ROUTLEDGE HANDBOOKS

Routledge Handbook of Japanese Cinema

Edited by Joanne Bernardi and Shota T. Ogawa

ROUTLEDGE HANDBOOK OF JAPANESE CINEMA

The *Routledge Handbook of Japanese Cinema* provides a timely and expansive overview of Japanese cinema today, through cutting-edge scholarship that reflects the hybridity of approaches defining the field.

The volume's twenty-one chapters represent work by authors with diverse backgrounds and expertise, recasting traditional questions of authorship, genre, and industry in broad conceptual frameworks such as gender, media theory, archive studies, and neoliberalism. The volume is divided into four parts, each representing an emergent area of inquiry:

- "Decentering Classical Cinema"
- "Questions of Industry"
- "Intermedia as an Approach"
- "The Object Life of Film"

This is the first anthology of Japanese cinema scholarship to span the temporal framework of 200 years, from the vibrant magic lantern culture of the nineteenth century, through to the formation of the film industry in the twentieth century, and culminating in cinema's migration to gaming, surveillance video, and other new media platforms of the twenty-first century.

This handbook will prove a useful resource to students and scholars of Japanese studies, film studies, and cultural studies more broadly.

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EDITORS' NOTE

Japanese names are given consistently in Japanese order (family name first) except for contributors to this volume, individuals who have predominantly published in English using Western name order, and any other specified exceptions. Macrons (diacritical marks) are used for Japanese romanization except for the following exceptions that are typically rendered in English without them: Anglicized words (e.g., kaiju, kimono); principal cities such as Tokyo, Kyoto, and Osaka, except when they appear as part of a longer Japanese language reference (as in citing the title of a book published in Japanese); names with long-established precedents for Anglicized variants or romanized renderings; and the names of major film studios (e.g., Shochiku, Toho, Shintoho, Toei), which are commonly rendered without macrons in English-language publications. We generally follow a variant of Hepburn-style romanization, the most common form in use today that follows English phonology and uses hyphens sparingly. We make exceptions for cited material, which we reproduce intact. Japanese words (e.g., specific terminology) used in English sentences are italicized the first time they appear in each chapter unless they have entered the English language, but not thereafter in order to keep the use of italics to a minimum. Titles of Japanese films are referred to by their original title the first time they are mentioned, and by their English title (or translated English title) thereafter. We prioritize generally accepted and commonly used English language titles for Japanese films rather than devise new translations. In rare cases, individual authors have not provided translations for titles of Japanese films that are believed to be lost.

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INTRODUCTION

The study of Japanese cinema has long played a vital role in the academic discipline of film studies as a major non-Western tradition and a paradigmatic national cinema. Needless to say, from the outset, discursive attempts to define Japanese cinema have been shaped by the circulation of films as material objects. Widely circulated in 16 mm prints across campuses, film circles, and art houses around the world from the 1960s throughout the 1970s, post-war feature films by canonical directors like Ozu Yasujirō, Mizoguchi Kenji, and Kurosawa Akira contributed to the development and emerging profile of film studies in higher education. Even after the advent of VHS consumer formats in the 1980s, such titles dominated teaching and scholarship grounded in auteur criticism, national cinema, and world cinema. Over the past two decades, however, DVDs of previously inaccessible films, enhanced marketing of canonical films, streaming access, and innovative film festival programming have created new audiences for Japanese cinema, and new directions for teaching and research. At the same time, the broader field of cinema studies has experienced a sea change in response to an increase in venues for archival research, shifting geopolitics, the emergence of a multidisciplinary research community across several continents, and the proliferation of new media formats and means of access brought about by digital technology.[1] Correspondingly, the discovery, preservation, and research of films produced and exhibited in colonial Korea, Manchuria, and Taiwan—an outcome of increased contacts across East Asia in the post-Cold War era—have exposed the blind spot in discussing Japanese cinema within the strict confines of a national framework or along the East–West axis.[2] The challenges of reframing Japanese cinema vis-à-vis the transnational dynamics of colonialism, trans-Pacific immigration, and globalization have, in turn, facilitated closer engagement by film researchers with the adjacent fields of modern history, cultural studies, media studies, and archive studies.

The *Routledge Handbook of Japanese Cinema* provides a timely and expansive overview of the dynamic field of Japanese cinema today through provocative, leading-edge scholarship that reflects the changing contours of the broader discipline. Capitalizing on the diversity of approaches that define cinema studies today allows us to provide a perspective of Japanese cinema scholarship that reflects the field's contemporary breadth and depth. By expanding the body of scholarship that defines the field to, for example, considerations of the object life of film (e.g., the [non-]commercial circulation of film prints and their afterlife in the archives, the intermediality of complex media set-ups) and the *longue durée* history of moving images from pre-cinema to post-cinema media, we aim to pry open handed-down frames of reference that have

fueled the national cinema paradigm (canon, classics, auteur, genre). This facilitates further possibilities for growth.

Whereas it once sufficed solely to think of films in the abstract as titles, we now negotiate complex issues of provenance, acknowledging film prints as organic, mutable objects traveling through time and across space, from hand to hand or collection to collection, from one cultural context to another, from analog to digital. It was once common practice in English language discourse on Japanese cinema to predictably begin with standard disclaimers: abysmal survival rates, a dearth of subtitled prints or translated sources, obstacles to accessing archival material, or references to the field's marginalization (both in cinema studies and area studies).[3] To some extent such problems persist, but in the transdisciplinary and transnational context of cinema studies today, and at a time when ever more thorough archival research is uncovering diverse, hitherto neglected film cultures, they are no longer unique to the study of Japanese cinema.[4] They no longer warrant the attention (and constant reiteration) that they commanded in the past, even if some challenges (e.g., access, translation) are being addressed more effectively than others (the discipline's institutional marginalization). With its expanded corpus, well-informed audiences, and an increased diversity in scholarship and critical attention, Japanese cinema is no longer a "niche" subject.

As evidence of Japanese cinema's maturation as a field, there is a steady accumulation of academic handbooks (single-volume anthologies) dedicated to the study of Japanese cinema, not to mention the much larger and denser body of research available as monographs, subject-specific anthologies, and journal articles. Reflecting on these existing handbooks allows us to trace the shifting forms in which, over time, editors have sought to define the parameters of a field that is inherently dynamic, transnational, and interdisciplinary. *Reframing Japanese Cinema: Authorship, Genre, History* (1992), by Arthur Nolletti and David Desser, was the earliest of the English language anthologies. For Nolletti and Desser, the anthology format's ability to contain multiple perspectives was a critical factor that differentiated the book from Donald Richie and Joseph L. Anderson's *The Japanese Film: Art and Industry* (1959) and Noël Burch's *To the Distant Observer* (1979), two seminal monographs that offered coherent analytical frameworks—humanist auteurism and Marxist structuralism respectively—through which Japanese cinema could be studied (Nolletti and Desser 1992: xv).[5] As in all subsequent anthologies, English translations were a key part of Nolletti and Desser's pluralist approach; the translations of works by Iwamoto Kenji, Komatsu Hiroshi, and Max Tessier made accessible in their volume remain invaluable sources.

After a hiatus of fifteen years, during which the range of Japanese films circulating outside Japan drastically increased and world cinema courses gained traction in film studies programs, Phillips and Stringer's *Japanese Cinema: Texts and Contexts* (2007) updated the handbook genre to include chapters on anime as well as a host of post-studio era auteurs such as Itami Jūzō, Kitano Takeshi, and Kore-eda Hirokazu. Departing from a dichotomous understanding of Japanese cinema as a Western discourse on a non-Western culture, Phillips and Stringer reframed the field in the polycentric dynamics of world cinema (albeit without using this term), as is most evident in the one-film-per-chapter structure they adopted from handbooks of both French and Chinese cinema. Miyao Daisuke's *The Oxford Handbook of Japanese Cinema* (2014) more explicitly tests the limits of Japanese cinema, notably by tracing the genealogies of intermedia practices and expanding scholarship on *benshi* (narrator or lecturer of silent film) to the colonial territories.

Maturation of the field is also evident from the gradual increase of field guides, encyclopedias, and reference books. Publications such as the *Research Guide to Japanese Film Studies* (Nornes and Gerow 2008), the *Critical Handbook of Japanese Film Directors* (Jacoby 2008), and the *Historical Dictionary of Japanese Cinema* (Sharp 2011) help make the field accessible not only to those in

higher education, but also to critics, programmers, and librarians. These practical guidebooks seek to standardize the whole range of practices involved in studying Japanese cinema, from locating relevant materials in libraries and archives to citing proper nouns in the established format. Regardless of the format of all these publications, the genre of handbooks is always torn between the impulse to standardize disciplinary norms and the counter-impulse to facilitate future changes by inducing new members to the field.

The logic of the book

Our edited volume continues the dual efforts of further expanding the parameters of Japanese cinema while clarifying its position within the broader disciplinary environment. This is a good place to briefly consider this contradictory set of objectives as an integral feature of "handbooks" as a genre of publication in modern academia. Using the publication of Springer's 78-volume *Handbuch der Physik* (*Handbook of Physics*) as a case study, Historian of science Alrun Schmidtke reminds us of the dilemma that handbook editors typically encounter. Launched in 1955 and completed only in 1988, this monumental handbook series put the editors in a difficult position; they had to reconcile the gap between the almost classical aspiration of the series to be *the* standard book neatly organizing all the key fields of modern physics and the reality of a dynamic discipline that favored journal publication as the more adaptable platform (Schmidtke 2018). In other words, handbooks contain a built-in anxiety arising from the inevitability of obsolescence and the unattainability of a comprehensive survey.

