OZU&

THE ETHICS OF INDETERMINACY

DAISUKE MIYAO

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For Dot

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PREFACE

Ozu Yasujirō (1903–63) introduced me to academia. It was in 2003. At the Ozu Centennial International Symposium, for the first time as a professional I had conversations with scholars from all over the world. I was a postdoctoral fellow at Columbia University's Expanding East Asian Studies Program and co-organized the symposium with Paul Anderer and Richard Peña. In conjunction, I had the opportunity to co-translate Kiju Yoshida's *Ozu's Anti-Cinema*, one of the foundational works of Ozu studies in Japan, into English. Since I finished reading and translating Yoshida's cinematic journey through the lens of Ozu, I have been asking myself what cinema is. What can cinema do in the world? In other words, I have developed into a scholar of cinema studies by studying cinema with Ozu.

For various reasons, Ozu has always been my home base as a scholar. The historiography of Ozu studies has been my essential reference when I position myself in the field. How Ozu's films were received and studied internationally prepared the methodological basis for my first monograph, *Sessue Hayakawa: Silent Cinema and Transnational Stardom* (2007). I located Japanese cinema in the transnational network of cinema. I utilized archival resources in various languages and demonstrated that the stardom of Sessue Hayakawa, a Japanese silent film actor, was constructed through a cross-cultural negotiation on race, ethnicity, and gender/sexuality among the United States, Japan, and France.

The lighting in Ozu's films was the inspiration to examine the aesthetics of shadow in my second monograph, *The Aesthetics of Shadow: Lighting and Japanese Cinema* (2013). I challenged the dichotomized viewpoint on Japanese aesthetics between the brightness typified by kabuki, whose flat frontal lighting evenly illuminated the entire stage, and the darkness that Tanizaki Jun'ichirō famously discussed in *In Praise of Shadows* (*Inei raisan*, 1933–34) as the essence of Japanese traditional aesthetics. The acclaimed filmmaker-screenwriter Paul Schrader addressed this during the

Ozu Centennial Symposium in 2003: "We do not understand Ozu's films without reading *In Praise of Shadows*."[1] Elsewhere, Hasumi Shigehiko, arguably the most influential film critic in Japan, has called Ozu a "broad-daylight director."[2]

Ozu's layered mise-en-scène, which has often been linked with ukiyo-e woodblock prints, led me to my most recent monograph, *Japonisme and the Birth of Cinema* (2020), in which I analyzed the mutual influence between European and Japanese arts, including early cinema, during the period of the Japonisme vogue. I examined multiple elements that went into the modern invention of cinema, such as technological inventions of the film medium, transference between fine art and film, Orientalist aesthetics, global imperialism, and relations of power in the cultural sphere. Japonisme was the nodal point in a transmedial network that involved a series of narrative and nonnarrative forms across media platforms in the late nineteenth century.

If cinema was an object of study for Ozu, Ozu's films have been the gatekeeper of my research in cinema studies. I have written about the films directed by Ozu on several occasions and published journal articles and book chapters. I have taught courses on his work. At the same time, I have always thought that I was not equipped enough to fully examine, in a satisfying manner, Ozu's rich and complex filmography. I have also been hesitant to write a book on a single director when I think of the historiography of the study of Japanese cinema, which has been heavily inclined to auteurism. Besides, there are already many books on Ozu written by acclaimed critics and scholars. Why should I add another book to the packed bookshelf?

But this time, I asked, why shouldn't I? If I focus on how I have trained myself as a film scholar, conversing not only with the films that Ozu directed but also with the writings by critics and scholars on them, perhaps that would be useful to other researchers. In this book I explore what cinema is and what the study of cinema is with Ozu Yasujirō. Thus, this book is not a book solely on the films directed by Ozu. It is a record of my (ongoing) thoughts on cinema studies. So the title of this book is multidirectional: Ozu's study of cinema, other scholars' study of Ozu's films, and my study of cinema by way of Ozu. This book captures my academic journey to this day by way of Ozu.

Let me go back further in time to contextualize my scholarship and methodologies. When I started my graduate study in Japan in the early

1990s, film studies had not achieved institutional visibility there. While film studies had been taught at a few universities, including Waseda University and Nihon University, the most visible program was the unit of Interdisciplinary Study of Culture and Representation in the Liberal Arts Department of the University of Tokyo, which was established in 1986. Under the leadership of Hasumi Shigehiko, the program vowed to offer the study of film as a constellation of "pictorial phenomena from drawing through computer graphics" and to invite not just the usual panoply of Western approaches (linguistics, psychoanalysis, deconstruction, gender theory) but a new "scientific scholarship" specific to the image. Hasumi called his methodology "surface criticism" (*hyōsō hihyō*). Separating his work from a dominant type of film criticism in Japan (i.e., the subjective reading in which educated critics thematically express their ways of reception), Hasumi proposed to pay attention only to what was visible on the screen surface. Hasumi's 1983 book, *Director Ozu Yasujirō* (*Kantoku Ozu Yasujirō*), was the perfect example of his "surface criticism." For instance, Hasumi criticized the readings of the famous shot of a vase in *Late Spring* (*Banshun*, 1949) offered by Donald Richie and Paul Schrader, the two critics who first published books on Ozu in English, saying that the shot should not be called a shot of a vase. Hasumi listed many other things visible on the screen: the shoji screen, the shadows on the shoji screen, and so on. Hasumi's writings taught me how attentively I needed to look at the images on the screen. It was Hasumi's book that opened the gate for me to explore the enchanting world of Ozu. With his book in hand, I watched all existing Ozu films at the 1993 Tokyo International Film Festival celebrating the ninetieth anniversary of the director's birth.

For Hasumi, as Aaron Gerow states, "Cinema is what is here, now, relating at best only to a past cinematic moment, but in such a way that time—and all that is not there, such as history—is irrelevant."[3] But I was equally attracted to the political and historical reading of films. One book that I was intrigued by then (and I still am) was Robert Sklar's *Movie-Made America: A Cultural History of American Movies* (1975). Sklar combines ethnic studies (Jewish immigrants), industrial studies of Hollywood, US political history, and the technological history of cinema to examine the formation of the film culture in the United States.[4] Because Sklar's book does not focus on close textual analysis of individual films as do works by Hasumi or David Bordwell, whose book on Ozu I was introduced to in a seminar taught by Matsuura Hisaki, Hasumi's colleague,

I wondered how a combination of the two would be possible. It didn't seem that Hasumi's and Sklar's separate approaches resulted only from their different methodological standpoints in film studies. The difference was perhaps an issue of area studies: Hasumi in French (and Japanese) theory and Sklar in American studies. I decided to study with Sklar at New York University's Department of Cinema Studies. In retrospect, I was somewhat uncomfortable with the rather ahistorical and politically unconscious tendency of "surface criticism."

But when I arrived in New York, I encountered a different type of ahistoricity and political unconsciousness that seemed to be caused by a lack of substantial dialogue between film studies and Japanese studies as a result, unfortunately, of Eurocentrism. As Markus Nornes, among others, has addressed, when the discipline of film studies was formed in the 1970s and 1980s, scholars such as Bordwell, Noël Burch, Dudley Andrew, and Stephen Heath utilized Japanese films as their objects of study.[5] When I arrived at NYU, it had been a while since the trend had shifted. The founding generation had moved on to write about other parts of the world, such as Hong Kong, and subsequently moved away from the national cinema paradigm. Yet, ironically, contrary to the rising trend of studying cinema as a transnational cultural medium, in reality, as a person originally from Japan, I was automatically expected to talk about Japanese cinema for the sake of multiculturalism or the multidirectionality of film culture. I began to understand what it feels like to find oneself outside of a dominant culture in academic and social communities. I hate to admit this, but from time to time, I had to play the role of a model minority and talk about generalized or popularized views on Japan (and propose courses on Japanese filmmakers and genres). Around the same time, Japanese area studies started to open up to embrace popular culture, including cinema. But such incorporation was not profound. At meetings on Japanese studies, a field in which I had never been trained, I became expected to add a popular perspective as an expert on Japanese films because I was from the field of cinema studies. Colleen Laird correctly observes:

> To many students the "Japanese" part of "Japanese" film is in equal measure the most prohibitive and the most engaging aspect of the class. As so many of the commonly taught films feature prominent aspects of "Japanese tradition" (more on this to follow), classroom dynamics fall into explanation of Japanese culture (either by the instruc-

> tor or "savvy" students) as almost a matter of course. . . . Additionally, teachers also face the problem of students' varying background in and familiarity with film studies terminology, history, form, theory, and analysis, particularly for students who take Japanese Film courses to fulfill a distribution requirement.[6]

How could we talk about Japanese cinema without marginalizing "Japanese" in film studies and "films" in Japanese studies? This became the biggest question for me as a film scholar who is from Japan and works in US academia. Throughout my career as a scholar, I have tried to locate Japanese cinema in an international and transnational network of film culture.

If we look at the numbers alone, the future is bright. Many non-Japanese students are interested in talking about Japanese culture, including cinema. At my current institution (the University of California, San Diego), nearly two thousand undergraduate students are studying the Japanese language. An introductory course on Japanese film is always full, with an enrollment of three hundred or more students. But the dialogue I want between cinema studies and Japanese studies, especially paying attention to historical specificity, is yet to come. I keep asking myself, my colleagues, and my students, "Do we really want to have dialogues?" I sincerely hope that the readers of this book want to discuss *Japanese cinema*.

