

Routledge Culture, Society, Business in East Asia Series

CENSORSHIP IN JAPAN

Hoi-yan Yau and Heung-wah Wong

ROUTLEDGE



Censorship in Japan

This book explores censorship, particularly film and video censorship, in Japan in modern times. It shows how most censorship has been the film and video industry exercising self-censorship and how this system has been problematic in that it has allowed dominant players in the industry to impose their own standards and exclude independent filmmakers. It outlines notable obscenity cases and discusses how industry self-censorship bodies have been undermined both by industry outsiders setting up their own alternative regimes and by the industry self-censorship bodies themselves being prosecuted for obscenity. The book also examines the conflict between the obscenity law, introduced in Meiji times when Japan was importing Western models, and the freedom of speech law, which was put in place by the US occupation administration after World War II. The book concludes by assessing the current state of censorship in Japan and likely future developments.

Hoi-yan Yau is Senior Lecturer in the Department of Cultural Studies at Lingnan University, Hong Kong.

Heung-wah Wong is Associate Professor and Acting Head of the School of Modern Languages and Cultures at The University of Hong Kong.

Routledge Culture, Society, Business in East Asia Series

To view more titles in the series, follow this link: <https://www.routledge.com/Routledge-Culture-Society-Business-in-East-Asia-Series/book-series/CSBEA>

Editorial Board:

Heung Wah Wong (Executive Editor), The University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong, China
Chris Hutton, The University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong, China
Wayne Cristaudo, The University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong, China
Harumi Befu (Emeritus Professor), Stanford University, USA
Shao-dang Yan, Peking University, China
Andrew Stewart MacNaughton, Reitaku University, Japan
William Kelly, Independent Researcher
Keiji Maegawa, Tsukuba University, Japan
Kiyomitsu Yui, Kobe University, Japan

How and what are we to examine if we wish to understand the commonalities across East Asia without falling into the powerful fictions or homogeneities that dress its many constituencies? By the same measure, can East Asian homogeneities make sense in any way outside the biases of East-West personation?

For anthropologists familiar with the societies of East Asia, there is a rich diversity of work that can potentially be applied to address these questions within a comparative tradition grounded in the region as opposed the singularizing outward encounter. This requires us to broaden our scope of investigation to include all aspects of intra-regional life, trade, ideology, culture, and governance, while at the same time dedicating ourselves to a complete and holistic understanding of the exchange of identities that describe each community under investigation. An original and wide-ranging analysis will be the result, one that draws on the methods and theory of anthropology as it deepens our understanding of the interconnections, dependencies, and discordances within and among East Asia.

The book series includes three broad strands within and between which to critically examine the various insides and outsides of the region. The first is about the globalization of Japanese popular culture in East Asia, especially in greater China. The second strand presents comparative studies of major social institutions in Japan and China, such as family, community and other major concepts in Japanese and Chinese societies. The final strand puts forward cross-cultural studies of business in East Asia.

Gender, Dating and Violence in Urban China

Xiyang Wang

Chinese Animation, Creative Industries Digital Culture

Weihua Wu

Japanese Encounters

The Structure and Dynamics of Cultural Frames

Eyal Ben-Ari

The Japanese Adult Video Industry

Heung-Wah Wong and Hoi-yan Yau

Tradition and Transformation in a Chinese Family Business

Heung Wah Wong and Karin Ling-fung Chau

Censorship in Japan

Hoi-yan Yau and Heung-wah Wong

Censorship in Japan

Hoi-yan Yau and Heung-wah Wong

First published 2021
by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

and by Routledge
52 Vanderbilt Avenue, New York, NY 10017

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

© 2021 Hoi-yan Yau and Heung-wah Wong

The right of Hoi-yan Yau and Heung-wah to be identified as author of this work has been asserted by them in accordance with sections 77 and 78 of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reprinted or reproduced or utilised in any form or by any electronic, mechanical, or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publishers.

Trademark notice: Product or corporate names may be trademarks or registered trademarks, and are used only for identification and explanation without intent to infringe.

British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

A catalog record has been requested for this book

ISBN: 978-1-138-22200-7 (hbk)

ISBN: 978-1-315-40906-1 (ebk)

Typeset in Times New Roman
by Deanta Global Publishing Services, Chennai, India

Contents

<i>List of figures</i>	viii
<i>List of tables</i>	x
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xi
<i>Chinese glossary</i>	xiii
<i>Japanese glossary</i>	xiv
1 Introduction	1
<i>Major analytical themes</i>	5
<i>Conceptual schemes</i>	11
<i>Methodology</i>	14
<i>Organisation of the book</i>	19
<i>Notes</i>	21
2 A brief history of censorship in Japan	22
<i>Introduction</i>	22
<i>Early censorship in imperial Japan</i>	23
<i>Meiji period</i>	24
<i>Taishō and Shōwa periods</i>	27
<i>Post-war Japan</i>	29
<i>From state censorship to self-regulating or industrial inspection</i>	35
<i>After all, what is waisetsu?</i>	37
<i>Conclusion</i>	41
<i>Notes</i>	42
3 What are Japanese adult videos?	44
<i>Introduction</i>	44
<i>A brief history of Japanese adult videos</i>	44
<i>Tantai and kikaku AVs</i>	48

