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Section V: The Yakuza Film

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A Genre ‘Endorsed by the People’: Addressing the Appeal of The Yakuza Film

Before collecting his Order of Culture Award in 2013, veteran yakuza film actor Takakura Ken (1931-) told journalists ‘If you want to understand why the yakuza films were endorsed by the people, you can’t do it without thinking of the social situation at the time’.¹ Takakura’s comment clearly links his high-profile award for services to Japanese culture with the yakuza genre’s popular appeal, apparent in box office records, contemporary journalism and in the high incidence of serials and remakes of yakuza tales. This chapter suggests that the genre’s popularity and consequent impact on Japanese and global cinemas can be better understood by taking a wider approach to the genre than extant scholarship allows.

Drawing from Japanese-language film criticism of the 1960s and 1970s, this chapter makes a case for the yakuza film as a wide-ranging genre encompassing diverse narratives and imagery pre-coded in earlier film genres and cultural products. Like the wandering gambler characters (*matatabi mono*) on which modern yakuza film protagonists are based, the yakuza genre has absorbed influence from its surroundings, picking up tropes from other film genres and art forms, as well as real-life events. Takakura’s reference to ‘the social situation at the time’ can be interpreted in terms of reference to real-life social change, which scholars such as Isolde Standish (2000; 2005) read in the narratives of 1960s and 1970s yakuza film. However, the ‘social situation’ of this era must also be understood as highly media-aware; as cinema attendance declined from a peak of over one billion viewers per year in 1958,² remaining audiences in the 1960s and 1970s were film-literate and highly attuned to influences and borrowings from other periods and genres in the yakuza film.

Understanding the roots of the yakuza genre therefore allows us to better understand its popular reception.

Extant scholarship has generally concerned itself with the 'pure' yakuza film; contemporary tales set in 1970s urban Japan or in prisons, focusing on young male protagonists and imagined to cater to a largely masculine audience.³ However criticism published in popular film magazines of the period such as *Kinema Junpō* and *Eiga Geijutsu* shows that a large number of yakuza films featured female yakuza or gambler protagonists. My own interviews with viewers indicate the audience of the yakuza film to have included elite students of both genders, and suburban as well as urban audiences. It is therefore a secondary project of this chapter to reinstate the gender balance of 1960s and 1970s film criticism and audiences into contemporary accounts of the yakuza genre, placing analysis of female yakuza characters and narratives alongside their male contemporaries.

Taking a wider approach to the yakuza film in terms of both genre and gender allows us to understand more about its popular appeal. While extant scholarship on male yakuza heroes notes the nostalgia of yakuza narratives and imagery, a gender-balanced approach reveals a range of emotional cues at work in the yakuza genre, from desire to melodramatic affect. Considering the genre as a hybrid of pre-established tropes, we can understand the emotion central to the yakuza film as an element borrowed and repeated from earlier narratives. As these tropes are entrenched in popular imaginaries through repetition, their emotional impact is heightened by their easy recognisability. Broadening our definitions of the yakuza genre and the gender of its protagonists therefore allows us to better understand its emotional appeal.

A Brief History of the Yakuza Film

Between 1960 and 1976, films featuring yakuza characters consistently ranked among the top ten box office earners, and gradually began to appear in critics and viewers' lists of the best films of each year.⁴ While the yakuza genre is now one of Japanese cinema's best known however, its development as a stand-alone genre is relatively recent. Early films such as *Chūji's Travel Diary/ Chūji tabi nikki* (Ito Daisuke, 1927-1928, in three parts) told of the wandering gambler and swordsmen figures who would become contemporary yakuza, however, these films were not widely recognised as a genre in their own right until the postwar period. The 'wandering gambler' figure had been a recurring subject of popular entertainment since the Edo period (1603-1887), when wandering samurai (hata mono-yakko) and townsmen gangs (machi-yakko) came together to gamble. A sub-cultural identity grew around these gamblers (bakuto) and peddlers (tekiya), forming the basis of the modern yakuza legend.⁵ The bakuto gambler was referred to as a 'yakuza' on losing at cards – 'ya-ku-za' can be translated as 'eight, nine, three' – a losing hand in the hanafuda card game similar to blackjack.⁶ A loser at cards became a yakuza; a term subsequently applied to other fringe groups in the general sense of people who were considered 'good for nothing'.

In contrast to the culture depicted in 1970s yakuza film, Eiko Maruko Siniawer suggests that during the Edo period, yakuza culture was seen as 'neither extreme nor deviant'.⁷ As the Tokugawa shogunate weakened however, the yakuza began to operate in a power vacuum, challenging local and national authorities.⁸ Siniawer conflates the bakuto with the shishi, or 'men of spirit' who made up the 'violent arm of the modern state' under the Tokugawa shogunate; both used skills honed defending political and economic territories to attempt to overthrow the

shogunate and negotiate a favourable position for themselves during the Bakumatsu period of civil unrest (1860-1867).⁹ While the shishi did not survive the Meiji Restoration (1868), the bakuto went on to form the organised crime ‘families’ we recognise as modern yakuza.

The codes and rituals of contemporary yakuza film therefore draw from a wide range of historical influences; the vertical hierarchies of the yakuza ‘family’ stem from the Meiji re-organization of groups of bakuto and ex-shishi (shizoku) into structured quasi-legal bodies, while the formal introductions performed by yakuza characters such as Fuji Junko’s¹⁰ Oryū in *The Red Peony Gambler/ Hibotan bakuto* series (1968-1972) are borrowed from the wandering peddlers and craftsmen of the tekiya, who performed similar petitions for lodgings during their travels. The modern yakuza image also has antecedents in the legends of *kyōkaku* or ‘chivalrous commoners’, Robin Hood-style townsmen who protected their local communities. These figures are frequently referenced in yakuza film titles such as the series *An Account of the Chivalrous Commoners of Japan/ Nihon kyōkaku den* (1964-1971), and its female equivalent, the ‘*Nihon jokyōden*’ series including *Chivalrous Geisha/ Nihon jokyōden: kyōkaku geisha* (Yamashita Kōsaku, 1969) and *Bright Red Flower of Courage/ Nihon jokyōden: makkana dokyōbana* (Furuhata Yasuo, 1970).

The yakuza genre drew from popular myth as well as history; the Chūji character of *Chūji’s Travel Diary* is based on the quasi-mythical bakuto hero Kunisada Chūji (1810-1850) who epitomises many of the tropes still central to yakuza film.¹¹ Before his crucifixion by the Tokugawa authorities, Kunisada was a fencing student born into a farming family, similar in background to the *kyōkaku*, though somewhat less chivalrous. After murdering an opponent, he severed ties with his family and was removed from the village census, becoming a mushuku, or homeless

wanderer. As Kunisada picked up followers around modern-day Gunma prefecture assisted by the bakuto bosses of the region, his fame grew, and the modern yakuza legend of exiled warrior turned gang leader was born. Kunisada's legend fuses aspects of several pre-yakuza identities, from the *kyōkaku* to the *matatabi mono*, in much the same way as the yakuza genre film.