In reality, most of our undergraduate students take Japanese language and Japanese film courses to fulfill their general education requirements. They come to our classes because they like anime and Sony or Nintendo games. They are web-experienced viewers who are growing up at a time when the viewership of both cinema and TV series is declining. Streaming is the primary distribution and exhibition platform. The tide has shifted, and the conception of cinema of the previous decades is no longer valid for them. I am only talking about my impression based on personal experiences working in a literature department and a Japanese studies program at a public research institution whose major strength is science. I understand that more substantial research is necessary to discuss the general tendency, but how is it possible to formulate constructive communication when the involved parties do not have a common ground? Practically, to initiate dialogues on "Japanese," I always start my intro to Japanese cinema class by asking students what Japanese is. I want them, who are living in a global age without necessarily questioning it, to start becoming aware of the tension between national and transnational.

The trend of our graduate students' research interests is transnational, trans-Asian, and transpacific. This is an invaluable legacy of the scholarship from previous decades, including the works by Harry Harootunian, Masao Miyoshi, Naoki Sakai, and Oguma Eiji, among others, which questioned the notion of nation and the discipline of area studies.[7] But how can we develop a specific argument when our students presume everything is relative or in relation? A more concerning issue that I am becoming aware of is a sense of exclusivism in the name of diversity. Of course, equity, diversity, and inclusion are a top priority in education. There is no doubt about that. Individual personalities must be protected. This is a basic human right. But are we sometimes becoming too defensive to avoid being offensive in any way possible? Is it becoming difficult to critique others' thoughts and arguments when there is a clear difference between critiquing and criticizing? Touba Ghadessi writes, "Universities were created as a microcosm of the world, a world where knowledge was not to be worshipped as an untouchable and lifeless object, but was meant to ignite debates and fuel passionate exchanges."[8] I can rephrase: An *individual* is not to be worshipped as an untouchable and lifeless object but is meant to engage in debate and fuel passionate exchanges. It may be comfortable to be shielded from the outside world or stay in an octopus pot (*tako-tsubo*), in the Japanese idiom. What I would like to think about with the readers of this book is what this "trans" is before we/they use it. In this book, by way of discussing Ozu films, I want to foster readers' historical awareness and political consciousness.

Whenever we respect the self, another individual emerges as its inevitable result. Whenever there is the self and the other, there is a conflict because they are different. Considering not only the recent trend in Japanese film studies but also the current condition of humanities, I wonder if we are willing to face the conflict. Being cloistered, we are turning a blind eye to the conflict. If that is the case, the conflict will never go away. This is the sense of exclusivism that I am describing. I am not suggesting that a quarrel is necessary to face the conflict, yet Plato emphasized in Socratic dialogue the importance of asking questions as an educative method. Mikhail Bakhtin stressed that dialogue would reveal multiple perspectives and voices.[9] Each person has their final word, but it should relate to and interact with those of other people. A dialogical work engages with and is informed by other works and voices, and seeks to alter itself. I see fundamental ethics in such dialogue. With Bakhtin, I want

to criticize the view that disagreement means at least one of the people involved in a dialogue must be wrong. We need to face conflicts because many standpoints exist. To that end, dialogue is indispensable among many incommensurable voices. In this sense, this is a book of hope for me. I am hoping that book is valuable not only to those readers already invested in Ozu, Japanese studies, or film studies but to *all* readers of humanities, the fundamental study of all aspects of human society and culture.

INTRODUCTION

CINEMA & THE ETHICS OF INDETERMINACY

Problems of Auteurism and the Study of Ozu

The Japanese film director Ozu Yasujirō (1903–63) has been the object of attention by critics and scholars since the time when he was still working. Growing up as a film fan in the modernizing city of Tokyo, Ozu made his directorial debut at Shōchiku Company's Kamata Studio in 1927 with a silent *jidaigeki* (period drama) film, *Sword of Penitence* (*Zange no yaiba*). Then, he specialized in *gendaigeki* (contemporary drama). In Japan, Ozu's status as one of the foremost cinema directors was established in the early 1930s. Early celebrations of Ozu emphasized his depictions of the reality of modern life in Japan, which critics regarded as a mode of social criticism. After World War II, the primary focus of Ozu criticism shifted to a broader idea of humanism. This postwar critical tendency appeared to influence early scholarship on Ozu outside of Japan from the late 1950s to the early 1970s, including the work of Donald Richie, which celebrated Ozu as an auteur. Ozu's unique film style, including spatially and temporally ambiguous shots that open up scenes and the full utilization of 360-degree space that deviated from the narrational economy of Hollywood's continuity editing, made him a central figure during the period that saw the institutionalization of film studies in Euro-American academia in the late 1970s and 1980s. His work served as a suitable example in demonstrating both the universal ("a humanist auteur") and the particular ("a challenger to Hollywood"). Since then, a number of

scholars and critics have studied the films of Ozu from various theoretical and historical standpoints.

The title of this book, *Ozu and the Ethics of Indeterminacy*, implies that it is yet another auteurist study of Ozu Yasujirō. However, I do not examine Ozu's films as the art of a great director who, with his unique cinematic style, has undeniably impacted filmmakers and film critics worldwide. While I am a big fan of Ozu's films, I am less interested in an auteurist celebration of him as an iconic figure in film and media history. Instead, I attempt to reexamine cinema studies by discussing Ozu's films. I argue for what cinema is in its relationship to the world and the formation of cinema studies as a global academic discipline. I consider Ozu to be the "nodal point in a transmedial network" among the films, their domestic and global reception, and the critical and popular discourses around them from the twentieth century to the early twenty-first century.[1]

Let me begin by critiquing the notion of the auteur. The term dates back to the 1920s, when French film critics and directors debated the work of the auteur (i.e., the screenplay author and filmmaker being the same) versus the scenario-led film.[2] This debate was revived in the 1950s, when critics writing for the film journal *Cahiers du cinéma* started a discursive movement called *auteurism* (*politique des auteurs*). There are four assumptions in auteurism. First, cinema is equivalent to literature or any other art of "profundity and meaning."[3] Second, cinema constitutes a new and unique language. Third, this role for cinema affords directors a means of personal expression, that is, a form within which a genuine artist may "translate his obsessions" or personality.[4] Fourth, these obsessions can be traced through thematic and stylistic consistency over nearly all films by the director. As André Bazin claimed, auteurs included a "personal factor" that connected all their films and made their work identifiable.[5] As such, directors who were able to impart their style to their films, regardless of the type of narrative or the conditions under which the films were produced, were considered to be auteurs.

Following theorists such as Roland Barthes, Michel Foucault, and Jacques Derrida, critics declared in the 1960s that the author was dead or did not preexist the text as a unified intentionality or coherent source of meanings. However, auteurism is resilient. Mitsuhiro Yoshimoto argues, "Even when criticism concentrates on the formal organization and structure of a work without trying to establish some kind of intrinsic relation between the work and the author's intention, thought, or experience, the author does not necessarily disappear."[6] In the case of Japanese film studies

in non-Japanese academia, auteurism has been especially prevalent because of the enduring culturalism that has regarded Japanese cinema as a representative of an alternative to Hollywood. Many academic works on Japanese and East Asian cinemas have focused on canonized auteur directors, emphasizing their unique styles and worldviews. In particular, more than any other Japanese director, Ozu has enjoyed enormous popularity in the study of Japanese and East Asian cinemas. "But," claims Yoshimoto, "new studies of Ozu have not changed the basic framework of the scholarship on Japanese cinema." "Instead," he continues, "they have either merely refashioned Ozu as a modernist or avant-garde auteur or reinforced Ozu's 'Japaneseness' in the midst of the neo-nostalgia boom."[7] What does Yoshimoto mean by "a modernist or avant-garde auteur"? What is his implication about the connection between Ozu and "Japaneseness"? Similarly, Jinhee Choi argues, "There might be an epistemic risk in lumping together internationally acknowledged directors under the rubric of Ozu. The cultural essentialism still prevails when Ozuesque has become an umbrella term to denote any minimalist film style that generalizes the varying aesthetics of internationally acclaimed East Asian directors, despite the specificity of the individual directors and their own cultural orientations."[8] How should/could we avoid taking such a risk?

Ozu started receiving critical attention from intellectuals in Japan early in his career in the 1930s, well before cinema studies was established as an academic discipline America. Critics in the 1930s discussed Ozu's films as typical examples of realist films that captured everydayness in Japan. As Mitsuyo Wada-Marciano observes, Ozu's silent films about lower-middle-class people (*shōshimingeki*) were closely connected to the geopolitics of Tokyo in the 1920s and 1930s, which included urban planning and suburbanization as well as an increasing awareness of a new sense of home and family.[9] After World War II, the focus of Ozu criticism in Japan shifted to the vicissitudes of Japanese lives depicted in his films. Ozu's films were not considered suitable for export and were kept in Japan because they were deemed too Japanese for foreign audiences. This postwar critical tendency in Japan influenced early scholarship on Ozu outside of Japan. Influenced also by French auteurism, critics like Donald Richie and Paul Schrader argued that Ozu's films, which were very different from Hollywood films stylistically and thematically, represented Japanese national character, aesthetics, and cultural heritage. In his 1974 book, the first book-length study of Ozu in English, Richie repeated the term "pictorial beauty" to describe the images in Ozu's films, asserting that Ozu was close to the masters

of *sumi-e* ink drawing, haiku, and *waka* (Japanese traditional poetry). He also explained Ozu's thematic motif by referring to a traditional aesthetic term, *mono no aware*, by which Richie meant the transience of things or pathos.[10] Similarly, Schrader asserted in 1972 that Ozu was an auteur whose personality and work were influenced by Zen, "the quintessence of traditional Japanese art." Ozu's films were culturally specific, claimed Schrader, and also achieved a "transcendental" style, a universal form that even made somewhat religious experiences possible.[11]

Following this early auteurist criticism, more theoretical work on Ozu films emerged as cinema studies as an academic discipline developed in the United Kingdom and the United States in the 1970s and 1980s. Initiated by the British film journal *Screen* and the US film journal *Jump Cut*, the focus of these revisionist works was Ozu's unique film style and its ideological implications. These more theoretical studies of Ozu's signature film style, including so-called pillow shots (transitional shots) and the use of 360-degree space especially in conversation scenes that deviated from the narrational economy of Hollywood's continuity editing, still considered Ozu films to be "very Japanese" and enforced a divide between the West and Japan.