vi	<i>Contents</i>	
	<i>The saviour ideology</i>	65
	<i>Conclusion</i>	69
	<i>Notes</i>	70
4	The society of the Japanese adult video industry: AV studios, regulators, and distributors	72
	<i>Introduction</i>	72
	<i>The organisation of AV makers as a society of industry</i>	73
	<i>Small AV studios</i>	80
	<i>Wholesalers and rental shops</i>	82
	<i>Biderin as the most dominant self-regulatory body in the AV industry</i>	85
	<i>Conclusion</i>	87
	<i>Notes</i>	88
5	How the Biderin regime was founded: Biderin as the self-regulatory body in the AV industry in the 1980s and 1990s	89
	<i>Introduction</i>	89
	<i>Biderin as a self-regulatory body</i>	89
	<i>The organisation of Biderin</i>	91
	<i>The relationship between Biderin and the state (police)</i>	100
	<i>Control of wholesalers and rental shop owners</i>	102
	<i>Biderin and AV makers</i>	103
	<i>Inspection process</i>	106
	<i>Conclusion</i>	109
	<i>Notes</i>	110
6	Medirin: The emergence of a new regime in the AV industry	111
	<i>Introduction</i>	111
	<i>The concept of social drama</i>	111
	<i>The breaching stage</i>	115
	<i>The crisis stage: Medirin getting recognition</i>	125
	<i>Conclusion</i>	127
	<i>Notes</i>	128
7	From Biderin via Medirin to Eizōrin: The collapse of Biderin and the return to order	129
	<i>Introduction</i>	129
	<i>Redressive phase: The Biderin Incident in 2008</i>	129

	<i>The new ‘censoring’ body: Eizōrin</i>	134
	<i>Reintegration</i>	134
	<i>The search for a new order</i>	136
	<i>Play and games</i>	147
	<i>Conclusion</i>	149
	<i>Notes</i>	150
8	Adult video inspection at Eizōrin	151
	<i>Introduction</i>	151
	<i>Inspecting adult videos at Eizōrin</i>	151
	<i>Conclusion</i>	173
	<i>Notes</i>	174
9	Changing landscapes: The emergence of a new categorical classification of Japanese AVs	176
	<i>Introduction</i>	176
	<i>Medirin and AVs-for-sale as radicalisation and genre reunification of kikaku AVs</i>	176
	<i>The changing AV landscape</i>	184
	<i>Conclusion</i>	193
	<i>Notes</i>	193
10	Conclusion	195
	<i>Bibliography</i>	201
	<i>Index</i>	210

Figures

3.1	The cover of <i>The Debut of the 19-Year-Old Serious-cum-Rustic Amateur: Misaki Azusa</i>	49
3.2	The introductory image scene	49
3.3a	The <i>tantai</i> actress smiling to the camera	50
3.3b	The female character looks into the camera	50
3.3c	The female character with innocent smiles	50
3.3d	The female character with innocent smiles	50
3.3e	The female character with innocent smiles	51
3.4	The female character and the first male character	51
3.5	The female character and the second male character	52
3.6	The female character sitting on a sofa bed	53
3.7	The cover of a <i>kikaku</i> AV	56
3.8	The interior of a massage room	57
3.9	Nine cameras are installed in the massage room to capture every single movement made by the couple	57
3.10	The couple are being asked to fill in the questionnaire	58
3.11	The female character appears to be very embarrassed as the male character touches her body	59
3.12	The male character touches the female character's breasts	60
3.13	The female character attempts to cover her breasts with her forearms	60
3.14a	The male character presses his body against hers	60
3.14b	The male character presses his body against hers	61
3.15	The male character presses his lips on to the female character's	61
3.16	The male character holds the female character around her waist	62
3.17	The male character kisses her forcefully	62
3.18	The female character attempts to resist the male character, who is taking off her panties, though in vain	63
3.19a	The couple appear to be enjoying their time together	64
3.19b	The couple appear to be enjoying their time together	64
5.1	Inspectors reviewing AVs at Biderin in 2005	107
7.1	Eizōrin's internal structure for the inspection of AVs	147

8.1	The floorplan of Eizōrin	152
8.2	Application procedure	155
8.3	Inspection process	157
8.4	Report of the inspection results	159
8.5	Relationship between member makers and Eizōrin	160
8.6	Certificate of completion of inspection	161
8.7	The inspection form	162
8.8	One of the DVD inserts distributed to us for examination	163
8.9	The cover of <i>Mother and Daughter</i>	167
9.1	The cover of the indie movie	178
9.2	The nightclub setting where the whole movie is based	178
9.3	The six hostesses in the club	179
9.4	Uehara Ai's Twitter account homepage	191
9.5	Uehara's personal blog	191
9.6	Various tweets posted on Uehara's Twitter account	192