We have therefore edited this book keeping in mind the contradictions inherent in the genre of academic handbooks. Turning the anxieties of fast-paced changes in the field on its head, we designed our book as a survey of *current* research organized around four parts focused on different critical challenges. Part I, "Decentering Classical Cinema: Modernity, Translation, and Mobilization," engages with the challenge of decentering the dominant discourse of modernity that has typically treated classical Hollywood cinema as the model idiom to be replicated elsewhere. Part II, "Questions of Industry: Critical Studies of Regulatory Frameworks, Creative Labor, and Distributive Networks," showcases chapters that engage with two interrelated questions: starting in the 1950s, what kind of industrial formations emerged from the ruins of the studio system and how did media practices register, assimilate, and respond to the broader shifts in labor norms and economic conditions? Authors featured in Part III, "Intermedia as an Approach: Tracing Genealogies across Disciplines and Media," share an investment in probing the dynamics, meaning, function, and generative potential of cinema's interrelationships and interconnectivity with other media such as the magic lantern (and the related Japanese entertainment, *utsushi-e* and *gentō*), gaming, photography, puppet theater, and sound recording. Finally, Part IV, "The Object Life of Film: Site-Specific Approaches to Japanese Cinema Studies," provides a fresh perspective on how Japanese cinema's past (and the future of that past) is shaped by the attributes of analog film: its materiality as organic matter with a finite life cycle; its symbiotic relationship with technology (throughout the production, exhibition, and preservation continuum); and the collective experience of film projection in theatrical or domestic settings.

The notion of a classical canon by definition assumes the everlasting relevance of works by celebrated auteurs but this is contingent upon their physical durability in the long term. Therefore, Part IV, "The Object Life of Film," also returns us to the project of decentering the discourse of classical cinema central to Part I. Moreover, underscoring the volatility of cinema's material basis also resonates with this handbook's overall objective to present cutting-edge research on Japanese cinema while projecting possible future directions for a field that is perpetually in flux.

Each of the four parts is prefaced by a brief introduction with chapter summaries that contextualize their relevance to the part's objective. Rather than reiterate this information here, we chose to use this space to share our reflections on the process of editing this book. We made it a priority to identify and showcase emergent areas of inquiry and critical discourse because of our interest in looking ahead to possible futures for our discipline. We give equal voice to well-established as well as younger authors with diverse backgrounds, interests, and areas of professional expertise. Obviously, our field has been shaped by the labor of archivists, museum curators, festival programmers, and collectors as well as researchers. Recent anthologies, beginning with Miyao's *The Oxford Handbook of Japanese Cinema* (2014), have signaled a shift by expanding the parameters of scholarship beyond academics to include archivists and scholars with a background in film festival programming. In the planning stages, we also decided to spotlight the work of archivists and programmers. This is reflected in Part IV's emphasis on film as material culture. For example, Kyoko Hirano's account of her tenure as film curator at New York's Japan Society (est. 1907) from 1986 to 2004 offers unique insight into understanding the organic ways in which film programming preconditions not only which films receive international exposure, but also how the concept of Japanese cinema becomes fixed in the collective consciousness of the intellectual milieu of a specific locality. This part also features the work of Kae Ishihara and Kanta Shibata, whose contributions are similarly informed by their experiences as film archivist and film laboratory technician respectively.

It also bears mentioning that our long association with the city of Rochester—a location central to the origins of the physical material from which cinema emerged—was another critical factor in determining Part IV's emphasis on materiality, archive work, and film preservation. As a current instructor and former student, respectively, at the University of Rochester, our proximity to George Eastman Museum, and most importantly, the opportunity to work alongside our colleagues in the Museum's Moving Image Department, has been an important influence on our research and teaching.

In essence, our book proposes to embrace the hybridity that we understand to be at the heart of Japanese cinema: disciplinary hybridity, media hybridity, and hybridity of language and culture. All the contributions to this handbook were written specifically for this volume with the key exceptions of the following chapters: Ryoko Misono's revelatory study of 1930s Ozu (Chapter 1); Hideyuki Nakamura's recuperative work on the study of post-Allied occupation cinema (Chapter 2); and Takeshi Tanikawa's analysis of the important but previously overlooked campaign to subsidize the exportation of kaiju films (Chapter 7). We included English translations of the work of these important scholars based in Japan in order to reflect the complex web of different languages and cultures that inform our field. In this way, we are also able to introduce field-defining monographs in Japan albeit in abbreviated form. We envision our inclusion of these translated texts as a generative act. They will, of course, generate new readings of the corpus of films that they address. Beyond that, however, we encourage readers to think of them as an entry point to the interstitial sphere of translation that many of us working in Japanese cinema inhabit.

Notes

1 For increased venues for archival research, see Nornes and Gerow 2009, as well as Part IV of this volume. Digital technology's impact is notably palpable in the increasing range of moving images that film archives have been making accessible online. Examples include the National Film Archive of Japan's curated exhibitions of early Japanese animation (2017) and Meiji era films (2019); Korean Film Archive's extensive YouTube channel with over 100 titles including some colonial-era Japan–Korea co-productions; and the Huntley Film Archives' curated exhibitions. Joanne Bernardi's open-ended

multimedia digital humanities project, *Re-Envisioning Japan* (Bernardi 2017, First WordPress iteration from 2013 to 2016) features timelines that allow access to recuperated and digitized small-gauge 16mm, Regular 8mm and Super 8mm films about or related to Japan, including amateur travel films, educational films, promotional tourism and Japanese government agency films, newsreel footage, television commercial out-takes, stock footage, home movies, and films commercially marketed for home entertainment. The project allows users to view such images in the context of other contemporaneous ephemeral objects (primarily tourism or educational material) in the *Re-Envisioning Japan* physical collection.

2 From 2004 to 2006, archivists from the Korean Film Archive identified eight colonial-era Korean films at China Film Archive, which opened a new era for Korean film scholarship since they made colonial-era films viewable for film scholars for the first time. These films are part of Korea's film heritage, but the fact that many of the filmmakers trained in Japan is yet further proof of the arbitrary nature of the national cinema paradigm. Also, in the 2000s, ten colonial-era Korean and Taiwanese film titles were identified at the private Kobe Planet Film Archive in Japan, which were subsequently preserved and repatriated to the Taiwan Film Institute and the Korean Film Archive (for further reference, see Shota T. Ogawa's Chapter 20 in this volume).

3 For an example of the narrative of low-survival rates of Japanese film, see Russell 2011. For more on the narrative of Japanese cinema scholarship's marginalization within film studies and area studies, see Nornes and Gerow 2009; Miyao 2014. For a nuanced summary of both the marginalization narrative and evidence that the situation is improving, see Raine 2019.

4 It is worth noting that there have been ways to work around Japanese cinema's low survival rate for the silent period, in particular. In English language scholarship, this is evidenced by the work of Joanne Bernardi (2001) and Aaron Gerow (2010), who focused on screenwriting and film theory respectively by combing through print materials (scripts, film magazines, journals, criticism, etc.). There are also well-known, systematic efforts to excavate film-historical print materials in Japan in the form of reprint series known as *fukkokuban*.

5 Nolletti and Desser's anthology was by no means the first to challenge Richie and Anderson's art-versus-industry schema and Burch's rigid dialectic model in favor of a more nuanced and multifaceted approach. For example, Joan Mellen's and Audie Bocks' studies introduced considerations of gender to their auteurist analyses of important Japanese directors, who had at least some work in circulation in the form of English-language subtitled prints at the time these books were first published (Mellen 1975, 1976; Bock 1978); also see Phillips and Stringer 2007: 11.

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PART I

Decentering classical cinema

Modernity, translation, and mobilization

The six chapters included in this part demonstrate the productivity of revisiting the extensively studied period from the 1930s to the 1960s, particularly for decentering the discourse of modernity that has typically treated Hollywood as the model idiom to be replicated elsewhere. In the past few decades, an increasing number of scholars have sought to reframe cinema as an integral part of urban modernity, drawing inspiration from the seminal observations made by Weimar cultural critics such as Walter Benjamin and Siegfried Kracauer. These ideas that perceive a homology between the birth of cinema and urban modernity, or between film spectators and the urban *flâneur*, have since been labeled the modernity thesis. As Ben Singer concedes, in what is arguably the most rigorous defense of the modernity thesis, the claim that cinema and urban modernity brought about a new mode of perception characterized by shock, distraction, and mobility is ultimately speculative, unfocused, and unproveable, and yet demonstrably productive and illuminating (Singer 2001: 10; Guha 2015: 8). In the context of Japanese cinema scholarship, the modernity thesis has been particularly useful both in dislocating the view that modernity emanates outward from the West and in denaturalizing the treatment of classical Japanese cinema—one of the world's largest film industries, defined by a studio system, star system, and robust critical sphere—as a subset of Japanese culture (Russell 2011: xii–xiii, 3). By positioning cinema as a facet of modernity, that is to say, a phenomenon that ought to be studied alongside various adjacent dynamics, including the expansion of a white-collar middle class, the flourishing of consumer culture, women's education, migration of labor, and capital-intensive urban development such as the reconstruction of Tokyo following the 1923 Great Kantō Earthquake, scholarship on the classical period since the 1990s has opened up new avenues for examining how cinema mediated the everyday experiences of modernity in interwar Japan (e.g., Iwamoto 1991; Wada-Marciano 2008; Yamamoto 2015; Joo 2018).