Drawing from such varied historical sources, it is easy to see why yakuza tales became popular in a variety of early mass media including woodblock prints (*ukiyo-e*), stage plays, and novels. Yakuza *eiga* similarly work across genres to attract a diverse range of audience demographics; with the postwar development of the *gurentai* style of yakuza gang modelled on American gangsters, the yakuza *eiga* came to incorporate elements that appealed to fans of historical drama (*jidaigeki*), samurai tales, the youth genre known as the 'sun tribe' (*taiyōzoku*), and even the romance film in sub-plots centred around love interests resisted, left behind or encountered on the road. In the late 1950s, Misora Hibari popularised the *jidaigeki* yakuza musical, while stars such as Takakura Ken, Fuji Junko and Kaji Meiko drew on both film and musical audience demographics by recording *enka*-style hits of the title songs of their 1960s and 1970s yakuza films.¹² In the early 1960s even the non-conformist avant-garde directors who comprised the studios' 'nouvelle vague' (*nuberu bāgu*) and would go on to spearhead the postwar independent film movement incorporated yakuza themes into films such as Imamura Shōhei's *Pigs and Battleships/ Buta to gunkan* (1964). The yakuza genre had diverse appeal due to such numerous sub-sets and offshoots.

The wide-ranging popularity of yakuza motifs is often ignored in contemporary scholarship, which tends to focus on the peak popularity of the yakuza genre in the 1970s. This late peak owes much to historical circumstance; despite, or

perhaps on account of the great popular appeal of yakuza tales, authorities took a dim view of the genre throughout the twentieth century, delaying its distribution and development. *Chūji's Travel Diary* had been popularly received in the late 1920s; part two of the trilogy was voted the best film of 1927 by critics in *Kinema Junpō*'s 'Top Ten', while part three was listed as the fourth best film of the same year.¹³ As Japan embarked on the expansionist Fifteen Years War in the Asia-Pacific region (1930-1945) however, yakuza heroes were considered 'unfit for wartime'.¹⁴ Though films featuring characters based on Kunisada were produced into the mid 1930s, wartime censorship significantly impeded the popular distribution of the yakuza film.

During the Allied occupation following Japan's defeat (1945-1952), occupying forces ran a similarly rigorous system of censorship. The offices of the Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers (hereafter SCAP) constructed a list of banned topics and a system for screening films for censorship violations both before and after production. Jidaigeki period dramas were banned on the grounds that their 'feudal' themes were reflective of the attitudes that had led Japan to war; as yakuza narratives focused on bakuto, shishi or *kyōkaku* were often set in the pre-modern era, yakuza films were banned along with period film during the occupation, though modern yakuza characters feature in SCAP-approved 'humanist' films such as *Drunken Angel* (*Yoidore tenshi*, Kurosawa Akira, 1948).

Yakuza motifs grew in popularity from the 1950s, though the studios were generally slow to begin production of the new genre. Within the postwar Japanese studio system, each of the 'big five' studios (Tōhō, Shōchiku, Tōei, Nikkatsu and Daiei) specialised in a particular genre or genres. Daiei and Tōhō produced jidaigeki films centred on samurai and *rōnin* (wandering master-less samurai) characters, as well as the chanbara (sword fighting) subgenre films, which would contribute tropes

and audience demographics to the yakuza film. Shōchiku made melodramas and *shomin eiga* ('common people', or petit-bourgeois films), while Nikkatsu developed the *taiyōzoku* youth genre and Tōhō made monster and sci-fi films (*kaijū eiga*) as well as award-winning drama. While most studios eventually produced films that could be described as yakuza *eiga*, Tōei marketed itself as the home of the yakuza genre film from the 1960s (though Daiei was first to produce a popular female yakuza series, with the *Woman Gambler/ Onna tobakushi* series (1967-1971) which ran to twelve instalments). By the 1970s, the studios were producing almost a hundred yakuza films a year, comprising over one fifth of total film production in Japan.¹⁵

As increasing purchase of television sets coincided with mass social movement towards the *danchi* apartment blocks in the suburbs, far from city centre cinemas, the restriction of housework to these spaces generally restricted the postwar housewife audience demographic to television rather than cinemas. Film production began to focus on student and working audiences, as studios attempted to 'increase their appeal for modern audiences by making more masculine films' (*otokoppoi eiga*)¹⁶ in 'rapid-fire' (*renpatsu*) succession.¹⁷ Cinema managers are reported to have 'deplored the yakuza film, on the grounds that female and teenage fans were few' (*jōsei no sukunai... jūdai fan ga kō sukunakute*),¹⁸ however the *Red Peony Gambler* series opened up yakuza film to a wider audience from 1968, becoming particularly popular with students of both genders.¹⁹ The first instalment screened as a double bill with *Soldier Gokudo* (*Heitai Gokudo*, Saeki Kiyoshi, 1968) in Tokyo on 14 September 1968, selling an unprecedented 30,200 tickets in the first week and 70% of that total in the following week, largely due to the popularity of stars Fuji Junko and Wakayama Tomisaburo.²⁰ While the *ninkyō* or 'chivalrous' yakuza film, which presented tales of self-sacrifice and adherence to *giri* (duty) over *ninjō* (personal

feeling), was originally marketed to a salaryman audience demographic, with its reflection of the hierarchal and anti-individualist structure of the Japanese company, the *ninkyō* yakuza film did not exclude female audiences. Standish suggests that Fuji's films 'opened up the genre to a female viewing position by specifically addressing issues of patriarchal loyalty as they applied to women', resulting in a female audience base which also attended the *ninkyō* yakuza films focused more closely on male characters, such as the Abashiri Prison/ Abashiri bangaichi series (1965-1968).²¹

In an effort to appeal to younger audiences, the studios began to produce an anti-authoritarian subgenre of yakuza film based on memoirs and news events known as the *jitsuroku* or 'true account' film. At the same time, many studios fused the yakuza genre with the soft-core pornographic 'pink film' or roman porno popularised by Nikkatsu, to develop the 'pinky violence' films exemplified by the *sukeban* 'girl boss' subgenre.²² These films were generally quick and cheap to make, minimising the risk to the studios, which had begun to suffer from the vertically integrated nature of Japanese film production as popular interest in the cinema declined. Like the *jitsuroku* subgenre, the low-budget hand-held shooting style of the 'pinky violence' film gave a sense of immediacy and intimacy popular with soft-porn audiences. The *sukeban* film was likewise easily adapted to long-running series and spin-off media such as pin-up posters, increasing revenue.