Tables

5.1	List of the members of Biderin's board of directors in the early 1980s	92
5.2	List of the members of Biderin's board of directors in 2005	93
7.1	The membership of Eizōrin's board of directors	140
7.2	The membership of the advisory board	141
7.3	Members of the Shinsa Kenshō Kaigi in 2015	146
8.1	Application and inspection period	156
8.2	Application of mosaic	158

Acknowledgements

This book is the product of our decade-long research on Japanese adult videos. From the beginning, we intended it as the final volume that will complete our trilogy on adult videos, beginning with their recontextualisation in Taiwan, through their production system in the home country, and finally to their regulation and control as a form of disciplinary power. As we finish the trilogy, we have mixed feelings. It has been a huge focus of our academic life for years, and so letting it go is bittersweet, but we are also excited to do something different. Yet coming to the end of the trilogy made us aware of how much we are indebted to a great number of people for their support, assistance, and encouragement over the course of the years.

We are very grateful to Professor Eyal Ben-Ari, the well-known expert on Japanese Studies and Professor Emeritus of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel, as well as to Professor Christopher Hutton, the all-round linguist and Professor of English, at the University of Hong Kong, for reviewing the manuscript, despite their busy schedule. Both made extremely valuable comments and suggestions for the book without which this book would not have been possible. We would also like to express our gratitude to Professor Wayne Cristaudo, who read the whole manuscript and provided insightful suggestions and criticisms, as always, and to Isaac Gagne, who copyedited the manuscript.

Gratitude is also due to many people in the Japanese AV industry: without their generous help, this book, in particular Chapters 8 and 9, could not have been written. They must be thanked for their patience in sitting with us for long hours and speaking to outsiders about their industry. One of the authors (Hoi-yan Yau) would also like to express her gratitude to the Faculty of Arts, Lingnan University, for providing generous funding which made her various research in Japan possible. The other author (Heung-wah Wong) would like to express his gratitude to Professor Kenichi Sudo, former Director General of the National Museum of Ethnology, Osaka, Japan, who provided him with an excellent environment in which to finish major parts of this book when Wong was attached there as a visiting professor from January 2016 to January 2017.

We are also very fortunate that we have had kind association with and support from our publishing house, Routledge. Special thanks go to Peter Sowden. His

guidance, patience, and careful monitoring throughout the writing process have been so great that even our most profound gratitude is not enough.

Finally, we beg forgiveness of all those who have been with us over the course of the years and whose names we cannot, or have failed to, mention.

Disclaimer

Every attempt has been made to trace the copyright holders of the illustrations included in this book. We have also done our best to obtain consent forms from those whose portraits appear here. If anyone has any objection to the publication of any of the images in these pages, we ask them to contact us (hoiyanyau@In.edu.hk) so that we may rectify matters to their satisfaction.

Note

Yau is the first author of this book and has contributed 55% of this book. Wong is the second author and has contributed 45%.

Chinese glossary

<i>Bamei</i>	把妹	Hunting for women
<i>Chihan dianche</i>	癡漢電車	Train groper
<i>Riben youma a-pian</i>	日本有碼A-片	Japanese mosaicked adult video
<i>Wuma</i>	無碼	Non-mosaicked, i.e. unedited
<i>Yanshe</i>	顏射	Facial ejaculation

Japanese glossary

<i>Adaruto bideo</i>	アダルトビデオ	Japanese adult video
<i>Amakudari</i>	天下り	Descent from heaven
<i>Ashi koki</i>	足コキ	Foot job
<i>Anna koto</i>	あんな事	Literally means ‘that thing’; here refers to the sex act
<i>Bakufu</i>	幕府	Literally means ‘tent office’, referring to the headquarters of a field commander in battle
<i>Bakunyū</i>	爆乳	Literally means explosive breast, i.e. huge breasts
<i>Barēbōru</i>	バレーボール	Volleyball
<i>Basukon eiga</i>	バスコン映画	Birth control movie
<i>Benjō</i>	便所	Toilet
<i>Benshi</i>	弁士	Film narrator for silent movies
<i>Bideo</i>	ビデオ	Video
<i>Biderin</i>	ビデ倫	Nihon Ethics of Video Association, which was closed down in 2009
<i>Binibon</i>	ビニ本	Softcore pornographic magazine
<i>Binibon-kei</i>	ビニ本系	A <i>binibon</i> -style
<i>Binyū</i>	美乳	Beautiful breasts
<i>Bishōjo</i>	美少女	Beautiful young woman
<i>Bishōjo ebūi</i>	美少女AV	Beautiful young woman AV
<i>Bukkake</i>	ぶっかけ	A variety of fetish that involves repeated ejaculation on a female by many (sometimes up to 100) men
<i>Burusera</i>	ブルセラ	Refers to a sexualised attraction to the underwear or school uniforms of girls or young women. It is Japanese English, coined by combining bloomers (<i>burumā</i>) and sailor suit (<i>sērā-fuku</i>).
<i>Chijo</i>	痴女	A female groper or slut
<i>Chikan</i>	痴漢	A male groper or pervert
<i>Chinchin</i>	ちんちん	Penis
<i>Chinpo</i>	ちんぽ	Penis
<i>Chō usukeshi</i>	超薄消し	Super see-through, i.e. ultra-thin mosaic application
<i>Chotto</i>	ちよつと	A little bit
<i>Chūyi</i>	注意	Attention

