade. The most rigorous efforts in utilizing Roman law were undertaken in the institution of the General State Laws for the Prussian States (*Preussisches Allgemeines Landrecht*) in 1794, again with the intention of reinvigorating a state that was seen as backward and ill equipped for the challenges of a burgeoning modernity. A similar motivation moved Japan to adopt large parts of the structure of German law—itself derived from the Prussian predecessor—as the basic foundation of Japanese civil law in 1898. Thus *commixtio* and *confusio* entered the Japanese legal system at a moment when the questions of mixing, integrating, and separating were arguably at the peak of their public and institutional salience. The well-known slogan of *wakon yosai* ("Japanese spirit and Western techniques") intended to help regulate the inevitable mixing. Its political thrust was considerably more partial to the idea of *commixtio* than that of *confusio*. If the threat posed by the absorption of the foreign to (by now: *nationally* defined) identity was to be held in check, mixing had to be conceptualized as, in principle, reversible. This was an intricate problematic, as even the notion of a national identity—one of the main entities under threat—was already a consciously installed import.[29] Therefore in Japan, a country in which specific confusion surrounding identity was at least in large parts introduced and dramatized through administrative channels, the legal distinction between *confusio* and *commixtio* possesses an interesting twist. Without going into too much detail on the complex legal terminology these terms are embedded in, one more strategic aspect of the steering of confusion should be mentioned. Japanese law does provide for the principal distinction between *confusio* (kondo/混同) and *commixtio* (konwa /混和). However, in practice it uses konwa /混和 (*commixtio*) as the umbrella term for both notions, and thereby implicitly privileges reversibility as the basic trait of mixing, at least on the level of terminological usage.[30]

POLITICS/CULTURE

Despite the complication of identity that *confusio*, liquidity and the information society represent, "The West" and "Asia" for Japan remain the constructed points of reference in a complex geopolitical and psychological constellation. There is little need to recount in detail the acrobatic discursive strategies that posited a "Western" Japan vis-à-vis "Asia" and an "Asian" Japan vis-à-vis "the West" (the United States), and that led to the development of a strategically mobile identity formation.[31] Basically, the Japanese state since Meiji has amassed a great deal of know-how in terms of strategic identity administration. That this now is supposed to become the displaced foundation for a new definition and fusion of commodification and (cool) Japan has its bureaucratic logic. The recent policy has included various attempts to utilize popular culture politically. The most famous example is the donation of Arabic-dubbed episodes of the anime series *Captain Tsubasa* (as *Captain Majid*) to Iraqi television by the Japan Foundation while large images of Captain Tsubasa were attached to the water supply trucks of the Japanese Self Defense Forces. Under the banner of *Cool Japan,* manga and anime especially became the focus of a strategy that aimed to create an aesthetically defined and commodifiable national brand.

The annexing of manga and anime as a reservoir of signifiers of nation or essentialized Japanese culture—be it by animators such as Takahata Isao or the Japanese government—is not without an irony that has been remarked upon frequently. Otsuka Eiji has perhaps most prominently argued that the contemporary forms of anime and manga are

FIGURE 20.4: A nationalist symbol is transmogrified by leaving the world for outer space. (Source: Space Battleship Yamato/Uchu–Senkan Yamato (Masuda Toshio, 1977).)

unthinkable without the American influence after 1945.[32] On the discursive level, it once again becomes a question of regulating the relationship between *confusio* and *commixtio*; just as, according to Azuma, the linking of anime and manga to markers of Japanese tradition such as ukiyo-e constructs a pseudo-Japan, the japanicity of *Cool Japan* is a pseudo-discourse, though one that is much more self-aware. Critical reflection on the phenomenon generates further publicity, and the Japan Foundation continues to co-fund the mini-boom of *Cool Japan*–focused (and usually perfunctorily critical) academic conferences. The performative and utilitarian aspect of the *Cool Japan* campaign is thus as unhidden as its use of the market logic of product differentiation. A specific, fixed identity discourse by now is merely simulated in the context of popular culture. The actual focus is on cultural branding with a maximum of semiotic mobility, a world that can be constructed and rearranged or multiplied through liquefaction and the media mix. The ahistoric component of identity discourse is consciously weakened as the brand must be able to react flexibly to ever-shifting markets. Anime and manga and the corresponding practices are thus supposed to function like a *confusio* that simulates a *commixtio*. The result is a quite precarious, but potentially profitable, identity conception.