In his groundbreaking 1991 essay that critically surveyed the history of Japanese film scholarship in the West, Mitsuhiro Yoshimoto pointed out three distinctive positions in theoretical studies of Ozu films.[12] The first position followed Richie and Schrader's traditional aesthetic viewpoint but broadened it to a more political perspective. For instance, David Desser criticized Ozu's aesthetics as politically reactionary in his 1988 book on the Japanese New Wave. Sympathetic to the political radicalism of young filmmakers who reacted against the Japanese studio system in the 1960s, Desser wrote, "Ozu's films tend to end on a still life, or coda. Such shots, of a field, clothes hanging on a line, a train passing, allude to human presence through absence. Such shots point to the transitory nature of individuals juxtaposed against the timelessness of nature, or the Zen-like absence of the human subject within a humanized context."[13]

The second position also followed Richie and Schrader but interpreted the traditional aspects of Ozu's films as a radically alternative film practice. In his 1979 book on Japanese cinema, Noël Burch argued that Ozu drew on Japanese aesthetic traditions to challenge the dominance of Hollywood.[14] Burch's book was one of the first attempts to bring the poststructuralism of Roland Barthes and Jacques Derrida to bear on a serious inquiry into foreign cinema. While Burch acknowledged the irreducibility of Ozu's aesthetics to national or cultural origins, he did not

contextualize Japanese traditional culture within its history, no matter how strategic his ahistorical approach to film form was. For Burch, the "premodern" aspects of Ozu's film style should be valorized because his radically alternative film practice challenged the representational illusionism of the Western bourgeoisie. For instance, referring to the "pillow words" (*makura kotoba*) of *waka*, in which epithets are used in association with certain words, Burch emphasizes the ambiguous function of what he calls Ozu's pillow shots that would simultaneously serve for and go against the Hollywood narrative economy. Burch also regards the incorrect eyeline matches in Ozu's films and the low-angle camera as contrary to linear perspective, a central element of Hollywood's code of realism.

The third position took a step away from the traditional aesthetic viewpoint, though not neglecting it, sharing a viewpoint with the second position regarding Ozu's films as departing from the classical Hollywood continuity narration. Kristin Thompson and David Bordwell, two founding scholars of film studies in the United States, were attracted to Ozu's work (along with that of some other directors, such as Robert Bresson and Carl Theodor Dreyer) as a test case for a theoretical paradigm they called "parametric style."[15] By calling Ozu's films "parametric," Thompson and Bordwell foregrounded the presence of particular stylistic features that were not motivated by any story construction but appeared to be dominant structuring devices for their own sake. Thompson and Bordwell also argued that Ozu playfully used nonnarrative space, color, and props to open up textual space to the free play of meaning. They did not, however, share Burch's (and Desser's) radical political position that posed Japanese cinema as a challenger to the capitalism that typically informed classical Hollywood cinema. Calling themselves "neoformalists," Thompson and Bordwell never tried to use their film analyses to support specific ideological agendas.

The deep-seated culturalism, or cultural essentialism, in all three positions reinscribes a divide between the West and Japan. Indeed, Schrader writes, "Each artist must use the raw materials of his personality and culture . . . but it is not possible to extrapolate the transcendental style from within a totally Japanese perspective; one needs several cultural perspectives."[16] But, as Jinhee Choi asks, how can we "conceptualize the notion of influence, either cultural or filmic"?[17]

Unfortunately, Japanese scholarship on Ozu's films did not fill the gap and facilitate international cross-reading of Ozu criticism. The biggest problem of Japanese scholarship on Ozu was its lack of historical

specificity. This probably was not because of the Eurocentrism and culturalism witnessed in Euro-American scholarship. The insensitivity to history, especially to Japanese colonial history during wartime, was most likely the result of postwar history education in Japan initiated by the US Occupation, but such historical amnesia and postcolonial unconsciousness were enhanced during the rapid economic growth in the 1950s and 1960s, the subsequent period of political conservativism (1970s and 1980s), and the period of the bubble economy (late 1980s to early 1990s). Some critics have called these periods Japan's postmodernity.

While some writings appeared on Ozu while he was still alive and working, critical interest in his work at that time was sporadic. Satō Tadao's book *Ozu Yasujirō's Art* (*Ozu Yasujirō no geijutsu*, 1971), was arguably the only monograph devoted to Ozu. Hasumi Shigehiko's 1983 book *Director Ozu Yasujirō* single-handedly resurrected Ozu's reputation in Japan. On the surface, Hasumi rejected auteurism when he insisted that there never could be an Ozu style. Yet, in the wake of Hasumi, a veritable explosion of scholarly essays, critical books, and writings by Ozu himself has appeared in Japan. Ironically, Hasumi's critique of the notion of the auteur via Ozu led to a flourishing of auteurist criticism within Japanese film criticism. According to Aaron Gerow, Hasumi walked a tightrope between the celebration and negation of Ozu as an auteur. Gerow writes: "Against the conception of auteurs as free artists flaunting convention to establish their own personal styles, Hasumi sees a filmmaker straddling juxtaposition and coexistence, one who is an 'open auteur' only through awareness of the limits of cinema, who must engage in difference and contradiction because cinema cannot be controlled. Just as Ozu's cinema is most brilliant when it challenges those limits by exposing them—at the point just before cinema ceases to be cinema—Ozu is an auteur right at the point just before he ceases to be an auteur."[18]

By adopting what he called "surface criticism" (*hyōsō hihyō*), Hasumi paid attention to what is visible on the screen, no matter how banal the appearance. His examples included the peculiar eyeline matches that refuse the illusion of looking, while his examples of Ozu's belief in the capabilities of cinema included various themes (*shudai*) or fragments (*danpen*), such as eating, changing clothes, or looking, that Ozu consistently adopted in his films but that exceeded the linearity of the narrative or intellectual reading.[19]

Hasumi's work influenced the discursive formation of film criticism in Japan in the 1980s to 2000s. As the designation "surface criticism"

implied, his (and his followers') lack of interest in historical argument, especially sociopolitical history in Japan about filmmaking, distribution, and exhibition, was evident. Hasumi's surface criticism separated politics from textual analysis. Gerow points out that such a gap between politics and textual analysis in Hasumi's criticism stemmed "in part from a disillusionment with the sixties' radical politics and its claims of authority, critiqued universal abstractions and metanarratives that restricted the inherent creativity of criticism and film viewing."[20]

Under the strong influence of Hasumi, for instance, Saussure scholar Maeda Hideki analyzed Ozu's films in conjunction with Deleuze's film theory in his 2005 book, *Ozu Yasujirō's House* (*Ozu Yasujirō no ie*). Maeda emphasized the mechanical perception and optical unconsciousness of the motion picture camera. Ozu, argued Maeda, phenomenologically represented the cosmos, expanding beyond the camera frame with daily objects, including a beer bottle, a line of smoke, and a vase. Maeda's work constitutes one of the first European-style theoretical engagements with Ozu's films by contemporary critics in Japan. Hasumi's work has also contributed to the emergence of a group of filmmakers, including Kurosawa Kiyoshi, Suō Masayuki, Aoyama Shinji, and Shiota Akihiko, who were conscious only of the history of filmmaking, or what Hasumi calls "cinematic memory" (*eiga-teki kioku*).

Since the middle to late 1990s, both Japanese and non-Japanese scholars who are well-versed in Japanese have challenged the Eurocentric trend of prior decades by proposing new methodological approaches to the study of Ozu and Japanese cinema that would overcome the shortcomings of auteurism as well as national cinema. I will point these out in the following section. In a book that questions the coherence of the work of Kurosawa Akira, Yoshimoto proposes that Kurosawa's authorship should be regarded "as a question or a site of negotiations." Yoshimoto further argues that the author "Kurosawa" is "a discursive product, the critical meaning and social function of which are constantly negotiated by Kurosawa, critics, and audiences. The reception and interpretation of his films cannot but be influenced by a particular construction of Kurosawa as an author."[21] Emphasizing the significance of historical specificity, the research by Yoshimoto and other scholars covers various aspects of Japanese film production, distribution, exhibition, and reception. This new historical approach has located Ozu's work within a global network of popular culture, mass media, and theoretical frameworks as critics have examined the formation of Ozu's aesthetic within specific historical contexts.