<i>Daimyō</i>	大名	Daimyō were powerful feudal rulers in Japan from the tenth century to the nineteenth century. In the term, <i>dai</i> means ‘large’, and <i>myō</i> stands for <i>myōden</i> , meaning ‘private land’
<i>Danseiki</i>	男性器	Male sexual organs
<i>Dōtei</i>	童貞	Cherry boy or virgin
<i>Eirin</i>	映倫	Film classification and rating organisation in Japan which was founded in 1949
<i>Eizōrin</i>	映像倫	Image Ethics Association
<i>Furyō</i>	不良	Immoral
<i>Furyō eiga</i>	不良映画	Immoral film
<i>Fūzoku</i>	風俗	Adult entertainment industry
<i>Gaishutsu chū</i>	外出中	Out of office currently
<i>Gansha</i>	顔射	Facial ejaculation
<i>Gekijō</i>	劇場	Theatre
<i>Genba</i>	現場	The set
<i>Genki</i>	元氣	Vigour, vitality, or spirits
<i>Gijiroku</i>	議事録	Minutes
<i>Gokkun</i>	ごっくん	<i>Gokkun</i> refers to the sexual activity in which a person, usually a woman, consumes the semen of one or more men, usually from some kind of container
<i>Hageshii</i>	激しい	Acute, vehement
<i>Haha</i>	母	Mother
<i>Hazukashii</i>	恥ずかしい	Ashamed
<i>Hamedōri</i>	ハメ撮り	Self-photographing of sex; it is similar to what is called gonzo pornography in the West
<i>Harenchi rosen</i>	破廉恥路線	A shameless line
<i>Heā</i>	ヘアー	Hair
<i>Hentai</i>	変態	Pervert
<i>Hitotsuma</i>	人妻	Wife
<i>Hōeki</i>	法益	Benefit and protection of the law, interests protected by law, legal benefit
<i>Honban</i>	本番	Real sex
<i>Hōga</i>	邦画	Japanese movies
<i>Hyōgiinkai</i>	評議員会	Board of trustees
<i>Ijimekko</i>	いじめっ子	A bully
<i>Ikagawashii</i>	如何わしい	Suspicious, unreliable
<i>Ippansaku</i>	一般作	Regular movies
<i>Ishiki kaii jōrei</i>	違式註違条例	This, literally, was a body of articles concerning (1) ‘violated conventions’ (<i>ishiki</i>) and (2) ‘implicit violations’ (<i>kaii</i>).
<i>Ijōseiai rosen</i>	異常性愛路線	Abnormal line
<i>Iya</i>	嫌	Unpleasant, not good
<i>Iyashi</i>	癒し	Healing
<i>Jihankihon</i>	自販機本	Vending machine pornography
<i>Jimu shoku</i>	事務職	Clerical staff
<i>Jimukyoku</i>	事務局	Administrative office
<i>Jishu dantai</i>	自主団体	Self-regulatory body
<i>Jishu sei</i>	自主制	Self-regulatory system