While liquidity discourse—borrowing from the digital utopia—defines the earth-bound copyright legislation as old it is actually quite young, in its current intensity a product of the last few decades. And while the accusation of anachronism is again strategic, there is no question that a divergence is taking place. The legal sphere argues an identity conception that seems to contradict the de facto developments in economy, politics, and certain societies. How is ownership of a "culture brand" determined if these are already the results of *confusio*? How can Doraemon/Hello Kitty/Captain Tsubasa be (national-)

FIGURE 20.5: Gundam: Battling at the border between world and worlds. (Source: Gundam I: The Movie/KidoSenshiGundam (Tomino Yoshiyuki/FujiharaRoji, 1981).)

politically exploited if they represent *confusio*, and at the same time only the difference they are markers of enables a legal fixing? Despite their supposed contrariness, the balanced interplay of *confusio* and *commixtio* play a decisive role for the functionality of the entire system. Liquefaction is primarily an experience, and one that is relative to a perceived basic state of solidity as well as focused on reconstituting it in different form. This is one reason why liquidity discourse can reproduce itself over time—we never arrive in the fully liquidized future. And it is the reason why the alignment of discourses of the vanishing and liquidity discourse and its dramatization in popular culture, catalyzed through the media mix, made it so easy for theorists in Japan to imagine an endlessly looped state.

AND HISTORY

The question of the future, and the possibility of a future, thus inserts itself on various levels: On the metaphorical-discursive level, if liquidity discourse is inherently relative and self-reproducing, how can change come to this specific conception of change? Such a question itself has found popular expression in the apocalypse-addicted anime/manga/light novel/game pattern of *sekai-kei* (world type). For a short time *sekai-kei* became one of the prime references for *zero-nendai* theorists such as Uno Tsunehiro and Azuma Hiroki as one of the centerpieces of the state of identity in otaku culture.[33] The genealogy of *sekai-kei* is often traced back to Murakami Haruki's *Hardboiled Wonderland*, and centered on works such as *She, the Ultimate Weapon* (Saishu Heiki Kanojo, 2000) or *Voices of a Distant Star* (Hoshi no Koe, Makoto Shinkai, 2002) and *The Melancholy of Suzumiya Haruhi.* In these narratives the world is constantly in crisis. The usual storyworld involves a teenage boy and a girl, both attracted to each other, but kept apart by an unfortunate set of circumstances that puts the world in peril. Often war looms in the background, and one of the two (usually the girl) must fight to prevent the end of the world; her battle, however, keeps the two from acting on their affection. The fate of the world and the most intimate emotional shifts are directly connected.

Watanabe Daisuke interprets this short-circuiting of world and self as the rejection of the mediating tool of language, and a flight into fantasy that began with the earthquake in Kobe.[34] Watanabe, Saitô, Otsuka, and Azuma all agree that this rejection of a medium between self and world forecloses any kind of "growth" (*seicho*) on the part of the character, and that this indicates a psychological trend in Japanese society.[35] This theme of a regressive tendency in Japanese society has been so strategically employed both in Japan and outside of it that it is difficult to consider as a straightforward argument.[36] In any event, the impossibility of growth/development in the sense of a *Bildungsroman* in these cases is argued as having an antithetical relationship to communication. Manga theorist Ito Go however, approaches nondevelopment not on the reception side but through the semiotics of manga. In his book *Tezuka izu Deddo* (Tezuka Is Dead) Ito describes what he calls a *kyara*, a specific mode of fictional character that remains unchanged across various contexts—Hello Kitty is a prime example—and that indeed seems especially

suited to expansion across multiple media (and takes on another level of complexity in the question of multiple worlds or looped narratives, when only the transworld individuals seem to retain any potential for growth or change).[37] But spread across media, the never- or little-developing entity itself becomes a force of communication, indeed the specific avenue of consumption the consumer chooses for the nondeveloping *kyara* becomes the *basis* for communication.[38] Thus the rejection of "growth" on the textual/narrative level of media consumption does not equate to or even mirror the rejection of communication or of change. The permutations of worlds and characters are not used as media for communicating, rather the act of arranging them melds into the act of communication, and textual immanence is de-emphasized in favor of immediacy supplied by a media mix environment. Identity now is subject to a different kind of *confusio*, one that involves the perpetual con-fusion of self, language and acts of communication, which in the current media mix context inevitably means consumption.[39] That consumption is becoming more entangled with communication is by no means a new idea. Yet the specific mode this development takes in the difference-producing constellation of worlds—that are themselves traversed by *kyara*, characters, narratives and their formal structures—provides us with an opportunity to critically conceptualize and map the communication they elicit rather than vilify or discount it.