As many film theatres closed due to low attendance, 'art house' yakuza films such as those of Kitano Takeshi began to appear at film festivals around the globe, lauded for their powerful imagery, intricate codes and high-impact recurring tropes. Kitano's yakuza films were also popular and critical hits at home; *Sonatine/ Sonatine* (Kitano Takeshi, 1993) was voted the fourth best film of 1993 by *Kinema Junpō*

critics and rated fifth by readers.²³ At the same time, long-running series such as *Gangster Women/ Gokudō no onnatachi* (1986-1995), based on the bestselling *Gangster Wives/ Gokudō no tsumatachi* books written by Ieda Shōko, suggest the continuing popularity of the yakuza genre on video and television as well as in film.

What Makes a Yakuza Film? The Case for Extending Genre Definitions

Given the many mythic and historical motifs and conventions on which the yakuza genre draws, and the wide global and historical impact of yakuza tropes, it is difficult to determine exactly what constitutes a yakuza film. From the genre's roots in *jidaigeki* to the adoption of key yakuza motifs and imagery by other genres and other cinemas, such as the indie hit *Memories of Matsuko/ Kiraware Matsuko no issho* (Nakashima Tetsuya, 2006) or the trans-national *Kill Bill I* (Quentin Tarantino, 2003), it is impossible to differentiate a yakuza film from a film featuring yakuza characters, ideology, imagery or themes. Paul Schrader argues that the first 'authentic' yakuza film dates from 1964, with the release of *Gambler/ Bakuto* (Ozawa Shigehiro),²⁴ however critic Akiyama Kiyoshi refers in 1968 to both 'prewar' yakuza film (*senzen no yakuza eiga*) and yakuza films as 'a popular phenomenon over the last twenty years' (*sengo nijū nen no ryūkōteki ichi genshō*).²⁵ Defining the yakuza genre by time period alone is therefore problematic.

Schrader does not specify why he considers *Gambler* more 'authentic' than its predecessors; given the arrangement of his article, the 'authenticity' of *Gambler* appears to be defined in contrast to earlier films of the 1950s and 1960s, which fused yakuza and *jidaigeki* conventions. If we are to make this kind of distinction, we must discount films that include elements of other genres from the 'canon' of yakuza film, including those that stray into 'pink' territory. However, these hybrid yakuza films are

often those which have had the greatest impact on the wider history of Japanese and global cinemas, producing the most popular, recognisable and frequently imitated characters, narrative tropes and imagery. For example, *Lady Snowblood* (*Shurayuki hime*, Fujita Toshiya, 1973) while not a yakuza film by Schrader's definition, inspired the yakuza character O-Ren of *Kill Bill I*. On the other hand, yakuza genre films such as *Yakuza Graveyard/ Yakuza no hakaba: kuchinashi no hana* (Fukasaku Kinji, 1976), voted fifth best film of 1976 by *Kinema Junpō* readers and eighth best by critics, often take as protagonists undercover police rather than yakuza, and focus on parallel issues such as police and government corruption. Observing a trend in 1970 which combined 'cruel scenes of killing with mannerisms from classical theatre', film critic Hojo Nobuhiko argued for a kind of 'ultra yakuza film' (*chōyakuza eiga*) similar to Andre Bazin's 'ultra western', incorporating 'everyday content' relevant to 'aesthetics, society, politics and erotics', among others.²⁶ The wide range of influences, including other film genres, incorporated in the yakuza genre was apparent to Japanese film critics as early as 1970; it therefore seems unwise to delimit the definition of yakuza film to those films featuring only yakuza characters, narratives, themes and stars.

Schrader himself struggles to cohere his argument for 'pure' yakuza film, splitting the developmental period of the genre's production into two parts, 1964-1967 and 1968-1972. These periods are distinguished by an initial low-budget, 'B movie' (*B kyū eiga*) approach to making yakuza film pursued by Tōei alone from 1964-1967, as opposed to a better-funded, 'classier' approach to production from 1968-1972, which incited other studios to 'get in on the act'.²⁷ Reducing the yakuza genre to this limited period risks underplaying the impact of the yakuza film on later productions, and discounts the influence of earlier B movies on the yakuza genre. For

example, B movie star Mihara Yōko repeatedly played American-styled chinpira, or ‘punk’ gangsters’ molls and female gang bosses in the ‘Queen Bee’ series,²⁸ before taking kimono-clad supporting roles in the Red Peony Gambler films and moving into the sukeban soft-porn subgenre in the 1970s. Mihara’s roles in the new ‘pink’ yakuza genre fused motifs from her 1950s and 1960s careers, and were predicated to a great extent on her star persona, honed in previous performances and genres. Examples such as Mihara suggest that we must take a longer historical view of the yakuza film than the eight years highlighted by Schrader in order to fully understand the development of key themes, star personas and characterisations. We cannot consider the yakuza films of Schrader’s narrowly defined peak period free from influences and borrowings from other genres and time periods. In this sense, a ‘pure’ yakuza film seems impossible.

Approaches to Studying Yakuza Film

Much of the extant literature on yakuza film follows Schrader’s ‘top down’ model, focusing on studios, directors and actors. Chris Desjardin’s *Outlaw Masters of Japanese Film* (2005) provides access to directors’ and stars’ opinions on the yakuza genre through long-form interviews, defining yakuza film according to the working histories of participants. Mark Schilling’s *The Yakuza Movie Book* (2003) combines a history of the yakuza film with interviews with top-billing stars and directors of the genre, while Aaron Gerow’s *Kitano Takeshi* (2005) considers the director’s art-house yakuza films in the context of his wider body of work. Keiko McDonald has provided an overview of the yakuza film beginning from the 1950s when, she argues; a ‘more positive yakuza protagonist’ appeared due to ‘a popular appetite for cultural continuity’ with the past.²⁹ However, her claim that *The Red Peony Gambler* series

introduced the first yakuza heroine discounts earlier yakuza musicals starring Misora Hibari, Daiei's Female Gambler series, and yakuza themes in other genres.³⁰ Higuchi Naofumi's *Roman poruno to jitsuroku yakuza eiga* (2009) comes closest to a broad taxonomy of the yakuza genre, juxtaposing two subgenres of 1970s yakuza film to demonstrate how major themes and series shade into other popular genres.