As the following chapters show, reconsiderations in the rubric of modernity of Japanese cinema's classical period pose more questions than answers, especially regarding how best to imagine a transnational history of cinema. Consider Miriam Hansen's seminal concept of vernacular modernism, which helps to disrupt the association between classical Hollywood cinema's international popularity and the supposed "universal narrative form" it developed. Instead of conceptualizing an unmarked modernist form, Hansen treats Hollywood as a vernacularized "modernist idiom" that recognized how modernity meant "different things to different people and publics, both at home and abroad" (Hansen 1999: 68). In one sense, the concept of

vernacular modernism encourages scholars to shift their emphasis from examining the USA as a model case to studying culturally heterogeneous milieus outside the West, such as Shanghai and Tokyo. As a number of critics have pointed out, however, it remains questionable whether Hansen's model liberates us from the center–periphery model of understanding world cinema in the classical period, or if it even departs from what Mitsuhiro Yoshimoto has described as the theory–history dichotomy in which Hollywood's "modernist idiom" (Hollywood cinema as the dominant mode) registers as a theoretical concern while the contexts of vernacular reception register as historical concerns (Yoshimoto 1991: 252; Hori 2018: 268–269).

Before introducing each of the chapters in this part in some detail, it is useful to briefly summarize how they address the questions raised by and in response to Hansen's vernacular modernism, and how they contribute to the broader decentering of film history beyond national paradigms. In the first two chapters by Ryoko Misono (Chapter 1) and Hideyuki Nakamura (Chapter 2), for instance, American modernity is interrogated as both a historically particular construct and a highly contradictory phenomenon. Its presentation as anything but a universal model thus turns Yoshimoto's theory–history dilemma on its head. Misono persuasively demonstrates that a close reading of Ozu Yasujirō's *That Night's Wife* (*Sono yo no tsuma*, 1930) requires an understanding not only of the codes for the Hollywood genres of the melodrama and gangster film, but also the modern US history of immigration, racism, and puritanical morality informing these genres. Nakamura similarly positions American journalists in early 1950s Japan as historically conditioned film spectators whose outrage at Taniguchi Senkichi's *Akasen kichi* (*The Red Light Military Base*, 1953) attests to both cinema's international idiom and the culturally specific factors of the Hays Code (the Motion Picture Production Code enforced between 1934–1968) and McCarthyism.

Other chapters more explicitly decenter Hollywood's dominant position in the transnational historiography of classical cinema by articulating other kinds of international idioms. These include the idioms of the Weimar- to Nazi-era German *kulturfilm* (Chapter 6 by Anne McKnight); Soviet constructivism and Bolshevization ("popularization" or "massification") (Chapter 3 by Diane Wei Lewis and Chapter 5 by Mitsuyo Wada-Marciano); and queer desire lodged in the transnational-transmedial-translational space straddling Anglophone literature, UFA, and Hollywood (Chapter 4 by Yuka Kanno). Finally, the productivity of translation is a common thread running through the chapters, affirming Naoki Sakai's observation that translation ought to be considered constitutive of the phenomenon of modernity that entails the meeting of many peoples, industries, and polities (cited in Russell 2011: 3).

Ryoko Misono's chapter, "Suspense and Border Crossing: Ozu Yasujirō's Crime Melodrama," invites us to attentively reread *That Night's Wife* (1930), without separating the formalist discussions regarding Ozu's assimilation of Hollywood's idiom from the historical discussions of the various facets of modernity. The logic that is key to Misono's intervention is encapsulated in the opening passage, which analyzes Ozu's diary entry that poignantly describes a dream he had on a damp barracks cot in rural Mie Prefecture, where he was detained for mandatory military training. In truncated prose peppered with cinematic images and Hollywood references, Ozu describes a virtual *flânerie* through Ginza's high street, where he longs to return. The passage affirms the association, espoused by advocates of the modernity thesis, between film spectatorship and the distracted perception of the urban *flâneur*. Yet the passage also invokes the repressed *other* of urban *flânerie*: the large-scale movement of soldiers, workers, and the dispossessed brought about by the imperialist factors instigating (and coeval with) the rise of the imperial metropoles where the *flâneurs* roamed (Singer 2001: 101–129; Guha 2015: 8–9; Lurey and Massey 1999: 231). Lest we fail to appreciate this ambivalence, Misono calls our attention to another diary entry in which Ozu likens himself—a conscript of the Japanese imperial army—to

Tom Brown, the foreign legion character played by Gary Cooper in Joseph von Sternberg's *Morocco* (1930). Far from constituting a universal idiom, Hollywood cinema provided Ozu with a framework for articulating the contradictory predicament of being simultaneously a Japanese national, an imperial subject, and a city-dweller who dreams in Hollywood's vernacular.

The dialectic between geopolitical tension and the transnational flow of cinematic images also figures prominently in Hideyuki Nakamura's chapter, "Beyond Mt. Fuji and the Lenin Cap: Identity Crisis in Taniguchi Senkichi's *Akasen kichi* (*The Red Light Military Base*, 1953)," albeit in the context of the post-Occupation period that followed the San Francisco Peace Treaty that took effect in 1952. The goal of the chapter is, as Nakamura succinctly puts it, to rescue Taniguchi's unsung masterpiece from oblivion. This rescue mission does not entail extricating aesthetic debate from the messy controversy that caused the Toho production studio to abruptly pull the film when it was blamed for sensationalizing the volatile issue of the presence of US bases in post-Occupation Japan. What Nakamura seeks to rescue are the intricate lines of communication spanning the nocturnal realm of cinema and the diurnal realm of discourse. Indeed, the chapter deftly moves from the discursive domain of the controversy, cross-examining contemporary reviews of the film in Japanese and English, to the startling observation that the American journalists' strong opposition to the film was fueled not just by preformulated ideological positions, but also by their own inadvertent and irrepressible emotional identification with the protagonist's anger across the ethno-nationalist divide.

The remaining chapters explore a more polycentric model of transnational film history that is not exclusively centered on Hollywood or USA–Japan relations. In "Home Movies of the Revolution: Proletarian Filmmaking and Counter-Mobilization in Interwar Japan," Diane Wei Lewis proposes a transnational cinematic imaginary cohering around international communism. If Hollywood inevitably takes center stage in film-historical discussions of the theatrically released narrative fiction that constitutes the "classics," Lewis's study of the Proletarian Film League of Japan (or Prokino, 1929–1934) suggests that when we shift our attention to nontheatrical film practices, an equally influential factor might be the Soviet-led initiative of Bolshevization ("massification") that sought to increase direct contact between farmers, workers, and activists. In a telling example, Lewis discusses Prokino's mobile screenings as a countermeasure against state- and capitalist-led cultural programs that were designed to implement their own mode of Bolshevization. Lewis's readings of Prokino's own publications suggest Bolshevization might be better understood as a trans-ideological facet of modernity rather than a directive issued by Moscow.

Critical interest in the reconfiguration of modernity's social relations also informs Yuka Kanno's chapter, titled "*When Marnie Was There*: Female Friendship Film and the Genealogy of Queer Girls' Culture." Kanno investigates "girls culture" (*shōjo bunka*) and the technique of queer reading that it encourages, as a facet of modernity made possible by the emergence of all-women schools for higher education (1899–) and magazines such as *Shōjo sekai* (*Girls' World*, 1906–1931), *Shōjo no tomo* (*Girls' Friend*, 1908–1955), *Shōjo gahō* (*Girls' Graphics*, 1912–1942), and others. These publications targeted both the new female readership and the translational space that encompassed literature, revue, and cinema. As a particularly interesting example, Kanno cites the work of Yoshiya Nobuko, Japan's first professional female writer and the pioneer of the "girls' fiction" genre who was also an avid reader of translated English girls' stories and supervised the Japanese translation for the 1933 Hollywood adaptation of Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women* that made Katharine Hepburn into a queer icon. Kanno's elliptical genealogy of "girls' culture" stretches from the 1910s to the present, but her study confirms the productivity of revisiting the "classical period," notably, the thriving translational space of the 1930s when iconic images of Dietrich, Garbo, and Hepburn in "drag" circulated alongside images of

all-female Shochiku and Takarazuka revues, spurring lively discussions in the male homosocial milieu of film criticism as well as the reading public of girls' culture.