Following Yoshimoto's proposal, the central arguments of this book rest on the premise that, when it comes to Japanese cinema in its complex historical dimensions, Ozu exists as a site of negotiation from which to explore and define the tension between the national and the transnational, between aesthetics and history, and between theory and practice.

Problems of National Cinema and the Study of Ozu

My goal is not to rearticulate Ozu films per se to challenge auteurism but to critique the deep-rooted culturalism witnessed in the study of Japanese cinema caused by Eurocentric power relations. I share the same concerns of Hideaki Fujiki and Alastair Phillips, who state in the introduction to their anthology, *The Japanese Cinema Book* (2020), "Neither term—'Japanese' or 'cinema'—might necessarily be pre-given, monolithic, self-sufficient or stable," and "The national boundary of 'Japanese' and the media boundary of 'cinema' remain instead fluid and contested on a number of levels."[22] Fujiki and Phillips continue: "The idea of 'Japan' must always be seen as contingent on a process of historical construction: a process that not only involves established administrative frameworks and the idea of cultural heritage, but also certain forms of diversity, instability and contradiction. . . . [T]he idea of 'cinema' must similarly be seen as something historically shaped on multiple levels in terms of technologies such as the camera, the film projector, celluloid film footage and digital media; institutional practices involving production, distribution, promotion, exhibition and representation; site-specific screening venues and media platforms, and the sensory experience of audience bodies."[23] Their argument leads to several essential questions: How should we talk about "transnational" when we talk about Japanese cinema? What should be the relationship between aesthetics and history, and between theory and practice? Should we also test the limits of cinema by tracing the genealogies of intermedia and transmedia practices?

I have persistently questioned the ways in which Japanese national cinema has been studied hitherto and have proposed theoretical and historical methodologies that would overcome the tendency of culturalism that Japanese cinema studies has embraced. In *Routledge Handbook of Japanese Cinema* (2021), Joanne Bernardi and Shota T. Ogawa similarly attempted to "embrace the hybridity" that they "understand to be at the heart of Japanese cinema: disciplinary hybridity, media hybridity, and

hybridity of language and culture." I mainly agree with Bernardi and Ogawa, although I believe that such "hybridity" can exist at the heart of cinema from any region.[24]

There are problems with the concept of national cinema. In cinema studies, studies of "national cinema" since the late 1970s have emphasized that cinema has the function of realizing a nation. Ella Shohat and Robert Stam suggest the role that cinema plays in the process of the imaginary construction of national identity.[25] Shohat and Stam follow the historian Benedict Anderson and his idea of national self-consciousness as a precondition for nationhood. Anderson argued that a collective consciousness about origins, status, location, and aspirations became possible due to the use of a common language in novels and newspapers, both products of print capitalism.[26] Similarly, cinema can actively work to construct a collective consciousness rather than simply reflect or express an already fully formed and homogeneous national culture and identity. But we can recognize at least two problems: First, "Japanese cinema" cannot be easily regarded as a national cinema in the sense that it reflects a putative national culture. Second, there has been an essentialist tendency in film theory and criticism, conditioned by Euro-American colonialism and imperialism, to emphasize the difference of Japanese cinema compared with European and American films as a model or an alternative to "classical Hollywood cinema." As Fujiki and Phillips claim, "The construction of 'Japanese cinema' as an idea has never been a neutral project; from the outset, it has involved certain predilections conditioned by the global historical contexts of the time."[27]

There is a recent example related to the first issue. The choice of anime and its emphasis on superflatness by Murakami Takashi et al. without specific historical reference in the recent "Cool Japan" discourse reminds us of the post–World War II attempt by the Japanese film industry to formulate a "national cinema" that would represent Japan's unique culture. By the late 1950s, Japanese cinema had recovered from the devastation of World War II, thanks largely to the strong support it received during the Allied Occupation (1945–52), and was enjoying its golden period. According to a report by the Motion Picture Producers Association of Japan (Nihon eiga seisakusha renmei), in 1958, motion pictures had reached an unprecedented 1,127,452,000 viewers. The number of Japanese films released in 1960 rose to an unprecedented 547. The number of film theaters increased to 7,457 in 1960. (In comparison, in 1996, the number of viewers was 119,575,000, about one-tenth that of 1958.) The number of Japanese

films released in 1996 was 278 (most were independent films), whereas most of the 547 films of 1960 were produced by major film studios. The number of theaters dropped to 1,828 in 1996.[28] Audiences were attracted by genre films such as melodrama, comedy, and horror (monster films). Simultaneously, many Japanese films received critical acclaim in international film festivals in the 1950s. Kurosawa Akira's *Rashomon* (*Rashōmon*, 1950) received the Golden Lion Prize at the Venice International Film Festival in 1951. Mizoguchi Kenji's *Ugetsu* (*Ugetsu monogatari*, 1953) received the Silver Lion Prize in 1953 at Venice, and his *Sansho the Bailiff* (*Sanshō dayū*, 1954) was awarded the same prize in 1954 along with Kurosawa's *Seven Samurai* (*Shichinin no samurai*, 1954). Kinugasa Teinosuke's *Gate of Hell* (*Jigokumon*, 1954) followed with the Grand Prize at the 1954 Cannes Film Festival. As a result, the term "Japanese cinema" spread among international critics and audiences for the first time. A conscious and strategic attempt to construct a national cinema followed.

The unexpected success of *Rashomon* at the Venice festival had a certain influence on Japanese state policymakers and on how Japan would publicize its new image in the post–World War II reconstruction era. Nagata Masaichi, the president of Daiei Studio, which produced Kurosawa's film, became aware of certain expectations from international audiences regarding Japanese cinema. He strategically initiated producing and exporting films, such as *Gate of Hell*, that paid little attention to the historical accuracy of their content but instead emphasized hyperbolic Japaneseness, or traditional-looking cultural objects such as scroll paintings (*emaki*), gorgeous kimonos, sword-fighting samurai, and so on. Two types of films existed in Japan in the 1950s: genre films and exotic films. While the former was well received in Japan, the latter was formulated and recognized internationally as the Japanese national cinema. Nagata's strategy, which mixes and matches traditional cultural elements while paying little attention to historical accuracy and specificity, can be called the self-exoticization of Japanese cinema and culture. The justification for these films was their appeal to foreign viewers. Thus, the international "gaze" on Japanese culture initiated the formation of a national cinema in Japan. *Gate of Hell* did not succeed in the Japanese market, probably because it was too exotic. Yet, the self-exoticization policy strategically adopted by the Japanese film industry in the 1950s allowed the Japanese spectator to consciously think about what Japanese culture was and would be.

As for the second problem, in 1991, Yoshimoto pointed out that Eurocentrism was, consciously or unconsciously, embedded in the estab-

lishment of film studies as an academic discipline.[29] Twenty-three years later, I argued in the introduction to *The Oxford Handbook of Japanese Cinema* (2014) that, despite the reality of transnational innovation and dissemination of new technologies, the deep-seated culturalism continues to reinscribe a divide between the West and Japan, even in realms of technological activity that are quite evidently dispersed across cultures.[30] Andrew Higson questioned the validity of national cinema in 1989, even before the publication of Yoshimoto's essay. Even when Euro-American colonialism and imperialism were the dominant forces in international politics, economy, and advanced technology, Higson pointed out that no cinema ever reflected or expressed an already formed and homogeneous national culture and identity as if it were the undeniable property of all national subjects. One of Higson's goals was to criticize what he called "internal cultural colonialism," which privileged a limited range of subject positions being naturalized or reproduced as the only legitimate position of the national subject "at the expense of repressing internal differences, tensions, and contradictions—differences of class, race, gender, region, etc."[31] Following Higson, Aaron Gerow wrote in 2010: "Japanese film studies have focused increased attention on the issue of 'national cinema,' but even those that recognize that motion pictures are not the manifestation of some age-old national essence, and that they in fact participate in the modern construction of national identity, seem to be compelled to reduce films to the singular nation, even if that nation is constructed or inherently engaged in *transnational* systems of difference. By making the national the central category, even supposedly to deconstruct it, many studies have nonetheless made the cinema revolve around the question of the nation, effectively homogenizing it."[32] In our critiques of studies of Japanese national cinema in the crisis of national boundaries under globalization and the period of crisis of cinema under digitalization, both Gerow and I used the word *transnational*, which seemed to be popularized for use in our fields in the 1990s. By now, the ideal notion of a transnational culture has turned out to be one in which organizations and individuals engage in the exchange of ideas, participate in cultural activities—as artists and as an audience—and move from place to place at will, taking advantage of loosened borders and barriers to benefit from and contribute to the flourishing of arts and culture.[33]

Filmmaking can occur in the transnational discursive and practical network of a preoccupation with and representation of technology. However, I must stress that criticizing the concept of national cinema is

not equal to bringing in transnational cinema as an alternative. Instead of applying the notion of transnational as a panacean alternative to national cinema, it is more productive to discuss specific tensions between national and transnational in the history of Japanese cinema. While the focus of my book *The Aesthetics of Shadow* was on Japanese cinema, I situated Japanese cinema within the broader fields of transnational film history because experiments with technological lighting in cinema should be located within the transnational discursive and practical network of the preoccupation with technological modernity. At the same time, I admitted that cinematic lighting had historically been stabilized in close relation to Japan's cultural and national identity politics.[34] Japanese filmmaking has been an international affair formed in an unequal geopolitical relationship, or an imbalance of power. There has been a tension in the geopolitical perspective between a transnationality and a nationality. As I discussed in that book, the aesthetics of shadow, which praised darkness over brightness in the name of Japanese traditional aesthetics, was a discourse that emerged in the late 1930s as an amalgam of multiple desires: adoration of Hollywood's technology, desperation about material conditions in Japanese filmmaking, and rivalry between film companies, among others. The advent of Hypersensitive Panchromatic Type Two Motion Picture Negative film by the Eastman Kodak Company in 1931 triggered the tendency in Hollywood for low-key lighting. Japanese cinematographers adored this type of lighting, particularly in the Paramount productions of films directed by Josef von Sternberg and starring Marlene Dietrich. While they despaired at the limited material conditions in Japanese studios compared with the Hollywood film industry financially and technologically, they turned to one aspect of Japanese art that was available: praise of darkness in Japanese architecture and landscape. Nothing identified as national existed there yet. Both Hollywood and Japanese cinematographers practiced cinematic experiments with available technologies. If the achievement of low-key lighting was their common goal, the project tended to be technologically determined and transnational.