Meanwhile, Yomota Inuhiko and Washitani Hana include the female yakuza heroine in a broader study on female representation in action film, isolating female performances by narrative theme rather than genre from the 1920s to the present day.³¹ At the more populist end of the spectrum of yakuza eiga literature, Pinky *Violence: Tōei's Bad Girl Films* (1999) intersperses directors' interviews with picture galleries visually illustrating the development of the yakuza heroine from Fuji Junko's Oryū to Ike Reiko's girl boss characters. However, none of this literature specifically interrogates the yakuza genre's popular appeal, to which Takakura Ken ascribed his 2013 award. By contrast, Isolde Standish approaches yakuza film in the terms suggested by Takakura, thinking of 'the social situation at the time' to 'understand why the yakuza films were endorsed by the people'. Standish's consideration of selected films and series within the socio-political history of their production gives a sense of yakuza film's relevance and appeal for audiences.

As genre is a cyclical phenomenon in which the success, failure or sub-cultural popularity of a film has an impact on the reception of future films marketed as belonging to the same genre, the production history of a genre, a lateral view of production across genres, and the socio-political historical background of a genre's production are all important elements in understanding a genre's appeal and success. Desjardin and Schilling's interviews clearly demonstrate that directors and stars engaged with the history of the yakuza film preceding their own contributions, and

thought carefully about how to push the genre in new directions. Lateral studies such as Yomota and Washitani, Higuchi, and Gerow's work demonstrate that this innovation does not occur in a vacuum; Gerow situates Kitano's yakuza creations in the context of his work in other genres while Yomota, Washitani and Higuchi consider selected images and themes across genres. Standish's socio-political approach to understanding the historical background of 1960s and 1970s yakuza genre film may be extrapolated in this context to give a longer historical assessment of the yakuza film that also considers influence from other genres. This chapter's focus on 'genre and gender' is inspired by Standish's chapter of the same name in *A New History of Japanese Cinema*; having outlined the case for taking a wider approach to the yakuza film in terms of genre and gender above, the second part of this chapter will consider the appeal of the yakuza film, taking *The Red Peony Gambler* series as a case study.

Popular Endorsement and the 'Social Situation': *Fuji Junko as the Red Peony Gambler*

Connecting the popular 'endorsement' of yakuza film to 'the social situation of the time', as Takakura Ken suggests, requires brief theorisation of the question; how does the socio-political context of a film impact on its reception? Miriam Hansen has suggested that viewers use cinema to make sense of their social situations, particularly in periods of rapid or unnerving social change; film is a 'cultural horizon' on which social and historical change is 'reflected, rejected or disavowed, transmuted or negotiated'.³² Mitsuyo Wada-Marciano makes a similar claim for inter-war Japanese cinema, arguing for 'film-makers' works and popular films as the cultural "translation" of ordinary people's desires, needs and hopes' in the 1920s and 1930s.³³

I suggest that popular engagement with the yakuza film worked in a very similar way, and that Takakura's connection of the popular endorsement of the genre to the social situation around its development indicates that the yakuza film's reflection, rejection, disavowal, transmutation or negotiation of the social situation of 1960s and 1970s Japan had a particular appeal for viewers, who could read their own diverse 'desires, needs and hopes' into the yakuza genre's narratives, tropes and imagery.

Isolde Standish has linked developments in the yakuza genre to major changes in Japanese history and society; the cinema both referenced the social situation in which films were made, and offered escape from aspects of postwar life many found difficult. Standish suggests that the Abashiri Prison series appealed to men struggling with the pressures and boredom of their secure 'salaryman' jobs; the 'powerful masculinity' represented by the inmate characters of the series provided both aspiration and outlet, in their performance of a type of masculinity 'predicated on physical strength and stoicism'.³⁴ In such a nuanced relation between yakuza film and social situation, we can see Hansen's hypothesis at work as viewers recognise elements of their own experience in screen narratives, but also find space to reject or renegotiate difficult or unpleasant aspects of their lives and identities. Standish argues that the main character of the Abashiri series, played by Takakura Ken, 'closes the gap between the ideological image of masculinity and social experience, thus offering a vicarious solution to the eternal consequences lived by most men'.³⁵

Cinema does not only express and rework the social situations experienced by viewers, but can also impact on the meanings made of social situations at a wider level. Standish suggests that 1960s yakuza films 'can be analysed as sites where academic nihonjinron discourses are fictionalised in popular form'.³⁶ In this way, cinema not only makes sense of the social, it can actively make the social; a new

sense of ‘being Japanese’ can be born out of film representations which express and renegotiate social circumstances. Hojo argued in 1970 that yakuza film not only reflected ‘the very human desire to live a proper life’ (*seijitsuna ningentekina kanbō ga kyōgensarete iru*) but that ‘people often look to such fiction to tie themselves to something and build a life’ (*tenkei ni ikiru tame ni wa, hito wa kyokō ni sae mo, mizukara o shibaritsuke, inochi o kakeru*).³⁷

Yakuza film actively mediated and renegotiated what it meant to occupy a certain gendered, national or generational position in relation to others during periods of rapid social change. While Standish focuses mainly on issues affecting Japanese masculinity in postwar Japan in relation to the yakuza film, taking a wider view of the yakuza genre demonstrates its aptitude for addressing a variety of social issues. Analysing popular female-led yakuza series such as *The Red Peony Gambler*, we can see yakuza tropes used to ‘close the gap’ between the ideological image of femininity and social experience in the aftermath of an occupation which had placed strong emphasis on encouraging gender-equal attitudes in a neo-Confucian patriarchal society. Characters such as Fuji Junko’s ‘Red Peony’ Oryū, Misora Hibari’s cross-dressing musical yakuza characters and Enami Kyōko’s female gambler negotiate the changing status of women in postwar Japanese society in a manner consistent with the yakuza genre’s wide appeal. Female yakuza characters who fight alongside men and are accorded equal status can be interpreted as literal manifestations of Article 24 of the 1947 Constitution, which stated that ‘laws shall be enacted from the standpoint of individual dignity and the essential equality of the sexes.’ However, many Japanese citizens reported that gender roles and relations remained relatively unchanged, even decades after the Constitution was ratified.³⁸ Female yakuza film referenced the social experience of being female in a man’s world by isolating female yakuza characters

within largely male-dominated narratives. The appeal of these characterisations and narratives is broad; there is an element of catharsis or problem-solving in the closing of the gap between ideology and experience, while strong female characterisations may have had an aspirational appeal for younger and female viewers, and traditional or conservative narrative tropes and settings appealed to those nostalgic for an imagined ‘traditional’ Japan.