Translation also figures prominently in Mitsuyo Wada-Marciano's chapter, "Making Sense of Nakai Masakazu's Film Theory, 'Kino Satz'." As with Misono's treatment of Ozu, which resists dichotomizing stylistic and historical analysis, Wada-Marciano examines Nakai Masakazu's writings on montage as both historical *and* theoretical matter. Her positioning of Nakai's theory in the intellectual milieu of Kyoto, where translation held a special place as a creative process, is crucial to this dualistic approach. For example, Wada-Marciano discusses Hugo Münsterberg's *The Photoplay: A Psychological Study* (1916), not only as a precursor to Nakai's theoretical work (mass spectatorship was a vital part of both writers' interests) but also in relation to Kyoto's vibrant translational culture, to which Nakai belonged, and where philosopher Tanigawa Tetsuzō's Japanese translation of Münsterberg (1924) circulated together with Tanigawa's translations of Kant and Simmel. On the one hand, this chapter aims to clarify distinctions between Nakai's concept, Kino Satz (cinematic language) and other montage theories proposed by his contemporaries (not least Dziga Vertov's Kino Glaz [Cinematic Eye], which directly inspired Nakai's term) as well as 1970s formalist debates. On the other hand, the chapter seeks to liberate Nakai's writings on film from the narrow context of film theory. Contextualized as an integral part of Nakai's work as an aesthetic theorist, his film theoretical writings and his amateur filmmaking begin to resemble a parallel project of Kyoto School philosophy, namely, a bold attempt to open aesthetics to the contingent dynamics of interwar Japan.

The part closes with Anne McKnight's "Geysers of Another Nature: The Optical Unconscious of the Japanese Science Film." McKnight offers a critical survey of the theorization and production of *kagaku eiga* (science film) in Japan from the late 1920s through the early 1970s that is attentive to the inherent contradiction in the scientific wonder that the genre sought to convey. That is, the genre's celebration of modern science was tinged with vestiges of a premodern, subjective, and curiosity-driven quest to visualize the unseen world (also see Gaycken 2015). Departing from previous scholarship that centers on films produced in conjunction with university laboratories, McKnight traces an alternative genealogy rooted in the milieu of popular education outside the school system. Harada Mitsuo, a self-educated impresario of popular science whose product line included commercial science magazines (e.g., *Kagaku chishiki* and *Kagaku gahō*), sponsored science films, and science experiment kits, is a central figure in McKnight's alternative genealogy. Echoing Kanno and Wada-Marciano's observations on the productive space of translation that flourished in 1930s Japan, McKnight's discussion of UFA's *kulturfilm* centers on the playful commentary provided by the famous *benshi* lecturer (or narrator) Tokugawa Musei (see also Chapter 12 by Kyoko Omori), which vernacularized the wonder of scientific observation. McKnight's attention to verbal commentary allows her to critically examine wartime *bunka eiga* (culture films) and post-war industrial PR films to make a connection between technologically enhanced perception and the ideology of national empowerment and developmentalism. Ultimately, McKnight's critical rereading of science film's history in Japan offers a timely rejoinder to recent scholarship in Japan that investigates cinema's complex relationship to changing industrial norms, a topic that will be fleshed out in Part II.

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SUSPENSE AND BORDER CROSSING

Ozu Yasujirō's crime melodrama

Ryoko Misono (translated by Kimberlee Diane Sanders and Shota T. Ogawa)

On a shabby barracks cot, Ozu Yasujirō is dreaming. Ozu's dream slips out from the army parade grounds in Hisai, Mie Prefecture, where he lies asleep, and takes flight back to the familiar streets of Ginza.

> Sept. 20 (Wed.): Last night, on a chilly straw mattress, I had a dream/in the dream I was drinking beer on a second floor of a building in Ginza where there is a view of the big Hattori Building clock, while that girl leisurely crossed her legs under her green afternoon [dress].
>
> *(Ozu and Tanaka 1993: 50)*[1]

It is unclear whether Ozu's dream, which appears more like a scene from an American film than from one of his own, was based on his personal experience or born from the mass imaginary of Ginza. Did the pronoun "I" and the referent "that girl" have any correspondence in his real life, or were they interchangeable subjects taken from a highly abstracted image? Perhaps this was unclear even to Ozu himself. Consider how Ozu's diary at the time not only attests to his life as a typical urban *flâneur*, but also reveals a certain self-consciousness of an actor performing on the stage of "modernity."

> March 6 (Mon) ▲ Cloudy again: canceled/▲ took a look at Maruzen, worked on the design for a boxing club/▲ went to SHIBAZONO [theater] with [Nomura] Hiromasa/▲ *GIRLS IN UNIFORM* and half of *SO BIG!*/stopped by the Fuji Eis German Bakery on the way home.
>
> *(Ozu and Tanaka 1993: 36–37)*

Ozu's everyday, thus described, appears fitting for a filmmaker that represented "Kamata Modernism." Reconstructed in the form of diary entries, however, his everyday feeds into the broader imaginary of the "urban dweller." We can say that Ozu, who had made it his lifestyle credo to behave like American film characters in 1930s Tokyo, managed to live within a dream community produced by Hollywood, albeit in the realm of his imagination. Even so, when we

picture him in this way, are we not simply confirming the well-established image we have of Ozu in his youth as a fashionable modernist filmmaker? Instead, I would like to problematize here the actual place where Ozu's dream of being an "urban dweller" manifested itself.

It was in the fall of 1933 that Ozu was summoned to the army parade grounds at Hisai, where he had the dream. His diary entry during the two weeks of being drafted, which begins "Sept 16 (Sat) ▲ 9:00/lodging at STAR HOTEL, No. 33," reads less like an account of events than a series of short, connected fragments that we might interpret as Ozu's monologues, but they are thought-provoking in many ways (Ozu and Tanaka 1993: 50). During this short practice conscription, Ozu's consciousness was briefly detached from the busy everyday life of Tokyo, thus allowing the hitherto concealed web of political and cultural forces surrounding him and the fissures created by the multitude of contradictory forces to come pouring forth.

Ozu had been sent to Hisai in Mie Prefecture in the first place because it was still his legal residence in the family register, even though his family home was in the Fukugawa area of Tokyo. The military logic of dispatching someone to a place with no connection to his daily life, simply based on what was recorded in the family register, had the effect of exposing the precariousness of Ozu's identity in Tokyo as a modern cosmopolitan. This made it evidently clear that he was integrated into the family register system, positioned within the structure of the nation state, and was required to enlist as a national subject. There is a diary entry that reads, "Sept 18 (Mon) ▲ second anniversary of the Manchurian Incident, all night exercise" (Ozu and Tanaka 1993: 50). The premise of the exercise connects him to the expansionist war of aggression in China that had begun in earnest two years earlier. This exercise, which could be seen as a drill for the poison gas weapon, yperite (mustard gas), which was used four years later in the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937–1945), foreshadowed Ozu's own eventual participation in the large-scale poison gas campaign that occurred at the Xiushui River.[2] Already at this moment in 1933, Ozu's body was firmly enmeshed within Japan's imperialistic desire to expand its borders. Ozu's self-image as a cosmopolitan urban dreamer was fragmented and torn between his roles as a member of the nation state and an agent of the imperial project. In addition to these three mutually contradictory yet continuously overlapping political and cultural currents, the death of his aunt, with whom he had been close, and allusions to symbolic incidents of the time (including the "Go–Stop Incident," which laid bare the opposition between the police and the military) and American films all appeared together in his diary. This diary marked the intersection between the multiple external and internal factors that had shaped Ozu's subjectivity as someone living through the early 1930s in Japan.

At first glance, the many conducting wires running through Ozu's subjectivity seem to contradict one another—being slated as a member of the nation state within its borders, participating in the war of aggression as an imperialist subject, while also aligning oneself with the culture of border crossing generated by American films—but were they really mutually exclusive factors? Conventionally, the palpable influence of American cinema on Ozu's films from the 1920s and 1930s has been understood as oppositional or contradictory to Ozu's position as an imperial subject who served twice in the Asia–Pacific War.[3] Underpinning this interpretation is a mode of historiography that treats Japan's interwar period as a transition from the universalist modernism of the 1920s to the nationalist fascism of the 1930s and 1940s. In such historiography, however, it is difficult to ascertain the kind of political or cultural formation that Ozu was operating in when, for example, he likens his life in the barracks to an American film.

> Sept. 30 (Sat) even for virtuoso Jules Furthman, Tom Brown without Amy Jolly would be a tough subject to turn into a film/If Tom Brown in rubber boots was spreading bleaching powder in Yperite, it couldn't even make a NON-SENSE film.
> *(Ozu and Tanaka 1993: 51)*

As we often see in Ozu's statements and diary entries, he seeks to make sense of his everyday experiences with the vocabulary of American film. The reference above is to Joseph von Sternberg's *Morocco* (1930). As well as consolidating the popularity of Sternberg and Marlene Dietrich in Hollywood, *Morocco* marked the dawn of the sound era in Japan as the first American film screened with subtitles, and it was received as a hallmark of Hollywood's golden age in the 1930s.[4] In a certain sense, it is completely correct to call this film an "American film" as long as we reconsider the adjoining of "America" and "film" as two inseparable terms in this era. In this film, centered on a love triangle involving Dietrich (an actress that the German immigrant Sternberg brought over from their home country), Gary Cooper (an American actor), and Adolphe Menjou (an American national who frequently played French characters), we see a typical example of the multi-nationalizing process in production and distribution that was underway in Hollywood in the 1930s.[5] In other words, the word "American" in the phrase "American film" did not signify the unitary nature of the nation state but rather the hybridity engendered by cultural flows. The subject matter of this "American film," thus redefined, was the Western powers fighting over hegemony in the Islamic world during World War I, and the exotic world of border-crossing Foreign Legion members who were stationed in a Moroccan town that serves as a kind of a demilitarized zone.