Notes

1. Hans Blumenberg, *Wirklichkeiten in denen wir leben* (Stuttgart: Reclam 1999), 3. (My translation).
2. Hans Blumenberg, *Paradigmen zu einer Metaphorologie* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1998), 12–13.
3. The opera was written and produced by the *Bernkastel Shitsunai Kagekijo* (Bernkastel Indoor Opera House) and performed in March 2010, while DVDs of the performance have been sold at various fan conventions. Further information can also be found on their website: http://higurashiopera.web.fc2.com/index.html (accessed December 16, 2011).
4. These ideas of a circular phase in history have to be distinguished from Nishida Kitaro's *eien no ima* (eternal present), which is actually very concerned with the question of the progression of history.
5. Lev Manovich, *The Language of New Media* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2011), 314.
6. The increasing overlap of labor and play has been condensed into such (unplayful) terms as *playbor* and *prosumer*, and has been most influentially discussed by neo-Marxist theorists such as those of Maurizio Lazzarato and Tiziana Terranova. Thomas Lamarre has discussed the question with regard to the figure of the otaku: Lamarre, "Otaku Movement." In *Japan after Japan: Social and Cultural Life from the Recessionary 1990s to the Present*, eds. Harry Harootunian and Tomiko Yoda, 358–394 (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006).
7. Henry Jenkins, *Convergence Culture* (New York: New York University Press, 2006), 95–96.
8. As with a sizeable portion of Otsuka's theoretical work, this structural model of a surface and underlying larger narrative was picked up by Azuma Hiroki, who modified it to fit his own, more postmodern perspective on media consumption. See, for example: Hiroki Azuma, *Otaku. Japan's Database Animals,* trans. Jonathan Abel and Shion Kono

(Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009). Also Eiji Otsuka, *Teihon Monogatari Shohiron* (Tokyo: Kadokawa Shoten, 2001).

9. Here we encounter a significant problem in the terminology of the analysis of the media mix of transmedia. While a book suggests a reader, and a film suggests an audience or spectator, a media mix work at this point only suggests a consumer. This is not an entirely inaccurate term, but it is biased and narrows down the perspective on these phenomena. For an excellent and detailed study of the establishment of the media mix system after 1960 see Marc Steinberg, *Anime's Media Mix: Franchising Toys and Characters in Japan* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2012).

10. This is in contrast to the much less contingent view of metaphor that George Lakoff has put forth, although that difference cannot be elaborated on here.

11. In the original: "Aus den Dingen schwindet die Wärme" in Walter Benjamin, "Kaiserpanorama," in Benjamin, GS, Bd. IV–I, S. 99; quoted in Ulf Poschardt, *Cool* (Hamburg: Rogner & Bernhard bei Zweitausendeins, 2000), 12. The quote by Kracauer is from Siegfried Kracauer, *Theory of Film: The Redemption of Physical Reality* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997), 295. Quoted in Janet Harbord, *Film Cultures* (London: Sage, 2002), 34. See also Helmuth Lethen, *Cool Conduct: The Culture of Distance in Weimar Germany*. Trans. Don Reneau. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).

12. Shinichiro Inaba, *Modan no Kurudaun. Katasumi no Keimo* [Cooldown of the Modern. Enlightenment in the Corner] (Tokyo: NTT Shuppan, 2006).

13. For a detailed introduction to such projects see Markus Krajewski, *Restlosigkeit. Weltprojekte um 1900* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 2006).

14. My translation is from "Die Welt zerfällt in Tatsachen." Often, the phrase is translated as "The world divides into facts." In Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus logico-philosophicus. Tagebücher 1914–1916. Philosophische Untersuchungen* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1960), 11.

15. Manuel Castells, *The Rise of the Network Society* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 1996), 412.

16. Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience* (New York: Harper & Row, 1990). For a discussion of flow in recent video game research, see Asami Ito, ed., *Review House 3* (Tokyo: Review House Henshu-Shitsu, 2009).

17. My translation is from "Das Meer kennt keine … sinnfällige Einheit von Raum und Recht, von Ordnung und Ortung." and "Das Meer hat keinen Charakter in der ursprünglichen Bedeutung des Wortes Charakter, das von dem griechischen Wort *charassein*, eingraben, einritzen, einprägen kommt." In Carl Schmitt, "Das Recht als Einheit von Ordnung und Ortung." In Jörg Dünne and Stephan Günzel, eds., *Raumtheorie: Grundlagentexte aus Philosophie und Kulturwissenschaften* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp 2006), 410.