The transnational nature of the aesthetics of shadow was overtaken by nationalist ideas in the gradual militarization of film culture in the 1930s. While the initial motive was a search for ways to overcome material and technological limitations and accomplish spectacles that would equal the glamour of Hollywood cinema—in a different but equally gripping manner—Japanese cinematographers and critics were dissatisfied with their limited material conditions but invented a tradition of

Japanese aesthetics of shadow as an alternative. It did not take long before they started to connect their argument to the ideology of *kokutai* (national polity), dictated by the Ministry of Education, which stipulated that all cultural production must conform to the twin principles of a "return to Japan" and an embrace of the emperor system and its hierarchical structuring of Japanese society. The phrase *kokutai no hongi* (the cardinal principles of our national polity) entailed a revival of Japanese cultural practices that had long since been forgotten in the popular imagination and had to be reinvented for cultural uplift. They thus justified their newly adopted aesthetic practices in the name of "Japanese characteristics in cinematographic technology."[35] In other words, they strategically connected the aesthetics of shadow to a nationalist discourse.

We should not forget that such a shift of the discourse of the aesthetics of shadow from transnational to national was never unilateral or one-directional. The emergence of the aesthetics of shadow could be attributed to the rise of militarism and governmental control over film content, especially after the Film Law was promulgated on April 5 and enforced beginning on October 1, 1939. However, the aesthetics of shadow was not the dominant discourse of the time, nor was it simply a nationalist and traditionalist project. Behind the emergence of the concept of the aesthetics of shadow, there existed a strong rivalry between the Tōhō and Shōchiku studios, which had almost no relation to nationalist thought. The newly established company Tōhō challenged the dominance of Shōchiku, whose films were (in)famous for flat, bright kabuki-style lighting. Tōhō needed the aesthetics of shadow for product differentiation. Ironically, Tōhō and its cinematographers criticized Shōchiku films for their lack of Japaneseness, despite Shōchiku's close connection to kabuki. "Japan" was nothing more than a tactical word in an industry war familiar to any part of the world. In that sense, the aesthetics of shadow used in the Tōhō-Shōchiku conflict was a transnational incident. While the advocates of the aesthetics of shadow criticized Shōchiku's bright, cheerful cinema, Shōchiku never lost popularity among general audiences. The box office record suggests that even in 1943, Shōchiku's box office revenue of 9,903,392 yen was almost equal to the 10,351,679-yen revenue of Tōhō, the newly established rival.[36] This is evidence of how multifaceted and contradictory Japanese film culture was during the war, often believed to be unilateral under ultranationalism and militarism. The aesthetics of shadow existed in a complex web of negotiations and dialogues. As this example of the aesthetics of shadow demonstrates, one can never underestimate the significance of negotiation that

marks the tension and dialogism between the national and transnational in global power relations and political economy.

The Ethics of Indeterminacy

While being aware of the emergence of new historical and global approaches to Ozu's works, in this book I aim not to reevaluate Ozu's films but to go beyond the limit of auteurism and enduring culturalism. By discussing Ozu's work, I want to initiate multidirectional dialogue on the study of cinema. In the introduction to *The Oxford Handbook of Japanese Cinema*, I pointed out three types of marginalization of Japanese cinema: in film and media studies as one regional/national cinema, in area studies as one area of cultural studies, and by Japanese governmental policies as unuseful for the commodification of cinema.[37] My goal for that handbook was to foster dialogue among Japanese scholars of Japanese cinema; film scholars of Japanese cinema based in Anglo-American and European countries; film scholars of non-Japanese cinema; and non–film scholars, including a scholar of another discipline, a film archivist, and a film producer who is familiar with film scholarship.[38] Again, the ultimate goal of this book is to establish a basis for conversations on cinema between the scholars and critics of my generation and the future researchers and fans of cinema.

The recent development of rigorous study of Japanese cinema in Japanese- and English-speaking academia has yet to remove the problem of marginalization primarily because it is not inviting dialogue. "The era of dialogue and debate among scholars in the field is largely over," as Markus Nornes laments in his 2022 review of three volumes on Japanese cinema: *The Japanese Cinema Book*, edited by Hideaki Fujiki and Alastair Phillips; *Routledge Handbook of Japanese Cinema*, edited by Joanne Bernardi and Shota T. Ogawa; and *A Companion to Japanese Cinema*, edited by David Desser. While impressed by the quality of these books' scholarship and their interdisciplinary diversity, resulting in no overlap between the ninety-one essays that "embrace approaches from every angle imaginable," Nornes states that "the lack of dialogue between the articles is striking." "Today," he continues, "everyone is doing something fascinating, but they are basically doing their own thing," which makes him "nostalgic for the vital disagreements in the early days of the field."[39] I must admit that I am envious of Nornes's nostalgia toward the founding days of the discipline of film studies when "the debates were lively," which I did not have

a chance to experience. But at the same time, I also want to think about the future. What future do we anticipate? What dialogues do we want to have? And what exactly is the purpose of such dialogues?

Ultimately, I want to have dialogues that question how human beings can live in this world—as human beings in their relationships with others, including fellow human beings in society and animals and nature in the surrounding environment. As a film studies scholar, I want to discuss cinema as having an ethical purpose for the world. In this book, by examining several films directed by Ozu in detail, I want to explore the relationship between ethics and cinema.

The relationship between films and ethics has been discussed throughout the history of film theory, especially in terms of cinema's photographic realism.[40] As Robert Sinnerbrink and Lisa Trahair suggest, the documentary film, including the direct cinema and cinema verité movements, was "the most overtly ethical treatment of film," but "feminist film theory, psychoanalytic film theory, queer film theory, and the study of third cinema" have raised questions of ethical importance.[41] Sinnerbrink and Trahair map three ethical approaches to cinema that have been taken so far: "1) the ethics *in* cinema (focusing on narrative content including dramatic scenarios involving morally charged situations, conflicts, decisions, or actions); 2) the ethics *of* cinematic representation (focusing on the ethical issues raised by elements of film production and/or audience reception, for example, the ongoing debates over the effects of depictions of screen violence); and 3) the ethics of cinema *as* a cultural medium expressing moral beliefs, social values, or ideology (such as feminist film analysis of gender or Marxist analyses of ideology of popular film)."[42] Then, Sinnerbrink and Trahair propose to add a fourth, "the aesthetic dimension of cinema," which intensifies viewers' "ethical experience," focuses our "attention," conveys "the complexity of meaning through manifold means," and invites "ethical-critical reflection."[43] It is unclear how this differs from the second approach mentioned by Sinnerbrink and Trahair, but perhaps the focus of this fourth approach is the *how* while that of the second approach is the *what*. In other words, what cinematic techniques and styles are used (the fourth) to represent an object or issue (the second).

Sinnerbrink elaborates on "the aesthetic dimension of cinema" by analyzing the four-minute opening scene of Theo Angelopolous's *Ulysses' Gaze* (1995). Following a quotation from Plato, "And, if the soul is to know himself, it must gaze into the soul," and the Manakis brothers' two-minute, four-shot silent film, *The Weavers* (1905), depicting a group of women

weaving with their looms, the fourth shot, an elderly woman looking directly at the camera as she weaves dissolves into a long shot of the ocean in black and white. As the camera makes a slow backtracking movement, we see an elderly cinematographer operating a motion picture camera. A male voice-over narrates that he was an assistant cinematographer in 1954. The image changes from monochrome to color when the supposed narrator in a contemporary suit comes into the shot. Suddenly, the elderly cinematographer, photographing a blue ship sailing in the sea, falls onto a chair, having a heart attack. The narrator leaves the dead cinematographer in the chair and walks to the right. The shot pans to the right to follow him, where he is joined by the filmmaker A. (Harvey Keitel). The camera pans to the left to follow A. walking to the spot where the elderly cinematographer died. There is no cinematographer, chair, or motion picture camera, but the blue ship still sails on. The camera zooms into the ship until it disappears at the left of the frame. Cut. Sinnerbrink calls this long take with camera movements "A.'s historical-ethical quest . . . to retrieve this cinematic memorialization of historical experience in the hope that this 'first gaze' [of the Manakis brothers' motion picture camera] will shed light on the tragedies of twentieth-century history and the ongoing conflicts defining a contemporary Europe in crisis." This long take as an "aesthetic means" is "ethical" for Sinnerbrink because it evokes "the situation of marginalized subjects (minorities, wanderers, refugees, those 'without a place' in the new social orders) through a cinema of temporal duration, cultural memory, and ethical contemplation." "Cinematic ethics," concludes Sinnerbrink, "means showing, rather than telling."[44] For him, the ethics of this scene reside in the "ambiguity" and the "dissonance between affective/cognitive and evaluative dimensions" that only a long take can aesthetically present. Here, Sinnerbrink's usage of the term *ethics* is not equal to "morality" or "telling" of morality tales because, as he points out, "the tendency towards moral allegiance [with characters] is thwarted by the manner in which the action is depicted."[45]

Sinnerbrink and Trahair's first "ethics in cinema" approach can consider how the film's narrative engages with morally charged situations. The second "ethics of cinema" approach should examine whether the morally charged situation is a suitable object of cinematic representation. The third "ethics of cinema as cultural medium" approach should analyze the film's ideological and political stance toward the situation. The fourth "aesthetics" approach deals with whether cinematic techniques and styles are selected for ethical purposes. If the styles and techniques are adopted

for spectacularizing a situation, such as the war, that aesthetic choice is unethical.