<i>Joseiki</i>	女性器	Female sexual organs
<i>Joshi kokōsei</i>	女子高校生	Female high school students
<i>Joshi kōsei</i>	女子校生	Female school students
<i>Jukujo</i>	熟女	Mature women
<i>Junshinsaku</i>	準新作	Quasi new work
<i>Kafeteria</i>	カフェテリア	Cafeteria
<i>Kaizoku</i>	海賊	Piracy
<i>Kagayaku</i>	輝く	To shine
<i>Kaïinkaisha</i>	会員会社	Member companies
<i>Kami taiō</i>	神対応	Extremely attentive response
<i>Kankin</i>	監禁	Imprisonment
<i>Kanau</i>	叶う	To be fulfilled
<i>Kei</i>	系	Style
<i>Kekkin</i>	欠勤	Absence
<i>Kenshō kaigi</i>	検証会議	Verification meeting
<i>Ketsugō</i>	結合	Connection
<i>Kikaku</i>	企画	Plan, one of the two major styles of AV production
<i>Kikaku mono</i>	企画もの	Style emphasising story
<i>Kōmon</i>	肛門	Anus
<i>Kōshokuhon</i>	好色本	Amorous book
<i>Kōkyō fukushi</i>	公共福祉	Public welfare
<i>Kyōsei shidō</i>	強制指導	Compulsory instruction
<i>Medirin</i>	メデイ倫	Media Ethics Association
<i>Mensetsu</i>	面接	Interview
<i>Migaku</i>	磨く	To polish
<i>Mo zure</i>	モズレ	Mosaic that gets dislodged
<i>Mo more</i>	モ漏れ	Mosaic that is leaking out
<i>Mo usui</i>	モ薄い	Mosaic that is thin
<i>Monbushō</i>	文部省	Ministry of Education
<i>Misoji</i>	三十路	People, especially women, in their 30s
<i>Musume</i>	娘	Daughter
<i>Musubu</i>	結ぶ	To tie down
<i>Muryō monitā</i>	無料モニター	Product monitoring. It means that participants can earn money and points just by trying out a company's various products, communicating their thoughts to the company, and answering questionnaires
<i>Naimusho</i>	内務省	Ministry of Home Affairs
<i>Namadōri</i>	生撮り	A live shoot that has no settings or scenarios
<i>Nanni nanni</i>	なに?なに?	What? What?
<i>Nini dantai</i>	任意団体	A voluntary advocacy group
<i>Nūdo</i>	ヌード	Nude
<i>Kikaku ochi</i>	落ち	Literally, <i>ochi</i> means a drop or fall. Here it refers to a downgrade from a <i>tantai</i> or <i>kikatan</i> actress to a <i>kikaku</i> actress
Leap	おどる	A leap or jump
<i>Okyakusama</i>	お客様第一主義	The customer-first principle
<i>Ōte</i>	大手	The major
<i>Onania</i>	オナニア	Masturbation

<i>Omanko</i>	おまんこ	Vagina
<i>Osawari hō dai</i>	お触り放題	All you can touch
<i>Pai pan</i>	パイパン	<i>Paipan</i> is a slang term for a woman's pubic area that does not have pubic hair
<i>Peropero</i>	ペロペロ	Licking something in a continuous manner
<i>Pinku eiga</i>	ピンク映画	Pink movie
<i>Randoseru</i>	ランドセル	A firm-sided backpack made of stitched firm leather or leather-like synthetic material, most commonly used among elementary schoolchildren in Japan
<i>Rijikai</i>	理事会	Board of directors
<i>Rolita</i>	ロリータ	A young, childlike woman
<i>Senzoku</i>	専属	Exclusive
<i>Seru</i>	セル	Sale
<i>Seppun</i>	接吻	Kiss
<i>Shakai tsūnen</i>	社会通念	Socially accepted ideas; conventions.
<i>Shibori</i>	搾り	Squeezing
<i>Shidō</i>	指導	Guidance
<i>Shikkarishita</i>	しつかりした	Solid and sound
<i>Shimei</i>	指名	Designation
<i>Shinise</i>	老舗	Old stores or stores that have a long history
<i>Shinsa</i>	審査	Inspection
<i>Shinsaku</i>	新作	New work or production
<i>Shinsa kijun</i>	審査基準	Inspection criteria
<i>Shinsain</i>	審査員	Inspectors
<i>Shinsa sentā</i>	審査センター	Inspection centre
<i>Shinsabu</i>	審査部	Inspection section
<i>Shinsa kenshō kaigi</i>	審査検証会議	Inspection verification meeting
<i>Shinsa kenshō daisansha iinkai</i>	審査検証第三者委員会	Inspection verification third-person meeting
<i>Shiofuki</i>	潮吹き	Female ejaculation or squirting
<i>Shirīzu</i>	シリーズ	Series
<i>Shirōto</i>	素人	Amateur
<i>Shirudan</i>	汁男	Semen men
<i>Shōta</i>	正太	Young boys
<i>Shōjo usagi</i>	少女ウサギ	Girl rabbit
<i>Shōtakōsoku</i>	正太拘束	Confinement
<i>Shūchishin</i>	羞恥心	Shame
<i>Shukkin</i>	出勤	Attendance at work
<i>Shōnen</i>	少年	Adolescent boys
<i>Shunga</i>	春画	Spring pictures; i.e. erotic paintings
<i>Shuppan jōrei</i>	出版条例	Publication regulations
<i>Shuppan hō</i>	出版法	Publication law
<i>Shūsei</i>	修正	To revise
<i>Suji no tōtta</i>	筋の通った	Logical, coherent, and ordered
<i>Sumata</i>	素股	Intercrural sex
<i>Sukātoman</i>	スカウトマン	A scout
<i>Sukebe</i>	スケベ	A lewd woman or bitch
<i>Taisha</i>	退社	Leaving work