That Ozu likened his own military life to what is depicted in *Morocco* has significance beyond simply showing him masquerading as a modern urbanite. First of all, Ozu perceived, consciously or subconsciously, that the military exercises in Hisai positioned him within the imperialist formation of power in the first half of the twentieth century. Both Ozu and Tom Brown—the Foreign Legion soldier played by Gary Cooper—were swallowed up in the whirlpool of colonialist desire, although the territories and the decades were different. More importantly, such colonialist desire coexisted with a contradictory cosmopolitan worldview, both in Ozu's internal world and the imaginary world of *Morocco*. In the modern world that the two characters inhabit, these two worldviews were not necessarily mutually exclusive. On the contrary, in *Morocco*, colonialist desire actually mediates the cosmopolitan worldview, bringing it into existence. Ozu's imagination, which linked military exercises in Hisai with the world of *Morocco*, throws into chaos the school of thought that tries to consider the Ozu who loved American films as separate from the Ozu who eventually served in the Second Sino-Japanese War and participated in poison gas campaigns. Perhaps not only for Ozu, but also for those living in the interwar period, "American film" was never seen simply as a neutral symbol of modernity. Rather, the kind of modernity and modernism embodied by American films contained within itself the residues of the political and cultural power relations from the late nineteenth century to the twentieth century. Reconsidered from this standpoint, "American film" was as an embodiment of the dynamic processes through which cinema reconstituted itself from the apparent fragmentation of the "universal visual language" brought about by the "talkies" as a medium that visualized the contradictions and negotiations occurring on the borderlines of culture, people, and nation, during the interwar period in which a new geopolitics driven by powerful American capitalism repainted the nineteenth-century topographies of imperial powers.

This chapter considers two works that are representative of early Ozu, *Sono yo no tsuma* (*That Night's Wife*, 1930) and *Hijōsen no onna* (*Dragnet Girl*, 1933), which were also emblematic of "Shochiku Kamata Modernism," a brand that defined Japanese cinema through the 1920s and 1930s.[6] One immediately notices American cinema's influence on these films both in terms of narrative and style. David Bordwell, who located the development of Ozu's filmic style during the silent period within the modern life of early Showa Japan and the extensive influence that Hollywood films had on various filmmakers, points out that these two works stylistically emulate Hollywood crime melodramas by directors such as Sternberg, Howard Hawks, and Mervyn

LeRoy (Bordwell 1988: 207). For example, the editing in the opening scene of *That Night's Wife* with the policeman and the vagabond, the abrupt close-ups of the telephone receiver and pistol, and the use of cross-cutting (rarely seen in Ozu) are all expressions typically seen in crime films, and attest to Ozu's rigorous efforts to research and assimilate the genre's iconography into his films. Furthermore, *Dragnet Girl*, made in the wake of the Japanese release of major gangster films such as *Little Caesar* (1930), *The Public Enemy* (1931), and *Scarface* (1932), exemplifies the extent to which Ozu systematically absorbed the genre's conventions while also reformulating them for the setting, which appears to be taken straight from Hollywood gangster films and grafted onto the cityscape of Yokohama. For example, the linearity of the male protagonist's actions in gangster films is juxtaposed with the private, closed territory of the female protagonists, thereby engendering a drama of conflict. The women depicted in *That Night's Wife* and *Dragnet Girl* symbolize immobility associated with "motherhood" or "family," and mark the site torn by the contradictory dynamism imposed on them from the outside. As such, they play a pivotal role in creating a melodramatic undercurrent in the film. These works fulfill what Thomas Elsaesser provides as the central characteristics of melodramatic tradition: "the structural changes from linear externalisation of action to a sublimation of dramatic values into more complex forms of symbolisation" (Elsaesser 1987: 57). As such, they demonstrate that Ozu had accurately inherited the characteristics of two major genres constituting American film.

There appears to be nothing political about these works, which we might interpret as refined instances of the kind of cultural translation that took place during the interwar period. Beneath the surface, however, both films register the imprints of multiple sets of asymmetrical power relations. We cannot ignore the fact that the powerful ripple effects produced by the arrival of popular culture from North America occurred against the backdrop of an unequal relation between the rapid growth of the American economy in the wake of World War I and Asia's rising powers. As a genre, however, gangster films register within themselves the impact of changing modern urban spaces, growing consumer culture, and the influx of working-class immigrants to North America. Furthermore, if the urban space of the 1930s that is depicted in both of Ozu's films appears cosmopolitan, it contained in its fabric the regional and class disparity made wider with each recession and accompanying flow of international migration of labor from the country to the city, as well as the colonialist expansionist policies that were promoted in response to this disparity. In light of these conditions, we must acknowledge that it simply would not suffice to treat early Ozu's strong inclination toward American films merely as a matter of style. Just as the modernist gestures of his everyday life concealed other aspects of his existence as a member of the nation state or a foot soldier of colonialism, his formalist experimentation engaging with Hollywood norms contained within itself cultural and political fault lines that traversed and divided 1930s Japan. Perhaps such fault lines were smoothed over by the "universalist" and all-inclusive styles of classical Hollywood, which by then had consolidated its position as the global visual language.

With these points in mind, in this chapter, I aim to offer an analysis of Ozu's works that turns our attention to the contradictions latent in modern life that were brought about by American consumer culture, and to reveal the fault lines immanent within the modern city stylized by Hollywood cinema. At first glance, Ozu appears to be pursuing the pure experimentation of visual language in these crime melodramas set against the backdrop of a 1930s urban space. By virtue of the genre conventions that are used to depict the conflicts surrounding various borderlines drawn in the city, however, did he not unwittingly give expression to the anxiety surrounding the volatile boundaries of Japan, a nation state negotiating its place amidst the imperial powers of the first half of the twentieth century? Notably, this expression takes place in the form of a politics of space that the two genres—gangster film and melodrama—engender. Ozu's seemingly cosmopolitan

cityscape and the dramatic conflicts that he depicts allude to the ambivalence of the imagined community mediated by American films and their infusion of modernism into the everyday. Beneath the illusion of global universalism lurked a geopolitical cartography of the modern world that was divided up by the interests of nation states and capital.

Borders within the modern city: *That Night's Wife*

A solitary policeman slowly walks by the façade of an austere stone building. It is the dead of night and the city is deserted. Is he on patrol? He suddenly stops mid-stride, as if he has found something suspicious. Following a cut, a vagabond sleeping in the shadow of a pillar comes into view. He is shooed away by the policeman, who sees to it that the vagrant actually leaves the premises before continuing on patrol. Meanwhile, the vagrant takes refuge in the shadow of another building. He surveys his surroundings and then goes back to sleep with relief (Figure 1.1).

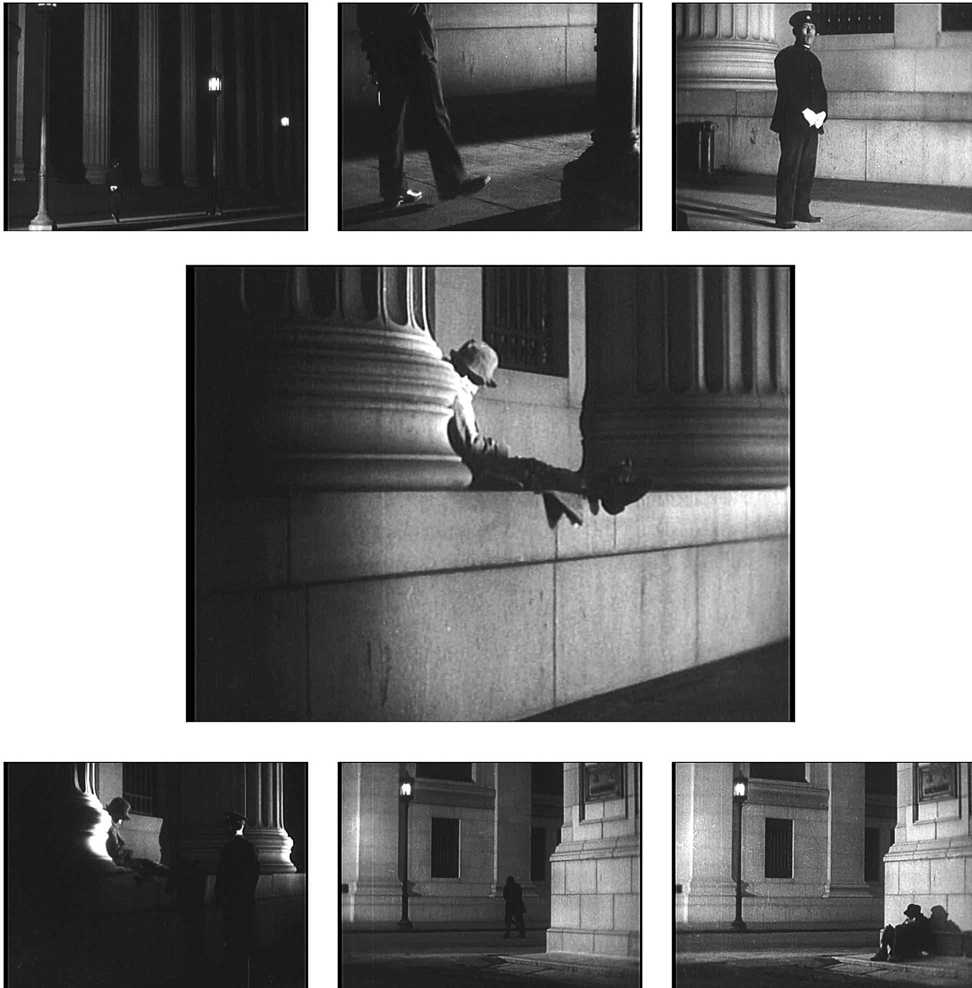

Figure 1.1 A vagrant roosting at a building in the business district. Stills from *That Night's Wife*.
Source: Ozu Yasujirō, 1930.