No matter how careful Sinnerbrink and Trahair's categorization of cinematic ethics is, "the ethical turn" in film theory in the new millennium, according to Jinhee Choi and Mattias Frey, has shifted the focus from filmmakers and stresses that "spectators' perceptual and sensorial engagement with film is considered as ethical in and of itself."[46] D. N. Rodowick rereads Stanley Cavell's film theory and shifts the ethical dimension of film from the medium's representation and meaning to its spectator's position. Rodowick emphasizes that the film viewer (re)experiences the past or the world passing in the present tense or the same duration as the viewer and the world viewed.[47] As Choi and Frey also point out, Rodowick thus highlights film as "the site for an ethical encounter between the self, reality and others."[48]

I began seriously thinking about the relationship between myself as the viewer of cinema and the reality of the world for the first time when I translated Kiju Yoshida's *Ozu's Anti-Cinema* into English. In retrospect, Yoshida's book invited me to "the site for an ethical encounter" between myself and the world mediated by cinema. That was my first opportunity to start a cross-cultural dialogue on cinema by translating one language into another.

Ozu's Anti-Cinema is not exactly a book about Ozu's films. Instead, it is Yoshida's study of what cinema is, facing the chaotic state of the world. It is the ethical response of Yoshida as the individual to Ozu as the Other. Ozu uttered enigmatic words to him, which unexpectedly haunted Yoshida for life. The words and the sight of Ozu forced Yoshida, as a responsible filmmaker, to think about what cinema was. Yoshida developed a sense of responsibility after the dialogue with Ozu.

In his book, Yoshida shares two personal encounters between him and Ozu, his senior colleague at Shōchiku's Ōfuna studio from the late 1950s to the early 1960s. On both occasions, Ozu defined cinema in ways that were enigmatic to Yoshida. On the first occasion at the studio's New Year's party, responding to Yoshida's published criticism of Ozu's most recent film, *The End of Summer* (*Kohayagawa ke no aki*, 1961), Ozu said to Yoshida, "After all, film directors are like prostitutes under a bridge, hiding their faces and calling to customers." Perhaps Ozu was asking whether it was possible to make films independent from commercialism. On the next occasion, when Yoshida paid the final visit to Ozu, who was battling cancer, Ozu whispered to him twice, as if speaking to himself, "Cinema

is drama, not accident." Yoshida was confused by Ozu's words because he had thought Ozu had not been intentionally making dramatic films but rather treating films as "accidents."[49]

In this book, I want to examine Ozu's comment to Yoshida, "Cinema is drama, not accident," as a statement of ethics. According to Yoshida, Ozu knew of the existence of "the artifice of cinema," or coherent grand narratives that could be achieved only by artificial manipulation, from the beginning of his career.[50] Ozu continued to ask what cinema as a medium of technology could do in the chaotic world in which he lived. The artifice of cinema seemingly brings system and order to represent the world, which can lead to "drama," as demonstrated most typically in classical Hollywood cinema. Ozu was not against the commercialism of Hollywood cinema. He was a commercial filmmaker who throughout his career worked at one of Japan's oldest and largest film companies. He was a big fan of Hollywood films. He did not depart from Hollywood cinema but instead adopted its styles and techniques. As if attempting to bring system and order to life, Ozu repetitiously presented episodes of everyday life in his films. Repetitious representations mean fiction. Drama. As a director of this medium of commercial technology, Ozu was aware of his authority, his employer's authority in its capitalist endeavor, and the rapid expansion of neoliberalism on a global scale after the end of World War II. But, argues Yoshida, Ozu's films suggest there is no perfect repetition in a chaotic world, which means that no perfect drama is possible. There is always an accident in any system or order. Then, do drama and accidents inevitably coexist? Do Ozu's dramatic films show a world filled with accidents or only slight differences among daily repetitive episodes? Was that what Ozu meant when he said, "Cinema is drama, not accident"?

According to Yoshida, Ozu made his filmmaking a passive act that tried to follow, imitate, and repeat incidents in the actual world. Thus, for Yoshida, Ozu regarded filmmaking as a nonimposing act. Yoshida even labels Ozu's filmmaking as "a theology of motion pictures." Yoshida chooses the word *theology* to indicate that Ozu's films present amorphous conditions of the actual world that are not captured in the signifying system or the standardized language of cinema.

One of the dramatic and artificial elements distinctively observed in the films directed by Ozu is his unique way of adopting point-of-view (POV) shots derived from the Hollywood films familiar to him. Principally in the scenes of conversation between characters in the narrative, actors gaze almost directly at the camera. Critics have argued that the audience

can place themselves in the characters' positions. Thus, the sense of involvement in the narrative is enhanced. The shot of a character looking directly at the camera does not promise ethical aesthetics. If it forces the viewer to participate in the storyline (i.e., the first-person POV shots used as a narrative device throughout films like *Lady in the Lake* [Robert Montgomery, 1947] and *Peeping Tom* [Michael Powell, 1960]), it only gives a unitary meaning of identifying or sympathizing with the character. Still, I want to stress the notion of the face-to-face encounter, an experience of the self's inescapable responsibility to the Other, that this type of POV editing used by Ozu induces.

The face-to-face encounter is a concept that the French philosopher Emmanuel Levinas considers as the basis of his thoughts on ethics. According to Levinas, the "face-to-face encounter with the other" suffering in pain makes an individual aware of the other's mortality and vulnerability and inevitably demands an ethical response to the other. In the "inter-human" connection, the individual realizes the "impossibility of abandoning the other to his aloneness."[51]

Levinas's concept may be naive because it is based on human conscience, compassion, or the doctrine of innate goodness. Levinas understood that he could not impose on anyone his ethical responsibility toward the other. The Levinas scholar Adriaan T. Peperzak argues that Levinas was not even producing ethics "if we understand 'ethics' as a doctrine about the moral principles, norms, obligations, and interdictions that rule human behavior."[52] If we think in this way, ethics becomes dogmatic. Levinas's idea has nothing to do with an authoritarian or imposing force. Ruth Domrzalski argues, "Responsibility springs forth from the demands made in this inter-human realm, and in the Levinasian conception, responsibility is not a choice, but rather a demand that binds me to the other."[53] For Levinas, ethics is not a conscious choice but happens inescapably as "an unexpected occurrence."[54] It is an accident, not a drama. If this is the case, cinema cannot be ethical because it is always consciously created, can it? As Ozu said, "Cinema is drama, not accident."

Yet, encountering the unique POV shots in the films directed by Ozu and being face-to-face with the characters in them, even when they are not always suffering in pain, I cannot help but feel involved in their lives in the world. It is one of the artifices of cinema that creates the interhuman connection even when the audience is not face-to-face with the other. It is the form that the films of Ozu make us aware of. The forms are created consciously (a drama), but the encounter with them occurs unexpectedly (an

accident). In cinema, through the forms, the individual virtually faces the other. Libby Saxton writes: "The film consistently frustrates our desire to see, know and understand by refusing to allow the other and his or her history to take shape as objects under our gaze. By holding us at a distance the images and voices afford a more intimate encounter with traumatic experience, opening up the possibility of proximity while preserving separation. In so doing, they call Levinas's critique of images and vision as inherently totalising into question."[55] Saxton thus reveals a contradiction similar to what I find in Ozu's claim on drama and accident: the limits of understanding the other. Cinema is "phantomlike," to use Rey Chow's expression.[56] But in such phantomlike ambiguity, Chow thinks, "may lie its most interesting intellectual future."[57] I would add its most ethical future to Chow's comment.

Yoshida insists, "If cinema can be regarded as a hope and a possibility, that is only because of its unreadability. Nobody, including the filmmaker who photographed the film, can read what appears on the screen decisively. It is not a film titled 'A' but a film of 'A' plus infinite numbers of points, blanks, and surplus. . . . That can be a film only for me as a viewer. The absolute superiority and freedom of the audience, that is the principle of the hope for cinema."[58] Yoshida, who seems to be influenced by Gilles Deleuze's notion of "any-space-whatever," writes, "Deleuze's emphasis on arbitrariness [in any-space-whatever] means that moving images should not be logically narrated by words or the chain of signification but are infinitely open as images that can connect to anything. They are the expression that only the viewers can freely decide the meaning of."[59] For Yoshida, "the attraction of cinema exists in its indecisiveness, ambiguity, and uncertainty" and "the films that are freely interpreted by the audience's imagination have infinite potentiality."[60]

However, are such open texts that Yoshida hopes for really possible? Can images be autonomous? It is possible to leave an image's meaning undecided and ambiguous, but does that mean this image is open as a text? Can a viewer freely interpret the image? How subjective is that interpretation when the image is in a context? If a film is read beyond or of no relevance to its context, should such freedom be allowed? What is the limit of freedom of expression as well as interpretation?