<i>Taiyō zoku</i>	太陽族	The Sun Tribe. It refers to a subculture popularised by Shintaro Ishihara's 1950 novel <i>Season of the Sun</i> that encourages a reckless and carefree expression of youth
<i>Tanki</i>	単企	A potential variant of <i>tantai</i> AV where the <i>tantai</i> actress is expected to play out the roles commonly played by <i>kikaku</i> actresses
<i>Tantai</i>	単体	A single person
<i>Tantai bishōjo</i>	単体美少女	A beautiful young woman
<i>Tantai mono</i>	単体もの	A single-person style
<i>Tekoki</i>	手コキ	Hand job
<i>Tensai</i>	天才	A genius
<i>Tokkaya</i>	特価屋	Bargain shops
<i>Tonya</i>	問屋	Wholesalers
<i>Tōsha</i>	当社	Our company
<i>Tōshō daigongen</i>	東照大権現	This was a name given to Tokugawa Ieyasu who died in 1616. A <i>Gongen</i> is believed to be a buddha who has appeared on Earth in the form of a <i>kami</i> to save sentient beings
<i>Tōsatsu</i>	盗撮	Secret filming
<i>Tsunagu</i>	繋ぐ	To connect
<i>Tsūnen</i>	通念	Social values
<i>Tsūtatsu</i>	通達	A notification
<i>Waisetsu</i>	猥褻	Obscenity
<i>Ura bideo</i>	裏ビデオ	Underground video
<i>Ura</i>	裏	Underground
<i>Usukeshi</i>	薄消し	Videos with thin mosaic
<i>Yakuza</i>	ヤクザ	Japan's organised-crime groups
<i>Yamete</i>	やめて	Stop!
<i>Yasuuri</i>	安売り	King of Cheap Video
<i>Zenmen shūsei</i>	全面修正	A complete revision
<i>Zenra</i>	全裸	Naked
<i>Zenra ōdishon</i>	全裸オーディション	Naked audition

1 Introduction

On a warm afternoon in early October 2016, Jacky, his wife, and one of the authors of this book, visited Michael at his house in Miaoli, Taiwan. Michael and Jacky have been our key informants since 2003, and the two, as mentioned elsewhere (Wong and Yau 2014), became close friends when they were drafted into military service in 2002.

Although the two have since married and have their own families, they remain very close and frequently meet up. On this day, Jacky and his wife are invited to Michael's house to have dinner. Soon after arriving at their house, Jacky's wife joins Michael's wife in the kitchen, preparing dinner for us. Michael then invites Jacky to his study for 'guys talk' and to enjoy 'men's stuff'. Soon after they enter the study, Michael turns on the computer and tells Jacky that he would like to show him his recently collected Japanese adult videos (AVs).

Michael navigates to a hard drive on his PC. The drive is named Japanese AVs with mosaics¹ (*riben youma A-pian*). As Michael plays one of the AVs, Jacky could not help but say, 'It's mosaicked AV, how can it be good!' Michael turns to Jacky and suggests that he will know that it is good once he starts to watch.

The two then start to watch the AV together. The AV is about a young housewife who has a sexual fetish involving someone's sweat. She fell in love and married her husband in large part because she was attracted to the smell of his sweat. Nevertheless, her husband is a clean freak. When they are about to make love, he immediately checks if she has showered—and if she hasn't within the hour, he sends her off to wash. He wipes up the sweat and wants his wife to have a shower with him straight after sex, too, rather than cuddle.

A young housewife has created a toilet blockage by throwing too many tissues into the toilet bowl after masturbating in the living room. Unable to fix it, the young housewife calls on the plumber for help. A couple of minutes later, the plumber, a man in his late 40s, arrives at her house. He is led to the bathroom. As he is unclogging the toilet pipe, the young housewife is seen standing outside the toilet. She is eyeing the plumber as if he were a delicious piece of meat. He is sweating a lot and using the towel to wipe up his sweat. Excited by what he is doing, the young housewife approaches the plumber, who notices her and finds it very awkward. In the meantime, she covertly takes away his towel while he focuses on fixing the pipe. She then runs away. The camera turns to the bathroom,

2 Introduction

where she is depicted covering her nose and mouth with the plumber's towel. Soon, she starts to caress her vagina with her undergarment on. Meanwhile, the camera shifts back to the toilet where the plumber is portrayed having a hard time fixing the toilet, then murmuring, 'Madam, you throw too much toilet paper into the toilet bowl'. When he turns his head around, he cannot see the young housewife. He then calls out to her, 'Madam, madam!' As he does not hear any reply, he gets up and starts looking for her in the apartment. He follows the sound of someone breathing to the bathroom. As he opens the door of the bathroom, he sees the young housewife masturbating herself with her skirt rolled up, while covering her mouth with his towel. Speechless at what he has just seen, the plumber's gaze just stays on her undergarment. Shocked and embarrassed, the housewife rolls down her skirt immediately and tries to sit up. As she attempts to run from the bathroom into the living room, the plumber follows her and drags her into his arms. He then starts to kiss her. Shocked, the woman resists by uttering 'Please stop ...' ('*Yamete ...*'). Now, having realised her unique sexual taste, the plumber counters by covering her mouth and nose with his towel. The housewife is immediately paralyzed and depicted indulging in the sexual pleasure triggered by the towel. The two start to kiss vigorously. The plumber continues to sexually engage her by allowing her to taste his sweat. Aroused and excited, she is shown licking the plumber's face, body and legs. They then make out in the living room. Lying on the coffee table, she spreads her legs wide as the plumber starts to penetrate her. The scene ends when the plumber ejaculates inside her.