As Bordwell has pointed out, this opening sequence of Ozu's 1930 film, *That Night's Wife*, bewilders viewers with its roundaboutness and false expectations (Bordwell 1988: 207). Neither the policeman nor the vagabond appears again as the narrative unfolds; in fact, they have no direct bearing on the narrative. Although superfluous to the plot, this sequence imparts information that is decisively important to the film. In a narrow sense, we can interpret the vagrant, who roosts at a building in the business district, as a historically specific sign of 1930, the year the film was made, and a reminder that the worldwide impact of the Great Depression that started the previous year had reached the Far East. The Wall Street Crash, which abruptly hit the nation's major export partner while Japan's economy had not fully recovered from the earlier domestic financial crisis (*Shōwa kinyū kyōkō*), landed a serious blow to Japan's economy, driving masses of unemployed, with nowhere else to go, out onto the city streets. It was evident that Tokyo, or the "Unemployed City," as the author Tokunaga Sunao rechristened it, was at a crossroad. There was a growing, stifling sense within the urban culture that had flourished in the era of "Taishō democracy" as the fascist era and militarism drew nigh. Domestically, in 1928, under the provisions of the Peace Preservation Act, leftists were arrested on a wide scale, and thought censorship by the state steadily grew increasingly severe. Overseas, with the outbreak of the Manchurian Incident in 1931, Japan's imperialist ambition to advance into continental China is finally played out in reality, with North China as the point of departure. The vagabond in the opening scene gave a material form to the general anxiety internalized by the masses at the time, but the character's significance extends further. It is equally important that the policeman shoos off the vagabond precisely because, as a vagrant—a figure without a permanent home—his presence as a negative symbol was considered "improper" in the Nihonbashi or Marunouchi business districts, center stages for Japanese modernity. This scene visualizes the borderlines running right through the foundation of "Tokyo" as a modern city and the problems aroused by crossing them. The vagrant in this scene breaches class boundaries and corresponding borderlines mapped onto urban space. Furthermore, this act of "border crossing" makes the vagrant a double for the protagonist, the father who appears as the criminal in the hold-up scene that jump-starts the plot, thus offering an allegory for the entire narrative.

Throughout *That Night's Wife*, both the narrative and stylistic features give viewers the strong impression that cultural flows, mediated by urban space, structure the foundation of the epoch we call "modernity." Based on Oscar Schisgall's short story "Nine to Nine" (published in Japanese in the magazine *Shinseinen*), this film is notable for its commentary on modern cities that emerged in the 1920s and 1930s and Hollywood's obvious influence. The influence of Hollywood's two biggest genres, crime film and family melodrama, is particularly notable, playing out on both narrative and stylistic levels. While the rapid-fire sequencing of short shots that make up the hold-up and chase scene in the first half of the film reminds viewers of 1920s and 1930s American gangster films, the familial love centering on a sick child and a mother's self-sacrificing love, themes central to melodrama, provide the main narrative thread. Moreover, the modern business districts that evoke New York and Berlin, the "borderless" (*mukokuseki*) *mise en scène* of the apartment room, and the casting of Yamamoto Tōgō, who had played villains and gangsters in 1920s Hollywood, helped create a fictional world devoid of signs (with the exception of Yagumo Emiko's kimono) that readily identify the locality of Japan. Hollywood's influence on Ozu and the representation of the modern city in his films attest to the "fluidity of culture" in the general sense of the term. I refer here to the movement of culture that came with the rise of US capitalist economy in the interwar period and the global influence of Hollywood film, its important export industry. The urban landscape that appears in *That Night's Wife* proves that Japan was no exception to the world-contemporaneous phenomenon in which American urban culture held sway over local spaces. That the film reproduced

American film styles with such a high degree of perfection attests to the "universality" of the visual language we call classical Hollywood film, and to cinema as the appropriate medium for expressing and propagating the newly reborn urban spaces.

Whether we use a cultural imperialist model to interpret Ozu's crime melodrama or adopt a formalist determinist model with the view of generating normative visual grammar, these are both teleological models that assume a unilateral transmission of Euro-American styles of culture to non-Western locales. With such models, it is difficult to detect the friction generated in the process of receiving the propagated culture, or to recognize the complicated background of national and cultural power relations. The urban consumer culture embodied by Hollywood cinema might have brought about a homogenization of space, but the fluidity that transgressed multiple borders intensified opposition by different cultures, and heightened public awareness of the rifts and fissures that emerged within this same space. As cultures travel at an ever-accelerating speed, the perceptual experience of modern citizens becomes fragmented, forcing them to live in hybrid spaces. This phenomenon finds expression, for example, in the technique of montage. Meanwhile, fluid cultural experiences laid bare the topography of uneven power relations that divided up the world in the twentieth century, stoking fear over the disorder brought about by border crossing, but also stirring up interest in the "other side" of the border. All these various kinds of borderlines are condensed in the small garret apartment that becomes the main stage for *That Night's Wife*, on which the drama of border crossings and reversals are repeatedly staged.

The imperial metropolis: the fault lines of modern urban space

Let us look at the opening scene once again. The vagrant crouching in the business district's shadows appears as a seedy figure, that is, he is introduced as the city's Other who has no place in the landscape. His abject presence leaves a strong impression on the viewers, for it makes visible the borderlines buried within the unconscious of the modern city. As Narita Ryūichi points out, the emergence of Tokyo as a modern city was synchronous with the process of the city's discovery of its Other, its underclass. In the latter half of the nineteenth century, progression of industrialization and the development of distribution networks spread across the entirety of Japan and engendered a demographic flow headed from the country to the city. In order to regulate the confusion brought about by the increasing mobility of the population, early Meiji administrators partitioned the urban space according to boundaries between civilized/uncivilized, order/chaos, and hygiene/impurity. By delimiting the areas and the population that signified negative valences, they were able to produce a foundational image of the modern city as its inverse, a space marked by positive valences (Narita 2003: 8–12). Weren't these borderlines, the preconditions for the formation of such urban space, precisely what the vagabond trespassed in the opening scene?

The stratification of space and people through the demarcation of borderlines can be placed within the shared context of urbanization as it occurred all over the world. In the modern world, experiences of urban space since the nineteenth century became meaningful and opened up a new cultural dimension that was entirely different from all precedents. As the growth of industrial society prompted the endless expansion of cities, the influx of immigrants from the outside and their heterogeneous cultures reorganized the existing urban space.[7] Thus, the city of Tokyo, which had completed its developmental phase by the dawn of the twentieth century, continued to undergo accelerated transformations. People flowing into the city eventually formed family units, settled down, and constituted a new middle class, thereby making the urban spaces multilayered. The structural changes that were prompted by the rapid population

growth in the great city of Tokyo manifested themselves, for instance, through the prevalence of violent attacks occurring in the burned out fields of Tokyo in the wake of the Great Kantō Earthquake: the massacre of Korean residents and the assassination of the entire household of the anarchists Ōsugi Sakae and Itō Noe. With the city destroyed to ground zero, the intricate boundaries embedded within it became visible, intensifying feuds between cultures, races, and classes that could no longer be contained by neat, binary schema. The capital of modern Japan, reduced to chaos by the earthquake, gradually regained order through government-led reconstruction and entered a new phase in its history. While consumer culture blossomed and urban areas expanded, however, post-earthquake Tokyo's urban space, fragmented by the labor-management opposition intensified by the successive recessions and the emergence of new ideas about sexuality and class, contained within it conflicts that were more complicated than before. It is easy to see that without such a multilayered and dynamic city space, the vagabond in the opening sequence could have neither staged his border crossing nor got into trouble doing so. This act of border crossing would be repeated in the subsequent hold-up scene in the business district by the father, played by Okada Tokihiko.