Even if open texts are possible, is such an action to make open texts ethical if the film in question deals with problematic issues such as the war? Yoshida writes, "All filmmakers, including myself, think they can depict things in reality. But they do not. They are only expressing themselves [using

reality]. . . . So, I object. It should not be allowed as a humane expression. It makes films authoritative, weapons, and dangerous. I have kept saying this from the beginning [of my career]."[61] Yoshida seems to have given up his hope for cinema to become an open text. He seems to give in to thoughts of impossibility for the viewers to escape from the authoritative structure and freely face and read the moving image. What, then, are the ethics of cinema that promise both spectatorial autonomy, avoiding unitary perspective and allowing multiple possibilities of viewing positions, and the aesthetics of filmmakers, preventing their films from being authoritative?

The famous scene in Ozu's *Late Spring* (*Banshun*, 1949), in which the film inserts two cutaways of a vase is an excellent example of the balancing act between the ethics of spectatorial autonomy and the aesthetics of a filmmaker. It is an exemplary scene that manifests the notion of indeterminacy in films directed by Ozu.

As I will discuss in chapter 2, *Late Spring* is a loose remake of *Stella Dallas* (King Vidor, 1937). In *Stella Dallas*, Stella (Barbara Stanwyck), the daughter of a mill worker in New England, meets Stephen Dallas (John Boles), a wealthy executive. Stephen is emotionally vulnerable. He and Stella quickly marry and have a daughter, Laurel (Anne Shirley). The couple separates because their class differences become a problem. Laurel stays with her mother but visits her father periodically. When Stella takes Laurel to a fancy resort, Laurel meets Richard (Tim Holt), a son of an established family. After an embarrassing incident, Stella realizes that Laurel will not be happy in her life if she stays with her mother.

Late Spring is the first film of the so-called Noriko trilogy—*Early Summer* (*Bakushū*, 1951) and *Tokyo Story* (*Tokyo monogatari*, 1953) are the other two. Hara Setsuko plays the character named Noriko in each of the three films. In *Late Spring*, Noriko happily looks after her father, a widower, Professor Somiya Shūkichi (Ryū Chishū). To encourage Noriko to marry, Shūkichi tries to trick her into thinking he is going to remarry. Distraught, she agrees to meet a possible husband but still resents the idea of her father's remarriage.

To initiate thoughts on the ethics of indeterminacy, it is helpful to analyze the corresponding scenes from the two films. Stella and Laurel spend a night together in a Pullman car during their trip before the daughter's marriage. (The 1925 version of *Stella Dallas*, directed by Henry King, also includes this sequence.) *Late Spring* reframes this sequence in a scene where the father and the daughter sleep next to each other at an inn in Kyoto. Both scenes adopt rather conventional shot/countershot editing and a soft spotlight on the characters' faces. The viewer's attention goes to

them without distraction. Yet, while the Pullman scene focuses on clearly expressing each character's thoughts and compassion toward the other, the scene in the inn consciously deviates from such expressive clarity.

The Pullman scene is composed of ten shots:

1 Medium shot (MS) of Stella lying on a bed. A soft beam of light through the curtains hits her face. She overhears Laurel's friends speaking ill of her.
2 Close-up (CU) of Laurel also listening in a bed above Stella. Soft top lighting makes a halo on her blond hair.
3 CU of Stella nearly in tears.
4 MS of Laurel, starting to get up.
5 CU of Stella, noticing the sound that Laurel makes and looking up.
6 MS of Stella, turning around and pretending to be sleeping.
7 MS of Laurel, peeking down at her mother.
8 MS of Stella, as in shot 6, but this time from Laurel's point of view.
9 MS of Laurel climbing down and approaching Stella. As she tries to kiss Stella's cheek, the camera tracks into the medium close-up (MCU) of the two. As Laurel sneaks into Stella's bed, the camera moves back to MS.
10 CU of the two characters. Stella's eyes are open. She looks toward the ceiling with a sad but determined facial expression.

Through visual cues, viewers can ascertain each character's psychological state: Laurel's compassion for her mother and Stella's sad realization that she is a burden to her daughter. This moment leads her to make the most difficult decision: disowning her daughter so that Laurel can conform to high society, where her father belongs.

The inn scene in *Late Spring* is composed of seventeen shots.

1 Long shot (LS) of Noriko and Shūkichi sitting on a futon next to each other and discussing their schedules for the following day. Noriko's back is brightly lit by an electric lamp on the ceiling. Shūkichi's front is in a slight silhouette.
2 MS of Noriko, turning her head to the left, looking almost directly into the camera.

3 MS of Shūkichi, turning his head to the right, looking almost directly into the camera. The reverse shot of shot 2.

4 MS of Noriko, as in shot 2.

5 LS of the two, shot from the opposite side of shot 1. Shūkichi's back is brightly lit. Noriko's front is in a slight silhouette. Noriko stands up, turns off the light, and goes to her futon. The shoji screens behind the two become the whitest sections within the frame. Noriko's and Shūkichi's faces are softly lit, reflecting the light through the shoji screens.

6 MCU of Noriko, who is softly lit and looking at the ceiling. Smiling, she says, "I am afraid I was very rude to Uncle Onodera."

7 MCU of Shūkichi, in silhouette and looking at the ceiling. With a calm face, he asks, "What about?"

8 MCU of Noriko, as in shot 6. She says, "His wife is such a nice person. They make a wonderful couple. I shouldn't have called him 'impure.'"

9 MCU of Shūkichi, as in shot 7. He says, "Don't let it worry you."

10 MCU of Noriko, as in shots 6 and 8. She says, "It was an awful thing to say."

11 LS of the two, as in shot 5, after the light is turned off. Shūkichi responds, "He didn't take it seriously." "Do you think so?" "It's fine." After a brief moment, Noriko asks, "Father?"

12 MCU of Noriko. Her smile is gone. She says, "I was feeling angry towards you, but . . . ," and turns to the left.

13 MCU of Shūkichi. His eyes are closed. This shot is from Noriko's point of view.

14 MCU of Noriko. She turns back to the right and looks at the ceiling with a slight smile (her white teeth are visible). Shūkichi's snoring begins.

15 MS of a vase in silhouette in front of a round shoji screen. Slightly moving shadows of tree branches are visible on the shoji screen.

16 MCU of Noriko, looking toward the ceiling. Her smile is gone. She moves her head to the right, back to the initial place, blinks, and looks toward the ceiling again.

17 MS of a vase in silhouette, as in shot 15. The nondiegetic score begins while Shūkichi's snoring continues.

After Noriko takes a brief moment before she calls her father in shot 11, viewers are left unclear about what to read or perceive from the images and the sound.

Among film scholars and critics, *Late Spring* is known for the two shots of the vase in this scene. As Markus Nornes sums up, many scholars and critics have tried to understand the meaning of shots 11 through 17 but have not come up with a definitive answer.[62] The problem is all those scholars and critics have been looking for *the* signification of the shots even when the vase itself or the shots with the vase are too vague to pinpoint a symbolic and metaphoric meaning.

For example, Donald Richie writes that Ozu "seems to have 'known' when the various empty scenes and still lives would have their finest effect, would most forward the emotion he was both delineating and creating." Richie reasons that the shot of the vase was not in the original script and was added later because the shot's "proper length and position . . . became apparent only during the course of creating the film."[63] Although I appreciate Richie's specific comparison between the screenplay and the realized film, he seemingly reads the scene as the conventional shot/countershot that expresses each character's thoughts and compassion toward the other. For him, the vase is a clear metaphor or a catalyst for creating a different emotion in Noriko. If this is the case, this scene only makes *Late Spring* pay homage to *Stella Dallas* by adopting the editing technique learned from the Hollywood melodrama.

Similarly, Paul Schrader regards the vase as "stasis, a form which can accept deep contradictory emotion and transform it into an expression of something unified, permanent, transcendent."[64] In contrast, Kristin Thompson warns of "simplistic readings" of objects on the screen because Ozu's choice of a vase was nothing but "arbitrary," but still, she regards it as "a non-narrative element wedged into the action" to invoke "tradition."[65] Similarly, David Bordwell argues Ozu uses the vase to depart from classical Hollywood cinema's rule of causality and continuity editing.[66] Eric Cazdyn gives the vase a historical meaning by regarding the shot as an allegory for the sociopolitical moment in Japan under the Allied Occupation. He writes, "The time images of the vase and the clocks are read here as a way of coming to terms with a world in which various needs and desires were interpreted as symptoms of something larger."[67] Kiju Yoshida interprets the vase as "an image of purification and redemption," which Ozu improvisationally inserted during the shooting of the scene to prevent viewers from thinking of "incest" between Noriko and her

father and calming down "the dangerously immoral passion between the characters."[68] Gilles Deleuze regards the shots of the vase as "time itself, 'a little time in its pure state,'" and argues, "Ozu's still lifes endure, have a duration, over ten seconds of the vase: this duration of the vase is precisely the representation of that which endures, through the succession of changing states."[69] The seventeen shots in this scene deal with the issue of time, but I don't think the question of temporality here is about the definitive representation of time.