The female-led yakuza film charmed critics with its depiction of ‘smart women standing shoulder to shoulder with men’ (*onna yakuza eiga no miryoku wa, nakase to, otoko to kata o narabete iku ikina onna no dokyō de aru*)³⁹; while positive comparisons of Oryū’s swordsmanship with that of the legendary Zatōichi indicates that many female-led yakuza narratives were placed on a par with male-led films, as does a roughly equal amount of critical coverage devoted to male- and female-led yakuza films in the cinema press from 1968.⁴⁰ While female yakuza characters were a means to imagine the strong active female gender performances advocated during the postwar occupation of Japan and discussed at length in popular media however, their demonstration of a potential postwar female identity was simultaneously bounded by the ‘traditional’ norms of patriarchal social structures. Oryū is ‘innocent and beautiful’ (*uiuishisa, utsukushisa*) rather than deadly, while her ‘astonishing strength’ is contrasted with her beauty (*utsukushikute, shikamo, meppō tsuyoi*) in a way that leads critics to interpret her characterisation as ‘quite removed from real life’ (*genjitsu hanareshite iru*).⁴¹ While some audiences may have appreciated the yakuza genre’s nod to gender equal ideals in the characterization of female yakuza, it was also possible to read these characterizations according to pre-occupation gender normative ideals, packaging the beauty and innocence associated with the more traditionally gender-normative ‘daughter role’ (*musume yaku*) in a fantastical narrative of female

empowerment which many critics consumed as an oddity, or a form of ‘lowbrow comedy’ (teizokugeki).⁴²

This contradiction between strong female gender performances and familiar ‘traditional’ gender roles are epitomised in the characterisation of Oryū, who symbolically renounces her femininity to avenge her murdered father. Fuji Junko came to the ‘masculine’ role pre-packaged in a way that did not challenge the patriarchal status quo; her father Shundō Kōji, the principle producer of *ninkyō* yakuza films at Tōei, was widely reported to have opposed her career as an actress until it became apparent that other studios would likely recruit his daughter. In this sense, the origin story of Fuji’s star persona mirrored the narrative of the Red Peony Gambler series, in which Oryū becomes a yakuza out of necessity and against the wishes of her dead father.

The centrality of the father figure to Oryū’s narrative and to Fuji’s star persona casts both as filial daughter characters; Fuji had played upright daughter roles in a number of yakuza and jidaigeki films before the Red Peony Gambler (Three Yakuza/Matatabi sannin yakuza, Sawashima Tadashi, 1965; *Thirteen Assassins/Jūsannin no shikaku*, Kudo Eiichi, 1963) and continued to intersperse the six-film series with roles as filial daughters avenging dead fathers (Bright Red Flower of Courage). The Red Peony Gambler series, already at a ‘fever pitch of popularity’ (*saikō chōtō tokoro de*) even before its release in September 1968, emphasised Fuji’s filial characteristics; critics noted that her star persona, predicated on ‘beautiful daughter roles’ (*utsukushii musume yaku sutā*), was consistent with the role of Oryū; ‘she keeps up this image’ (*imēji o tomotsu imi de, adate o uru*).⁴³ In this way, the gender progressive aspects of the narrative of The Red Peony Gambler, which repeatedly pits a female yakuza against male gangsters as an equal, is constrained by the more conservatively

gendered characterisations of Oryū and Fuji herself. Balancing a narrative expression of new roles for women in postwar Japan with the attractions of more traditional modes of femininity allowed the series to appeal to gender-progressive and retrogressive or nostalgic audiences alike, and closed the gap between ideological and experiential femininity in a cathartic manner.

Fuji's body is both sexualised and representative of a nostalgic appeal to chaste femininity. Critics regularly mention her 'red lips' (*makkana nūju*),⁴⁴ and the narrative tropes of Oryū's tattooed shoulder and repeated fight scenes necessitate regular disrobing throughout the series. Love interests are resisted or spurned however, as Oryū interprets her renunciation of female gender norms as a renunciation of heterosexual love. She bares her tattooed shoulder only for other female characters or while fighting alongside male yakuza 'brothers' (*aniki*), and always as a form of proof that she is "no longer a woman." Displaying her shoulder to a young woman who has been sold into prostitution in the first film, she compares her loss of femininity, symbolised by the tattoo, to the woman's situation, and after buying her freedom encourages her to resume her female-gendered way of life, as unlike Oryū she is not physically marked as "unfeminine". While Oryū's sober kimonos and tight chignon are modest in comparison to the looser kimonos of supporting characters such as Mihara Yōko's in *The Red Peony Gambler: Oryū's Visit* (*Hibotan bakuto Oryū sanjō*, Katō Tai, 1970), her dress situates her at an ungendered mid-point between her hyper-feminine younger self, shown in flashbacks in the first film in bright pink flowered kimono with a 'split peach' hairstyle, and the ultra masculine Ōtaka, an elder female yakuza boss who serves as Oryū's mentor (*oyabun*) and wears men's kimono with her obi tied low across her hips. Masculine or non-normative gender performance is articulated as a point of shame for women;

opposing yakuza bosses repeatedly refer to Oryū as unwomanly, or “a sight”, triggering violent outbursts from her supporters. Ryūko, Oryū’s younger pre-yakuza incarnation, runs off in shame when her father’s junior gang members (kobun) tease her for her proficient and “unwomanly” swordsmanship during a flashback to her youth. Even among friends, Oryū is articulated as firmly outside the realm of female sexual availability, as her host families refer to her as ‘Auntie’ (obachan).

In Oryū’s emotional relationships with resisted love interests, junior or suffering women, and small children, screen fantasies of female empowerment are further constrained within tropes borrowed from melodrama. Fuji explicitly connected both modest femininity and the female yakuza film itself to the melodrama genre in a 1968 interview with *Kinema Junpō*, saying ‘I want to become a melodrama actress, so I don’t want to show nudity’ (*Watashi wa mero joyū ni naritai. Mero hada nuide no hadaka wa iya*).⁴⁵ In many ways Fuji’s statement sums up the delicate balance with which the yakuza genre addressed the ‘social situation’ of gender roles and performance in postwar Japan; her chaste refusal to show nudity, and use of the childish word *iya* indicate a reliance on female-gendered tropes of innocence and beauty in female yakuza characterization, while her career goals and the revelation that she demanded changes to the original *Red Peony Gambler* script suggest a star persona predicated on strength and ambition as much as beauty. In another interview Fuji joked about her competitive attitude to Daiei’s Enami Kyōko, star of the *Female Gambler* series; “‘Enami Kyōka? I don’t want to lose to her!’” Fuji said, laughing’ (*‘Enami Kyōko san desuka? Makenai yō ni yaritai wa!’ warai nagara katate ita*). The core of strength and ambition in Fuji’s star persona is wrapped in references to her innocence, filial position and beauty; the sentimental ‘feminine’ tropes of melodrama cover the desirable and dangerous affect of the ‘strong woman’ trope. In this way,

emotion is used to close the gap between the progressive gender ideologies implemented during the occupation and the everyday experiences of Japanese citizens who found gender roles and expectations relatively unchanged.