The hold-up sequence taking place in an office and the subsequent chase scene unfolding in a brick and concrete Western cityscape both inherit the style of the Hollywood crime film. Through cross-cutting, these two scenes are presented in contrast to the interior space of the apartment room where the mother and daughter await. What links the public space of the business district and the private domestic space, two spaces that originally have no reason to be mixed together, is the motive for the father's crime—"saving his sick daughter"—that provides the melodramatic impetus. Here, the classical melodramatic storyline, which involves defending a beleaguered virtue (in this case, the ideal of "family"), displays a space of dualism, another characteristic of melodrama. In the multilayered cityscape of post-earthquake Tokyo, however, it was no longer possible to grasp space in terms of positive–negative binaries, or to divide up the construction of space in *That Night's Wife* into simple binaries of good versus evil, or the utopian rural community versus the crime-filled big city. Fueled by the melodramatic charge, the father transgresses the demarcation between public and private, which was overlaid with the various rifts and fissures that defined 1930s Japan.

One of the rifts has to do with class difference, as it presents itself in the cross-cutting between the two spaces. In an effort to save his sick daughter, the father crosses over to the wrong side of the law, which in practical terms meant crossing over from his cheap apartment on the outskirts of the city to the Marunouchi business district: from a low-income neighborhood to the capitalist city. The huge buildings that symbolize the city's shining façade in daylight turn into daunting walls that block the father's intrusion in the dark of night. Just as with the vagrant from the first scene, the father is an intruder in this space and subject to removal. Meanwhile, in the apartment where his family awaits, we see paint cans, posters, and signboards that give away his occupation as a commercial painter. We might say that as a type of intellectual laborer, he shares many problems with the white-collar workers who made up the majority of the daytime population of the business district, the people that the critic Aono Suekichi called "the embodiment of commodified *knowledge* and *skills*, the salaryman" (Aono 1930: 32). Caught between the affluent and the proletariat and having to bear the "hardship" and "predicament" of both, the salaryman was at once the product and greatest victim of modern capitalism. The father's profession as a commercial painter, which mediates the capitalist phantasmagoric process of "commodification," caricaturizes the tragedy of the salaryman, a class that circulated in the market in commodity form. Faced with the reality of poverty, he seeks to escape from the shackles of class relations through the direct action of seizing capital. It is at this moment that he is expelled from the public space as a criminal. This was not that far from the reality inhabited

by the salaryman class, one that was defined by the worldwide recession and ensuing mass unemployment. Seen this way, the business district in daylight and the underworld in the darkness of night appear as two sides of the same coin, as do the salaryman and the thieving father. Furthermore, the business district, with its appearance straight out of a Hollywood crime film, emerges as an allegorical space stamped by the particular historical context of 1930s Tokyo.

It was not that long before this film was produced that the cityscape of the business district, where the father in *That Night's Wife* stages a hold-up, was completed. It is all but certain that the group of modern buildings, which actually existed in 1930s Tokyo, appeared during the construction rush in the first few years after the earthquake (Matsuba 1988). With their rows of buildings incorporating contemporary Euro-American technology and style, business districts served as billboards advertising Tokyo as a truly modern city that ranked among the world's great metropolises. Within this newly rebuilt urban space, Tokyo re-emerged as a stage for modern life just as it had appeared in Ozu's dream. If these bevies of buildings appeared to prove the universality of the global experience of modernity, they were also symbols of the unevenness produced by the fluidity of international capital. Raymond Williams, who recognized the politics latent in the modernist notion of universalism, points out that the development of modern cities in Europe was intrinsically tied to imperialism. We cannot think of the sensory experience that the modern city reconfigured or the modernist aesthetics it produced without considering "the magnetic force that concentrated power and wealth in the imperial metropolis and the simultaneous wide-ranging access to marginalized cultures, that crossed national borders" (Williams 1989: 44). Similarly, in the case of the urban space of Tokyo, the capital of modern Japan, an increasingly visible imperial power of Asia, we cannot forget the context of colonialist power relations and the fluidity of culture and capital that they generated. If Tokyo's business district, with a proud splendor matching that of Euro-American metropolises, symbolized the transmission of culture from the West to Asia, it also attested to modern Japan's full-fledged mobilization of its imperial expansionist policies.

In the shadow of the immense commercial and political power of the imperial capital, Harry Harootunian observed, there were a number of people who had been completely depleted in the process of modernizing the city. Against the backdrop of a clear contrast between urban and rural, center and periphery, there was the uneven progress experienced by the colonizers and the colonized (Harootunian 2000: 313). For example, in early works like *Jidai to nōsei* (The Times and Agricultural Policy), Yanagita Kunio had already pointed out that migration from rural to urban areas was creating an uneven distribution of capital and labor, and the capital accumulated in the center, Tokyo, bankrolled the nation's colonial policy. He writes:

> Exhausting every means possible, they concentrate the savings made in rural areas to the center. Then, before the capital finds its way back to the countryside, they use it for managing Manchuria and Korea, or they use it wholesale to purchase foreign mines and railways; it is common to invest capital that's not even in surplus, for the sake of the nation's expansionist policy.
>
> *(Yanagita 1998 [1910]: 269–270)*

Yanagita realized that the flow of human and material resources from rural areas to the urban center could be contextualized within the general law of global capitalism. The immense network of production, circulation, distribution, and consumption, on which the city's dynamism depends, holds within it the "process that sweeps immigrants from the countryside and turns them into urban migrants and exiles within their own country" (Harootunian 2000: 317). In particular, the recession that assailed Japan in 1930 rendered urban exiles visible as hoards of

unemployed. It is fair to say that the border crossing and vagrancy that repeatedly appear in *That Night's Wife* give tangible form to this process of deterritorialization brought about by urbanization and the experience of being exiled from home. To resolve the crisis brought about by depleted domestic capital and markets, the project of urban development that was accomplished by exploiting rural areas expanded beyond national borders. In 1930s Japan, cultivating foreign markets and promoting emigration policy were considered an efficacious plan for solving domestic economic issues, particularly rural poverty.[8] In 1931, the year after *That Night's Wife* premièred, the Kwantung Army used the bombing of the South Manchuria Railway outside of Shenyang as pretext to invade northeast China. This event, known as the Manchurian Incident, marked the beginning of a new phase in Japan's colonial policy.

The division between urban and rural areas, marked by uneven development within Japan, and the borders that separated the empire's interior from its exterior that were mapped onto the stratified urban boundaries depicted in *That Night's Wife*, already registered public–private and capitalist–proletariat divisions. Once we see the city as an imperial metropolis, we gain a new perspective on its space, not merely as an expression of or a medium for a universal experience of modernity, but also as a contested space enmeshed with cultural, class, and ethnic divisions brought about by the fluidity of capital. This returns us to film techniques such as cross-cutting and montage, which served as effective methods to visualize the modern city. On the one hand, these techniques mediated the globalization of the modernism of consumer culture. On the other hand, they confirmed that modernism was at once determined and fragmented by the asymmetrical relation between the colonized and the colonizer. Edward Said emphasized the importance of "simultaneously recognizing both the history of the oppressed Other and the dominant discursive history that works against (or with) it" when we reread modern history (Said 1993: 53). He further points out that, within the imperialist topography that encompasses both colonizing and colonized nations, even the formal experiments of modernist writers, which on the surface appear unrelated to colonialist desire, cannot evade its influence. The formal characteristics of modernist culture, such as decentralization, transference, and irony, are clearly influenced by two of the primary anxiety-inducing factors that are the consequences of imperialism, namely, "oppositional indigenous people" and "the existence of other empires" (Said 1993: 188–189). These characteristics, which tend to be regarded as being born from the intrinsic dynamics of Western culture and society, can also be read as stylistic responses summoned by the cultural fluidity of imperialism as it inevitably encountered the Other.

The internal other within the nation state

When considering the cultural and political contexts surrounding the urban space depicted in Ozu's crime melodramas, we should remember that Ozu was referencing the "gangster film" genre. Although this genre is categorized as one of the classical Hollywood genres, it was marked by the presence of "cultural others" from its inception, and developed as a means to visualize them. In Prohibition-era America (1920–1933), silent gangster films were enlisted in the middle-class morality campaign that simultaneously sought to redeem racial ghettos made up of immigrants while also stigmatizing them. Taking the reality of the ghetto and turning it into a Victorian middle-class fantasy of "seeing how the other side lives" was a method to diffuse the destabilizing movements of immigration, industrialization, urbanization, and consumerism. Jonathan Munby points out that, during the recession era of the early 1930s, representations of gangsters shifted from "cultural others" to objects for national self-identification that crossed class and racial lines, taking "the desires of 'new' Americans for a fairer share of the American pie" as the pivot point (Munby 1999: 4). It is worth noting that Ozu's crime melodramas, which

translated and adapted the gangster genre, inherited the preoccupation with racial and cultural Others that had formed the basis of this Hollywood archetype. Consciously or not, by emulating Hollywood film grammar, Ozu gave his films a cosmopolitan appearance while bringing the various fissures that divided 1930s Japan into relief. Even when a cultural form transmitted from America to Asia is assimilated into the local film culture, we see the subject of "border crossing" being reiterated, albeit in the local context.