As the AV ends, Jacky cannot but agree with Michael that it was a good movie, even though it is fully mosaicked. They are excited about how sexually earnest the housewife is and how her sweat fetish is both hilarious and sexually arousing.

Jacky asks Michael if he has other 'interesting' videos. Michael moves to another folder on his computer where has different genres of AVs such as mature woman, old woman, lesbian, wife, teacher, sister, cosplay, SM, rape, bondage, imprisonment, train groper (*chihan dianche*), threesome, group sex, incest, secret filming, big breast, beautiful buttocks, scatology, interviews, amateur, hunting for women (*bamei*), sex entertainment (*fengzu*), and so on. Amazed at the wide array of genres, Jacky cannot help but stare at the page while scrolling up and down to have a quick view of the large number of genres. Michael adds that there are simply *too* many genres of Japanese AVs because genres keep diversifying.

Meanwhile, Michael clicks onto one of the AVs, while telling Jacky that it is 'great' because it is about facial ejaculation (*yanshe*). Yet, Jacky counters by asking why this video is so special, as there are so many *bukkake* (the Japanese term for facial ejaculation) AVs out there. Michael explains that this *yanshe* AV is special because the actress will be given a 'facial shower' or facial ejaculation by 150 men continuously. Stunned by what he has just heard, Jacky looks at Michael with his eyes wide open.

Michael skips most of the background that explains why the female character will be given facial ejaculations by so many men and 'jumps' into the middle of the AV. Kneeling on the floor, the female character is seen surrounded by a large

number of men who are masturbating over her face. Meanwhile, she is made to perform fellatio for a man, whereas her hands are seen masturbating the penises of another two men. As this group of men finish ejaculating on to her face, the second wave of men come to the front and start to ejaculate on her already semen-covered face.

Meanwhile, Michael's wife comes in the room to tell us that dinner is ready. As she sees what is on screen, she cannot help but say, 'You guys are watching these again?' Michael just explains that they are all legal videos with 'dancing squares' (the term for mosaics). Jacky also echoes that they are legal AVs, not the illegal hardcore 'unedited' (*wuma*) AVs. But Michael's wife counters by asking, 'Don't you guys feel that this treats the woman as if she was an object, not a human being?' Jacky immediately defends himself saying that it is just a story and, hence, not real. But as they talk, they admit that women depicted in most Japanese AVs are often treated as objects for male sexual pleasure. On the other hand, they also could not deny that they find the scenes sexually gratifying because it allows them to enjoy the sexual fantasy of controlling or subordinating the woman. Michael's wife sighs and cannot help but ask, 'Why does the Japanese government censor the display of sexual organs by stipulating that they have to be covered with the "dancing squares", but does not do anything to censor this "misogynistic" ideology?' Jacky suggests that the dancing squares, according to his Japanese friend, are not done by the government but by the people of the Japanese AV industry. Michael's wife counters, 'But still!' Michael then turns to Jacky and wonders, 'If all these are removed, no one will watch AVs anymore!' Looking at each other, Michael and Jacky appear speechless.

The above ethnographic episode raises a series of interesting questions. First and foremost, why must Japanese AVs in which real sexual intercourse between the female and male characters is employed to sexually arouse the audience have the actors' sexual organs and 'working parts' mosaicked, rendering them nothing more than a kind of softcore pornography? Second, why, on the one hand, is the visual display of sexual organs heavily censored but, on the other hand, the sexist, if not misogynist, content is allowed to permeate all kinds of genre of Japanese AV? Moreover, considering the fact that the self-regulatory bodies of the Japanese AV industry did and do pay extra attention to moral issues, why does sexist, misogynist content continue to rage on in Japanese AVs? Finally, as we have seen in the above episode, why do Japanese AVs have so many different genres? Of course, we are aware that, while American counterparts have different genres, Japanese AVs have far more genres. The answer to all these questions, as we will argue in this book, is closely related to the 'self-regulatory body' (*jishu dantai*) established to inspect the AVs produced in the industry.

This book, therefore, is about the self-regulatory body and its impact on the production, circulation, and consumption of AVs in Japan. The self-regulatory body is established voluntarily by the people of the AV industry to ensure that the AVs produced by their members are all in line with the nation's obscenity laws, as well as with the sexual morality of Japanese society, before they are released

4 Introduction

on to the market. In other words, what is being practised in the AV industry is not state censorship but industrial regulation or a self-regulation system (*jishu sei*).