Sentiment and Emotion in the Yakuza Film

From the homosocial relationships between the *nagare mono* wanderers of the *ninkyō eiga* to the fiery passions of the *sukeban*, the *yakuza* genre is suffused with emotion. Male gang members profess undying loyalty to their ‘brothers’, while female bosses lament their requisition of feminine gender norms that prohibit romance. Even the stoicism of Kitano Takeshi’s art-house *yakuza* is imbued with a sadness that sees Murakawa of *Sonatine* take his own life. Hojo argues that ‘emotion is indispensable’ to the *yakuza* film (*jōnen ga fukaketsu*), suggesting that the *yakuza* film viewer can feel a ‘sense of community’ in the ‘camaraderie’ of the ensemble cast (*yakuza eiga no shijisha de aru kankyaku wa, ittei no jikan, kono engisha kyōdotai ni, hōsetsusareru no de aru*) and ‘distraction’ (*itsudatsu*) in the genre’s ‘silly humour’ (*bakageta kōi*).⁴⁶ Fuji Junko and Takakura Ken were particularly popular as ‘the perfect pair to depict a woman’s sadness and a man’s pain’ (*Fuji Junk to Takakura Ken no konbi ni yoru, onna nosetsunasa otoko no tsunasa, to itta mono*),⁴⁷ indicating that the emotional cues of the *yakuza* film ranged from humour and distraction to cathartic community feelings and outpourings of sadness.

The cyclical and repetitive nature of the *yakuza* genre is central to the production of emotion, as repetition can heighten the emotional impact of a motif. Deleuze and Guattari argue that the musical refrain creates and sustains a heightened affect, or emotional response through repetition⁴⁸; while this particular refrain is of the musical kind, I believe we can draw a parallel with any repetitive motif. The

repetitive title songs recorded by yakuza actors and actresses and played at moments of heightened emotion as well as over title sequences are an aural example of an overall commitment to repetitive motifs which extends to the visual and the narrative levels of the yakuza genre. Plot devices such as lost love, murdered family members, and deep friendships or relations of loyalty formed in precarious or temporary situations are repeated with great frequency, as are visual motifs such as tattooing, traditional weaponry and kimono. In the Red Peony Gambler series for example, Fuji's Oryū is repeatedly forced to prioritize revenge for her father and yakuza loyalties over potential love matches. In each instalment of the series, the title song plays again over repeated scenes of Oryū walking away from a would-be lover, heightening the pathos of her situation by reminding the viewer that she is doomed to repeat this hardship until she achieves vengeance for her father. The re-use of the title song here, as well as the repetitive lyrics of the song itself ('onna no, onna no') underscore the extreme sadness of renouncing love, and Oryū's continued strength in doing so.

Yakuza film not only repeats tropes specific to the yakuza genre, but also draws heavily from the tropes of other genres with which it shares settings, stars or narrative themes, including the jidaigeki, the melodrama, the horror film, the musical and the pornographic film, as discussed above. Emotion is not only central to the yakuza genre, but to many of the genres from which it borrows and repeats key tropes; Linda Williams identifies melodrama, horror film and pornographic film as 'genres of excess'⁴⁹ in that they invite strong emotions from the viewer, who makes a physical connection with the film by emitting tears, flinching with horror, or becoming aroused. I suggest that the yakuza genre draws its excesses of emotion from other 'genres of excess'; borrowing tears from the melodrama in tropes of frustrated

romance, exile and the death of loved ones, suspense and terror from the horror film in scenes of fighting and ambush, and the qualities of the pornographic film in the ‘pinky violence’ subgenre. Among many examples of such borrowing, *Blind Woman’s Curse*, also known as *Black Cat’s Revenge/ Kaidan nobori ryū* (Ishii Teruo, 1970) blends the unlucky black cat trope of the ghost story (*kaidan*) with the peer bonding motif of the prison film, the revenge plot of the *yakuza* film, the noble values of the *ninkyō eiga*, the nudity of soft porn and the vocal performances of the musical (star Kaji Mieko’s performance of the title track *Taking Care of Duty/ Jingi komori uta* was released as her first single) in the early Meiji period setting of the *jidaigeki*. In this way, the *yakuza* genre draws on the affective devices used by other genres to encourage the viewer to invest emotion in *yakuza* characters and narratives. Rather than forging a new affective connection between the film and the viewer, the *yakuza* genre makes use of the well-trodden paths made by the melodrama, horror, and pornographic genres of excess to access the viewers’ emotions directly and predictably (an important issue for film makers in this era of declining cinema attendance).

Excesses of emotion are thereby incorporated into the *yakuza* formula and repeated in long running series and spin-offs, enhancing their impact. While Williams acknowledges that genres of excess can often cause the viewer to feel manipulated by the film text, she argues that ‘To dismiss them as bad excess whether of explicit sex, violence or emotion, or as bad perversion, whether of masochism or sadism, is not to address their function as cultural problem-solving’.⁵⁰ Affective identification with a film text can result in a kind of catharsis whereby excesses of emotion are spilled out in the safe or closed-off spaces of the cinema rather than in public. In this way film can become an outlet for emotional responses considered inappropriate for public

expression, as well as a space to practice or test out new attitudes or reactions. Takakura's suggestion that we look to the 'social situation' of popular yakuza film to understand why the genre was 'endorsed by the people' is consistent with the idea of the excess affect of the yakuza film as a form of 'cultural problem solving'. In 1968, Akiyama linked the yakuza film's reflection of contemporary circumstances to its emotional charge, arguing that 'yakuza films express today's consciousness' (*genzai ishiki o nobete kita mitai*),⁵¹ using sentiment and cathartic emotion to 'somehow give comfort to the viewer's heart' (*nantoka kankyaku no kokoro o sukui ni narō*).⁵² This 'somehow' is more readily explainable when we take into account the long history of borrowing and repetition that has imbued the tropes of the yakuza film with such powerful emotional charge. The professional salarymen and politicized students who made up the yakuza film audience, as well as the female fans of Fuji Junko and Takakura Ken and the sex workers who visited the late night yakuza film theatres before or after work, may have found in the yakuza genre an outlet for emotions suppressed in their working lives, and through this, a form of comfort.