18. Schmitt, 409–419.

19. Werner Hamacher, "Das Beben der Darstellung. Kleists Erdbeben in Chili," 238. In Hamacher, *Entferntes Verstehen. Studien zur Philosophie und Literatur von Kant bis Celan* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1997), 235–279.

20. Tamaki Saito, *Bungaku no Danso. Sekai, Shinsai, Kyarakuta* (Tokyo: Asahi Shinbun Shuppan, 2008), 213.

21. See Hiroki Azuma, "For a Change, Proud to Be Japanese." Trans. Shion Kono and Jonathan Abel. *New York Times*, March 17, 2011. http://www.nytimes.com/2011/03/17/opinion/17azuma.html (accessed November 22, 2011). Also Kojin Karatani, "How Catastrophe Heralds a New Japan." Trans. Seiji Lippitt. *Counterpunch*, March 24, 2011.

http://www.counterpunch.org/2011/03/24/how-catastrophe-heralds-a-new-japan (accessed November 22, 2011). Also see Azuma Hiroki's retraction of some of the statements in Hiroki. "The Disaster Broke Us Apart." In Hiroki, ed., *Shiso Chizu Beta*, 220–223 (Tokyo: Contectures, 2011).

22. Kentarô Takekuma, "Owari Naki Nichijo ga Owatta Hi." http://takekuma.cocolog-nifty.com/blog/2011/07/post-623e.html (accessed December 16, 2011).

23. Information on the donation was given to me in an interview with intellectual property lawyer Noguchi Yuko, who is on the advisory board of Creative Commons Japan. Tsuguhiko Kadokawa, *Kuraudo Jidai to Kuru Kakumei* [The Age of the Cloud and the "Cool Revolution"] (Tokyo: Kadokawa Shoten, 2010).

24. For one such position regarding copyright infringement in the U.S. market, see Sean Leonard, "Progress against the Law: Anime and Fandom, with the Key to the Globalization of Culture." *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 8.3 (2005): 281–305.

25. Thomas Lamarre, "The Animalization of Otaku Culture, Introduction," 176. In *Mechademia 2. Networks of Desire*, 175–177, ed. Lunning, Frenchy (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 2008).

26. "情報系の海"

27. Hiroki Azuma, *Gemu-tei Riarizumu no Tanjo* (Tokyo: Kodansha Gendai Shinsho, 2007), 286.

28. Earl C. Arnold, "Confusion." *Columbia Law Review* 23.3 (1923): 235–246.

29. For excerpts on Ito Hirobumi's arguments for an adoption of the national model in combination with an emperor system, see Masao Maruyama, *Denken in Japan* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp 1988).

30. 混同 (*confusio*) is applied but usually in a different sense (which also has precedents in Roman law) describing the case when a debtor and creditor are joined in the same person, which leads to the cancellation of the debt.

31. For a detailed discussion, see Koichi Iwabuchi, *Recentering Globalization: Popular Culture and Japanese Transnationalism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002).

32. Eiji Otsuka and Nobuaki Osawa, "*Japanimeshon*" *wa naze yabureru ka* (Tokyo: Kadokawa Shoten, 2005).

33. While the question also drew some criticism, especially Uno's fairly affirmative position. See, for example, Genkai Shosetsu Kenkyu Kai, *Shakai wa Sonzai Shinai. Sekai-kei Bunka-ron* (Tokyo: Nanundo, 2009).

34. Tamaki Saito, *Bungaku no Danso. Sekai, Shinsai, Kyarakuta* (Tokyo: Asahi Shinbun Shuppan 2008).

35. See, for example, Otsuka's discussion in Eiji Otsuka. *"Otaku" no Seishin-shi. 1980-nendai Ron* (Tokyo: Kodansha Gendai Shinsho, 2004).

36. Azuma himself has attempted to affirmatively appropriate the theme of an "immature" or better "not yet mature" (未熟) Japan, often with reference to the term *neoteny*, most explicitly in Hiroki Azuma, *Nihon-teki Sôzôryoku no Mirai* (Tokyo: Nihon Hoso Shuppan Kyokai, 2010).

37. Go Ito, *Tezuka izu Deddo. Hirakareta Manga Hyogenron e* (Tokyo: NTT Shuppan, 2005).

38. The most well-known detailed argument for this has been put forth by Mike Featherstone. *Consumer Culture and Postmodernism* (London: Sage, 1991).

39. While consumption is the relevant term here, with regard to the media mix it also contains a terminological bias. When we speak of novels or manga we can refer to readers; when we speak of film we can refer to spectators or the audience, as in other cases of gamers or listeners. Yet when we speak of media mix works, we can only use the term "consumer."

Index