As we shall see, AVs have been inspected by the people of the industry through the self-regulatory body for a wide array of reasons, which do not always have to do with the obscenity laws in Japan. More importantly, as all AVs are supposed to be inspected and endorsed by the self-regulatory body before they are released on to the market, it is rare that they will be taken to court for violating the obscenity laws after they are released. This indeed not only renders those studies of censorship of AVs that focus only on court cases insufficient and partial, but also speaks to another important implication: the inspection criteria adopted by the self-regulatory body for AV inspection are not necessarily a direct translation of the obscenity laws; they rather follow the different organisational logics of the self-regulatory body. If the self-regulatory body is not taken seriously, important questions concerning censorship of AVs in general and AV inspection in particular are often ignored—such as who is charged with the duty of undertaking the mosaicking work? Why and how do they do this? Are they made or forced by someone to undertake the mosaicking work?

Conceived narrowly, this study is about how Japanese AVs are regulated, if not censored. Our major purpose is to investigate the nature and character of the AV inspection by the self-regulatory body. We argue that the AV inspection conducted by the self-regulatory body should be understood as a social process, the result of which is shaped by the way the major players involved interact with each other. This enquiry in turn raises new questions: what are the consequences of the self-regulation of Japanese AVs for the industry, for instance, in terms of circulation method, power relations among major players, the emergence of new genres, and the changing status of a genre? Similarly, what are the impacts of the self-regulation of Japanese AVs on the society in general, such as morality and sexual representation, as well as the (mal)treatment of women in particular? Finally, and most importantly, what does ‘obscene’ mean in the cultural context of Japan, and how has it been interpreted in the actual AV inspection process? More than this, however, this ethnography also speaks to some important issues concerning the concept of censorship in general.

It is also important to clarify at the outset what we do *not* aim to do in the book. This account is not intended as a general ethnography of AV inspection or a comprehensive study of the self-regulatory system adopted by the people of the Japanese AV industry to inspect Japanese AVs, though this constitutes part of the whole book. Neither does it pretend to be a study of ‘legal anthropology’, because our main concern is not the relationship between the *legal* processes involved in censoring AVs and other aspects of the social, cultural, and political lives of the AV field; neither does it aim to offer a philosophical reflection on morality, especially the relationship between sexual moralities and sexual representations. These topics have been handled by many other scholars who are more competent than we are. Our goals are more modest and narrower: we would like to investigate the nature and character of AV inspection and how this affects the AV industry in Japan.

Major analytical themes

The literature on censorship in Japan is quite large. There are generally three lines of research on the issue. The first line usually traces the history of censorship in Japan, which began in the Tokugawa period (1603–1868), accelerated during the Meiji period (1868–1912) when the Meiji regime incorporated obscenity laws from the West, and culminated in comprehensive censorship during the wartime period (mid-1930s–1945) (Coyne 1967; Kasza 1988; Mitchell 1983; Shogimen 2014; Thompson and Harootunian 1992). Mitchell (1983), for instance, argues that the Meiji leaders created an ‘elaborate network of repressive controls’, which one way or another facilitated if not paved the way for the rush towards World War II. His narrative starts with a legacy of ‘suppression’ in the Edo period, followed by a demonstration of how the early Meiji government made a concerted effort to establish a ‘modern’ yet autocratic state based on Tokugawa practices in the first two decades of the Meiji era, which culminated in the formation of a ‘family-state’ ideology and the development of a ‘surveillance state’ in the later years of the regime. Subsequently, despite being stereotyped as one of the liberal periods in Japan, the Taishō regime (1912–1926) was no more liberal than previous regimes, as Mitchell demonstrates how the Taishō leaders, alarmed by the opposition, tightened controls over various media to curb seditious thoughts, and how the pre-war Shōwa years (beginning in 1926) turned into a time of absolute control.

Mitchell’s account seems to show that there is a general lack of resistance from the suppressed, alongside the politicians’ over-enthusiasm for co-operating with the state apparatus to control freedom of speech. Although Mitchell did describe how writers and journalists opposed censorship and the control mechanisms, especially in the Taishō and Shōwa eras, he concludes that industry people as a whole tended to come to accept state censorship, and that many businesses in the press, broadcasting, book, and movie industries generally submitted for a variety of reasons, ranging from fear, patriotism, and commercial motives to a Confucian-read identification with authority. This was especially the case in the 1930s, when editorial self-censorship, encouraged by direct and indirect pressure from the censorship apparatus, had become routine. Politicians, too, were as enthusiastic as officials about limiting freedom of speech. Mitchell points out that not only did the officials in the Ministry of Justice make concerted efforts to strengthen anti-seditious legislation, but also political party leaders such as Hara Takeshi were active in pushing through the legislation. According to Mitchell, the lower house, which used to support libertarians, even authorised the cabinet to prepare ‘a plan to unify national thought’. This willingness of the opposition to cooperate with the Japanese state and the unifying attitude of the Japanese government and the political party leaders thus forced Duus to comment (1984: 828), ‘[t]he picture is rather bleak, perhaps too bleak. Mitchell does not deal much with the opponents of censorship’. Self-censorship, Mitchell concludes, was in fact the most effective tool that the Japanese state adopted to limit the freedom of expression in the society.