Wandering On: New Approaches to the Study of Yakuza Film

The selection of Takakura Ken as recipient of the high-profile Order of Culture Award clearly signals that the yakuza film has become a nostalgic emblem of national culture for contemporary Japanese. As the famously taciturn star pointed out in a rare interview, the 'endorsement' of audiences has been central to the installation of the yakuza film into the canon of Japanese popular culture. In order to understand how this occurred, we have to consider the position of yakuza film today in terms of the genre's long history. Just as the yakuza introduction places importance on genealogy, film scholars must take account of historical cinematic influences on the yakuza

genre. To do this, we must think across genres, much as the matatabi mono wanders the countryside picking up information and influences along the way. Just as emotional attachments both motivate and sustain the yakuza hero or heroine's quest for justice or vengeance, so the emotional excess of the yakuza film sustains popular engagement with the genre. To understand the popular appeal of the yakuza genre, we must take a 'wandering' approach that considers the wider history, influences and emotional impacts of the yakuza film, allowing for a broader definition of the genre.

Notes and References

¹ Nathalie Kyoko Stuckey and Jake Adelstein, ‘Yakuza Movie Icon Takakura Ken Talks To JSRC About Yakuza Movies,’ trans. Nathalie Kyoko Stuckey, Japanese Subculture Research Center (January 2014) accessed February 7, 2014.

² Satō Tadao, ‘Hyūmanizumu ni jidai’, in Imamura Shōhei et al., (ed.), *Kōza Nihon eiga* vol.5, *Sengo eiga no tenkai* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1987), p. 3.

³ For example, Chris Desjardins’ *Outlaw Masters of Japanese Film* restricts its account of female-led yakuza film to an appendix, excepting a single interview with Kaji Mieko.

⁴ According to *Kinema Junpō* records listing the top ten box office earners, critical successes and popular hits each year, films featuring yakuza characters entered the box office top ten in 1960 with *Road of Chivalry* (*Ninkyō nakasendō*, Matsuda Sadatsugu, 1960), a sequel in the Jirocho series featuring Kunisada Chūji. The film made 350,910,000 yen, the highest box office taking that year (*Kinema Junpō besuto ten 85 kai zenshi 1924-2011* (Tokyo: Kabushiki kaisha kinema junpōsha, 2012), p. 158). The plot follows gambling samurai and inter-gang warfare, with Chūji as a Robin Hood-type cameo star. While the *Kinema Junpō* figures are rounded to the nearest 10,000 yen (man) and fluctuate over time due to inflation and changes in the tax on ticket prices in 1973, its evident that the top earning film each year was the most popular and widely seen, at least until video rental. Yakuza films begin to appear in the *Kinema Junpō* reader’s choice of best ten films in 1972 with *Female Prisoner no. 701: Scorpion/ Joshū 701 gō: Sasori* (Ito Shunya, 1972) in seventh place, *Theatre of Life: Story of Youth, Passion and Spirit/ Jinsei gekijō: seishun, aiyoku, zankyō hen* (Katō Tai, 1972) in eighth place and *Modern Yakuza: Outlaw Killer/*

Gendai yakuza: hito kiri yota (Fukasaku Kinji, 1972) in tenth position (*Kinema Junpō besuto ten 85 kai zenshi 1924-2011*, p. 294). In 1973, readers voted *The Yakuza Papers* vol. 1: *Battles without Honour and Humanity/ Jingi naki tataki* (Fukasaku Kinji, 1973) the best film of the year, *The Yakuza Papers* vol. 2: *Deadly Fight in Hiroshima/ Jingi naki tatakai: Hiroshima shitō hen* (Fukasaku Kinji, 1973) fourth best and *Yakuza Tale/ Nihon kyōka den* (Katō Tai, 1973) in ninth position. Critics voted *The Yakuza Papers* vol. 1: *Battles without Honour and Humanity* the second best film of 1973, with *The Yakuza Papers* vol. 3: *Proxy War/ Jingi naki tatakai: dairi sensō* (Fukasaku Kinji, 1973) as number eight (*Kinema Junpō besuto ten 85 kai zenshi 1924-2011*, p. 304). Yakuza films appeared in every box office, readers' and critics' top ten lists each year until 1976.

⁵ Mark Schilling, *The Yakuza Movie Book* (Berkeley, California: Stonebridge Press, 2003), p. 20.

⁶ Eiko Maruko Siniawer, *Ruffians, yakuza, nationalists: the violent politics of modern Japan 1860-1960* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2008), p. 194.

⁷ *Ibid*, p. 191.

⁸ Yasumaru Yoshio (ed.), *'Kangoku' no Tanjo: Asahi Hyakka Rekishi o Yominaosu* vol. 22 (Tokyo: Asahi Shinbunsha, 1995), p. 28.

⁹ Eiko Maruko Siniawer, *Ruffians, yakuza, nationalists*, p. 12.

¹⁰ Fuji Junko was the stage name used by Shundō Junko for the first part of her career. The actress starred as Fuji Junko in a series of jidaigeki and yakuza films in the 1960s, before retiring in 1972 on her marriage to kabuki theatre actor Onoe Kikugoro VII. She returned to television as Fuji Sumiko in 1974, before moving back into cinema, this time largely in melodrama and romance genres. She was awarded the Blue Ribbon Prize for best supporting actress in 1999 and 2006.

¹¹ Following Yukitomo Rifu's play *Kunisada Chūji* (1919), characters similar to Kunisada or based on his life have appeared in many films including Makino Shōzō's *Kunisada Chūji* (1924), Kinugasa Teinōsuke's *Young Chūji: Murder at Midagahara/Wakaki hi no Chūji: Midagahara no satsujin* (1925), Inagaki Hiroshi's trilogy (*Kunisada Chūji: Travel and Hometown/ Kunisada Chūji: Tabi to kokyō no maki; Kunisada Chūji: Story of Constant Change/ Kunisada Chūji: Ruro ruten no maki; Kunisada Chūji: Clear Skies over Akagi/ Kunisada Chūji: Hareru hagi no maki*, all 1933), Yamanaka Sadao's *Kunisada Chūji* (1935), and Taniguchi Senkichi's *Kunisada Chūji* (1960). A ten-reel epic made by actor Bando Tsumasaburo's company (*Kunisada Chūji ochiyuki oshuji/*) was rumoured to have been made in 1926 but does not survive.