A similar observation can be made of melodrama, the other film genre underpinning *That Night's Wife*, as the narrative style that gave expression to the bourgeoisie's confusion about and reaction against social change. According to concurrent observations made by Peter Brooks and Thomas Elsaesser, melodrama arose from the French Revolution and its aftermath, and re-emerged in subsequent periods of upheaval, providing the means to understand social changes in personal contexts and a sentimental lexicon (Brooks 1995: 14–17; Elsaesser 1987: 45–50). As Elsaesser notes, melodrama, which still retained the support of the masses into the nineteenth century, became the means to materialize "Industrialisation, urbanisation and nascent entrepreneurial capitalism" in literature (Elsaesser 1987: 48). In the first place, the dualism of good versus evil, self versus other, and order versus confusion that formed the basis of the gangster film genre overlaps at many points with the moral dualism on which classical melodrama is formed (granted, with gangs becoming mythologized as an object of self-identification, the dichotomies became ambiguous). In a modern society over-determined by the fluid dynamism of capitalism, however, the difficulty of delineating territories and the plurality of borders become the subject matter for narrative. The principle of melodrama became fragmented, shaken by the flows of capital and culture across national borders in the twentieth century and no longer able to be contained by the dualism of good and evil.[9] Moreover, by merging with the medium of film and further developing as the representative mode of American cinema, melodrama itself started to cross national borders and became a representational form mediating the increasingly pluralizing world. In the context of 1930s Japan, and for Ozu, who invoked melodramatic style in *That Night's Wife*, melodrama registered as this border-transgressing mode that the immense power of Hollywood capital spread across East Asia.

In *That Night's Wife*, however, melodrama is presented to the audience as a mode that resists the kinds of border crossing symbolized by the modern city, thanks to the use of cross-cutting that juxtaposes melodrama against the urban mode of crime film. The urban space embellished with the speed and shock so prevalent in gangster films is juxtaposed with the closed territory of the melodramatic household. The contrast between the two genres is made even more conspicuous by the gendered difference between the linearity of the father's actions and the immobility of the mother waiting for his return. In citing two of the major American genres—gangster film and melodrama—Ozu's focuses less on the interracial and cross-cultural encounters and tensions that these genres give formal expression to, and more on the bourgeois moral dualism on which these genres are based, and to which he returns through his concern with assimilating and identifying with the visual language of Hollywood. The film sets in motion a dialectic between the gangster film and melodrama that is ultimately sublimated by the morality of civil society that the "household" embodies. The father who commits the crime gives up on escaping because of his love for his family, especially his child, and he chooses to surrender and atone for his sins so that some day he might live with his family again. Even if the story's conclusion conforms to bourgeois family morals, the conflicting spaces portrayed in the process of arriving there do not necessarily conform to the dualist principles of genre films. As noted above, the urban space of 1930s Japan depicted in the film can hardly be contained by the spatial dualism that is taken for granted in classical melodrama: this urban space was over-determined by various borders running along the public–private, capitalist–laborer, urban–rural, and colonizing–colonized axes that divided up the modern world.

Similarly, the "household" depicted in the film manifests itself as a space fragmented by consumer culture and penetrated by global capitalism, despite being positioned as a bulwark against the fluidity of the modern city. When the dualist logic providing the basis for gangster film and melodrama breaks down as the modern world becomes further pluralized, American cinema, the object of Ozu's identification, ceases to function as a transparent medium, exposing its inherent hybridity and border-crossing quality.

The fragmented room

Let us move on to study the space of the apartment that the family inhabits. As in other early Ozu films, we see posters of Hollywood titles such as *A Broadway Scandal* (1918) and *Gentlemen of the Press* (1929) pinned to the wall. Typically understood as self-referential citations of the director's affinity for American films, in this particular context, these images serve the function of ridding the room of Japanese indigeneity, transforming it into a space appropriate for Hollywood's visual language. Perhaps this is also why, for example, the walls are covered with other miscellaneous images.[10] This space, with its confusing line-up of raw visual images in diverse genres such as signs, paintings, postcards, and textiles, reminds one of a contemporary Dadaist or constructivist collage rather than a film set. In front of a large world map on the wall rests a pile of canvases large and small, among which one finds a cubist oil painting, a Russian futurist poster, a sketch in the eastern European avant-garde style, and art deco signboards with the words "DANCE" and "JAZZ" written in large letters. As we have seen, this flood of visual symbols, resembling a scattered assortment of early twentieth-century artistic styles from around the world, is justified by the father's profession as a commercial painter. In fact, although this assemblage of images might appear like a random assortment, it accurately reproduced the look of 1930s commercial art in Japan, which vigorously incorporated contemporary trends in Western art.[11] Through these images of commercial culture, this cramped Tokyo attic apartment opens up to the contemporaneous global world. Just as the Hollywood film posters incorporated in many of Ozu's films served the role of ridding the space of Japanese indigeneity, the images scattered around the apartment in *That Night's Wife* served to deterritorialize the cinematic space, and reorganize it in the logic of another collective, of consumer culture mediated by border-crossing images.

The irony of this scene is that despite its compositional rigor, the collage that forms the backdrop reveals the winding road that twentieth-century aesthetic modernism had traveled. In other words, in this room where the commercial painter's family lives, avant-garde art style represents the very bourgeois values it is meant to repudiate, having been fragmented and decontextualized as indexes of the commodity economy. Rather than signifying the modernist aesthetic concept of global universalism, the multinationality of this film's household space ultimately reveals that in the real world, this universalism can only manifest as global capitalism mediated by commodity forms. At the same time, this is also an internal space that, fragmented by miscellaneous images, internalizes the modern city with a booming consumer culture as its self-image. Consumer culture, which rapidly permeated interwar Japan, gave form to people's desires and fantasies, played out on city streets.[12] As a commercial painter, the father in *That Night's Wife* serves as the intermediary between the fantasy represented by commodities and the people on the streets. What is interesting here, however, is that despite the illusion of identification evoked by commodities, the apartment, as the commercial painter's personal space, ends up being fragmented by the signboards and posters. Instead of existing as a stable and closed territory in counterpoint to the fluid urban space outside, the domestic space opens up to the city's fluidity, manifesting itself as a site where the divided self-image of the modern subject is visualized.

The ambivalence of the domestic space in the film is fleshed out by the family's mother, Mayumi, played by Yagumo Emiko. As a mother who protects the home and loves her child, and the only character appearing in Japanese clothing, Mayumi is an icon symbolizing the space of melodrama. The way in which she keeps vigil over her sick child gives concrete form to the primordial image associated with "motherhood." Even as she is shaken by the unrest outside the apartment and by the internal disquiet caused by her daughter's illness, as a symbol of domestic stability, it is as if she provides resistance against the fluidity of urban space. In fact, when the father returns home after evading the police, a momentary form of equilibrium appears to be restored as the father–mother–daughter triad coheres as a "family." Such fleeting stability gives way, however, when the pursuant, detective Kagawa, intrudes into the apartment. The borderlines defining their roles begin to waver.

Shaken by the arrival of an uninvited guest, Mayumi instructs her husband to hide behind a curtain before she opens the door. Kagawa barges into the room, ignoring her protest. Taking an unreserved look around the apartment, he picks up a felt hat from the table and places it on Mayumi's head, indicating to her that he knows her husband is present in the room: "To tell the truth, I just escorted your husband here by car." The suspenseful exchange between Kagawa, a detective that appears to have been carbon-copied from Hollywood gangster films, and Mayumi, who tries to repel him by insisting on her husband's absence, constitutes the film's climax, and the sequence that raises the most important questions. The felt hat that Kagawa places on Mayumi's head belongs to her husband, and thus gives away his presence. Realizing this, she quickly takes it off, but the detective walks straight toward the husband standing behind the curtain and thrusts his gun at him. Meanwhile, Mayumi leaps to the child's bed where her husband's pistol is stashed, creeps up behind the detective, and presses the gun to his side: "Drop the pistol!" She collects Kagawa's pistol from the table, and with a ready gun in each hand, she instructs her husband, still behind the curtain, to escape quickly.

The discordant symbolism of the felt hat on Mayumi's Japanese hairstyle, or the pistols she holds steady in front of her, captivates the viewers with their alluring "hybridity." In this sequence, her body marks the site where numerous fault lines separating opposing territories intersect. First, she crosses the boundary demarcating genders. The hat on her head affects a transgendered masquerade; needless to say, the guns in her hands are symbols of masculinity. Second, because a felt hat worn at a deep tilt by a character functions as a sign of fraternal association among gang members in Hollywood crime films, we can say that Mayumi trespasses the cultural borders between Asia and the West. Moreover, by disarming Kagawa using her husband's gun and arming herself with two guns—emulating a gesture common in gangster films—she succeeds in flipping the situation so that she is in the position of keeping Kagawa in check. This marks the turning point for the husband, who has been put into the position of being protected by his wife. He forgoes escaping the apartment in favor of staying to look after their sick daughter, thus transitioning toward a maternal role. As they wait for daybreak, the roles of the three characters remain reversed: the wife armed with guns, the helpless detective deprived of his gun, and the husband who is feminized as he performs a mother's role.

The fissures emerging on the body of the mother, an icon in melodrama that symbolized the private domestic sphere, call into question the natural or primordial connotations associated with the concept of "motherhood." It was only in the Meiji era (1868–1912), when the "household" (*ie*) system was restructured with the establishment of the family register system, that a concept of "family" that was contingent on the icon of a loving mother emerged in Japanese public discourse. After emerging as a discursive concept, "family" permeated to the level of the masses through communication networks such as education and mass media. Meanwhile, it was mapped onto real world coordinates, as the rapid growth of the urban population after World