¹² Like many yakuza motifs, yakuza enka have outlasted the peak popularity of the yakuza film; Kaji Meiko's *The Flower of Carnage/ Shura no hana*, the title song of *Lady Snowblood/ Shurayuki hime* (Fujita Toshiya, 1973) was included in Quentin Tarantino's *Kill Bill I* (2003) while the theme songs of yakuza films starring Misora Hibari, Fuji Junko, Takakura Ken and others are readily available in the catalogues of karaoke emporiums such as the Shidax chain and on Youtube. Examples include Misora Hibari's title song for *Ishimatsu the One-Eyed Avenger/ Hibari no mori no Ishimatsu* (Sawashima Tadashi, 1960) and male drag performance in *Daughter of Romance/ Romansu musume* (Sugie Toshio, 1956), as well as her many televised appearances singing yakuza enka such as 'Hibari no wataridori da yo' and 'Edo no *Yamitarō*'. Fuji Junko's title song for the *Red Peony Gambler/ Hibotan bakuto* series and Takakura Ken's title song for the *Abashiri Prison/ Abashiri Bangaichi* (1965-1968) series also continue to prove popular today.

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- ¹³ *1927 nen Kinema junpō besuto ten*,
<http://cinema1987.org/kinejun/kinejun1927.html>, accessed May 25, 2014.
- ¹⁴ Mark Schilling, *The Yakuza Movie Book*, p. 21.
- ¹⁵ David E. Kaplan and Alex Dubrow, *Yakuza: Japan's Criminal Underworld* (New Jersey: University of California Press, 2012), p. 142.
- ¹⁶ Anon. 'Kōgyō kachi: Daiei yakuza no nagurikomu', *Kinema Junpō*, 1 March no. 490, 1969, p. 74.
- ¹⁷ Anon. 'Kōgyō kachi': Yakuza to kodomo shōbu', *Kinema Junpō*, 15 March no. 491, 1969, p. 72.
- ¹⁸ Anon. 'Kōgyōkai: Yakuza bangumi ni gaika', *Kinema Junpō*, 11 November no. 481, 1968, p. 83.
- ¹⁹ Ijima Tetsuo, 'Nihon eiga hihiyō: Hibotan bakuto', *Kinema Junpō*, 15 November no. 509, 1969, p. 70.
- ²⁰ Anon. 'Kōgyōkai: Yakuza bangumi ni gaika', p. 83.
- ²¹ Isolde Standish, *A New History of Japanese Cinema* (New York: Continuum, 2005), p. 309.
- ²² The colloquial term 'pinky violence' was popularised by Sugisaku J-taro and Takeshi Uechi in their *Pinky Violence: Toei's Bad Girl Films* (Tokyo: Tokuma shoten, 1999).
- ²³ *Kinema Junpō besuto ten 85 kai zenshi 1924-2011*, p. 516
- ²⁴ Paul Schrader, 'Yakuza: A Primer', *Film Comment*, January-February, 1974, p. 10.
- ²⁵ Akiyama Kiyoshi, 'Yakuza eiga wa sara ni manfukukan o ataeyo: eiga shūkan to narutakiizumu', *Eiga Geijutsu*, 1 May 16: 5, 1968, p.64.
- ²⁶ Hojo Nobuhiko, 'Yakuza eiga no kōryoku', *Kinema Junpō*, 1 March no. 517, 1970, p. 50.

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- ²⁷ Paul Schrader, 'Yakuza: A Primer', p. 10.
- ²⁸ The Queen Bee series at Shin-Tōhō (Queen Bee/ *Joōhachi*, Taguchi Satoshi, 1958; *Queen Bee's Anger/ Joōhachi no ikari*, Ishii Teruo, 1958, Queen Bee and the School for Dragons (*Joōhachi to daigaku no ryū*, Ishii Teruo, 1960) was based on a remake of the Daiei film of the same name (Queen Bee/ *Joōhachi*, Tanaka Shigeo, 1952).
- ²⁹ Keiko Iwai McDonald, 'The Yakuza Film: An Introduction', in Arthur Nolletti Jr. and David Desser (ed.) *Reframing Japanese Cinema* (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1992), p. 173.
- ³⁰ *Ibid* p. 181.
- ³¹ Yomota Inuhiko and Washitani Hana (eds) *Tatakau onnatachi: Nihon no eiga no josei akushon* (Tokyo: Shohan, 2009).
- ³² Miriam Bratu Hansen, 'The mass production of the senses: classical cinema as vernacular modernism', in Christine Gledhill and Linda Williams (eds.), *Reinventing Film Studies* (London: Arnold, 2000), p. 341-342.
- ³³ Mitsuyo Wada-Marciano, *Nippon Modern; Japanese Cinema of the 1920s and 1930s* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2008), p. 130.
- ³⁴ Isolde Standish, *Myth and Masculinity in the Japanese Cinema: Towards a Political Reading of the 'Tragic Hero'* (London: Curzon, 2000), p. 160.
- ³⁵ *Ibid*, p. 161.
- ³⁶ *Ibid*, p. 167.
- ³⁷ Hojo Nobuhiko, 'Yakuza eiga no kōryoku', p. 50.
- ³⁸ Koyama Takeshi, *The Changing Social Position of Women in Japan* (Paris: UNESCO, 1961), p. 45.
- ³⁹ Takasawa Eiichi, 'Nihon eiga hihyō; Nobori Ryū yawarakada kaichō', *Kinema Junpō*, 1 April no. 492, 1969, p. 70.

⁴⁰ Kosuge Shinsei, 'Nihon eiga hihyō: Hibotan bakuto', *Kinema Junpō*, 20 September no. 480, 1968, p. 63.

⁴¹ Kosuge Shinsei, 'Nihon eiga hihyō: Hibotan bakuto', p. 63.

⁴² Ibid. loc cit.

⁴³ Ibid. loc cit.

⁴⁴ Ijima Tetsuo, 'Nihon eiga hihyō; Nihon jokyōden; Makkana dokyōbana', *Kinema Junpō*, 15 February no. 516, 1970, p. 77.

⁴⁵ Anon. 'Kōgyōkai', *Kinema Junpō*, 1 November no. 481, 1968, p. 83.

⁴⁶ Hojo Nobuhiko, 'Yakuza eiga no kōryoku', p. 50

⁴⁷ Ijima Tetsuo, 'Nihon eiga hihyō; Nihon jokyōden; Makkana dokyōbana', p. 77.

⁴⁸ Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (London; New York: Continuum, 2003), p. 339.

⁴⁹ Linda Williams, 'Film Bodies; Gender, Genre and Excess (1979)', in Leo Braudy and Marshall Cohen (eds.) *Film Theory and Criticism: Introductory Readings* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 701.

⁵⁰ Linda Williams, 'Film Bodies; Gender, Genre and Excess (1979)', p. 714.

⁵¹ Akiyama Kiyoshi, 'Yakuza eiga wa sara ni manfukukan o ataeyo: eiga shūkan to narutakiizumu', p.65.

⁵² Akiyama Kiyoshi, 'Yakuza eiga wa sara ni manfukukan o ataeyo: eiga shūkan to narutakiizumu', p.64.

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