I read this scene a little further than the critics before me. This scene repeats the Pullman scene, but it still takes a critical distance from the latter by stressing the notion of indeterminacy. Contrary to the Pullman scene, the vagueness of the actors' performance and the editing make the meaning of this scene in *Late Spring* ambiguous and indeterminate. I would call this tendency, which avoids unitary perspective and allows multiple possibilities of standpoint and spectatorial position, the ethics of Ozu's filmmaking. What is at stake is the sense of indeterminacy of meaning itself.

The inclusion of multiple viewpoints in the films directed by Ozu is an ethical choice. It escapes judgmental and authoritative voices, often discussed as the central narrational device and tactics of classical Hollywood cinema to make its products coherent and consistent temporally and spatially. Multiple perspectives and voices can be distractive. They delay the conclusion or even prevent stories from having a concrete closure. They become the site where the agency and the spectator encounter the images, with the images being selected by the agent and interpreted by the spectator. The meanings of the images are to be read textually and contextually. However, the films directed by Ozu conspicuously present indecisive images (and sound) from the chaotic world using the representational machine called cinema. This encounter leads to, or is based on, the ethics of indeterminacy.

My term the *ethics of indeterminacy* is inspired by "the ethics of hesitation" (*tamerai no rinrigaku*), the notion coined by the Japanese philosopher and the Levinas scholar Uchida Tatsuru. Uchida argues that when facing the Other, especially when encountering their vulnerability, the individual cannot but hesitate.[70] No matter how irresponsible the individual is, the inescapably compassionate individual cannot make a decision instantly. The individual is forced to hesitate. Inspired by Levinas and Uchida, I propose the ethics of indeterminacy and explore it throughout this book (and beyond).[71]

Thoughts on the ethics of cinema run through my arguments in this book. Each chapter proceeds on a thematic basis and works through analyzing a select number of films to illustrate Ozu's films' relationships with the nonhuman, the geopolitics of the term "Asian cinema," the techniques and technologies of camera mobility, the politics of temporality and melodrama, and the nature of color as an environmental sensorium. Each chapter combines a close textual exploration of the films with theoretical and methodological debates as I engage with previous and recent adjacent scholarship on these areas of research and then reposition and extend it with my critical narrative. This is perhaps my most personal and pedagogical monograph by far.

In chapter 1, inspired by Kiju Yoshida's fascinating concept of "gazes of things" coined in his book *Ozu's Anti-Cinema*, I discuss the significance of multidirectional gazes, or cross-readings, that question not only Eurocentrism but also the anthropocentric viewpoint that tends to be judgmental and unilateral.[72] The anthropocentric viewpoint does not usually allow room for indeterminacy in the name of morality. I critique the status of cinema as a visual medium from the very beginning of its history to this day. The fundamental presumption is anthropocentric. My question is, Can cats watch cinema? To rephrase, how do nonhumans look at the world? In other words, I go back to the philosophical and theoretical questions of cinema since it emerged in the late nineteenth century. What does cinema tell us human beings about the act of looking? The protagonists of this chapter are cats in Ozu films. The question of the animal, or thought of the nonhuman to decenter the human, constitutes a crucial area for film theory, among other fields of humanities and social sciences, in the twenty-first century. Animals, insects, in fact all species, pose a new and complex area of research about questions of image, the gaze, ethics, illusion, surveillance, and the spectral.[73] This chapter can be read as a sequel to my book *Cinema Is a Cat* (2019).

Chapter 2 is about the ethical critique of national cinema. In this chapter, I propose how to challenge the notion of national cinema and that of the transnational. I historically trace the discursive formation of the notion of "Asian cinema" in Japan. By articulating how the term emerged and was transformed in its use in film criticism since the pre–World War II era, I explain that the notion has been connected to the complicated geopolitical relationship between Japan and Asia throughout the twentieth century and beyond. By doing so, I propose a critical reading of the colonial (i.e., the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere) and the postcolonial

(i.e., the Cold War) state of mind in national and transnational film history in Japan. Closely examining *Late Spring* and the political economy of Japan in the 1940s, I critique the logic of transnational capital that dehistoricizes and depoliticizes differences and boundaries in the name of multiculturalism.

I discuss the ethics of camera movement in chapter 3, which examines transnational cinematography studies concerning narrative styles and cultural politics. I extend my project in *The Aesthetics of Shadow* to make connections between cinema studies and filmmaking practices. My focus in that earlier book was on lighting. My focus in this chapter is on camera movements. It is widely believed that the camera rarely moves in Ozu's films. However, one of the striking characteristics of his films, especially those released in the postwar period between 1947 and 1957, was their camera movements. The extraordinary camera movements in *Early Summer* and *The Flavor of Green Tea over Rice* (*Ochazuke no aji*, 1952) present an ethical possibility of camera movements deviating from the narrative economy and the controlled world. By discussing cinematographers' awareness of the relationship between the sense of vision and the haptic/tactile, I explore the potential of the cinematic space.

Chapter 4 is on realism, which has always been at the core of my research—from the formation of a Japanese actor's stardom to the Japonisme vogue. I examine the notion of historical time by closely examining *Tokyo Story* and its melodramatic imagination. Ozu openly expressed his disgust for melodrama, or *merodorama* in Japanese. And yet, he said *Tokyo Story*, one of the most acclaimed films that he directed, was the most melodramatic among his films. How should we interpret this contradiction? Ozu's conflicting claims indicate the complexity of the discourse of melodrama and an ambivalent definition of it in relation to realism in Japanese literary and film criticism. Along the way, I reexamine the modernity theory that has been influential in the study of early and silent cinema from the very first day of my work in US academia to this day. By doing so, I discuss the temporality of cinema. More important this chapter is about an ethical treatment of time in history.

I explore color aesthetics and its relationship to ethics in chapter 5. This chapter reflects my recent research interests in the physiological, symbolic, and technical aspects of color. Up to this point, I have researched and written on black-and-white films. I ended my book *The Aesthetics of Shadow* at the point in time when color became dominant in filmmaking. Ozu and Miyagawa Kazuo, the cinematographer for *Floating Weeds* (*Ukikusa*,

1959), did not subscribe to the standardization of use of color in films and explored ways to "use colors differently." I start here by discussing the aesthetics of shadow in color and move on to the issue of materiality in cinema, the materiality of color in particular. I use the notion of the "color environment" to explore the relationship between color film technology (film stock, lighting, and camera); color usage in landscape, architecture, and props (production design); color perception (eyes and brains); and signification (semiotics, symbols, metaphor, and interpretation).

I conclude this book with remarks on the notion of repetition, often associated with filmmaking by Ozu. Repetition is at the core of indeterminacy. I explore the difference between ethics of indeterminacy and habits of postponement. Ozu often compared himself to a tofu maker who keeps making the same product.[74] Why did he make repetitions? Yoshida interpreted the iterative aspects of Ozu's filmmaking strategy thus: "The motif of repetition and difference and the compilation of incoherent images were dangerous choices for a filmmaker because they were less likely to enhance fluent storytelling. Indeed, they were more likely to contribute to confusion, delays in narrative development, and betray the viewer's expectations. Through these elements, Ozu-san courted the danger of frustrating his viewers. Nevertheless, he persisted in these negative methods of expression only because he knew well that the world, the actual conditions of human lives, could not be sufficiently told as stories."[75] Especially after *Late Spring*, the films that Ozu directed notably emphasized the motif of repetition or self-remakes. No matter how often he repeated similar scenes, they do not give definitive meanings to the objects within them. No matter how consistently he inserted the shots of characters directly looking into the camera, those shots still do not clarify the characters' psychology or emotional states. In his book on cinematic ethics, Edward Lamberti acknowledges the face-to-face that Levinas discusses as "something visible but also beyond our ontological grasp, thus inviting the viewer into a relationship with film that makes of the visible a filmic version of the Levinasian Other, which necessarily for ethical engagement evades comprehension."[76] The motif of repetition in the films directed by Ozu similarly goes beyond the ontological grasp and only enhances the sense of indeterminacy and tentativeness that become more apparent through repeat viewings. It suggests that Ozu was hesitant to face the other. His enigmatic words "Cinema is drama, not accident" lead us to the theme of indefinite postponement or deferral.

NOTES

Preface

1 Schrader, "Ozu Today and Tomorrow."

2 Hasumi, "Sunny Skies," 120, 124. David Bordwell also argues, "Ozu insisted on a bright, hard-edged look to evoke the crisply defined images he had visualized in his notebooks. Even a film noir like *Dragnet Girl* [*Hijōsen no onna*, 1933], which is shot in a lower key than most of his works, remains generally committed to a high-key tonal scale." Bordwell, *Ozu and the Poetics of Cinema*, 82.

3 Gerow, "Ozu to Asia via Hasumi," 52.

4 Sklar, *Movie-Made America*.

5 Nornes, "Review," 89–92.

6 Laird, "Japanese Cinema, the Classroom, and *Swallowtail Butterfly*."

7 Harootunian, *Overcome by Modernity*; Miyoshi, *Off Center*; Sakai, *The End of Pax Americana*; Oguma, *The Boundaries of "the Japanese."*

8 Ghadessi, "Why We Must Rethink the Dialogue on the Humanities."

9 Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*.

Introduction

1 Lamarre, *Anime Machine*, xiv.

2 Hayward, *Key Concepts in Cinema Studies*, 12.

3 Astruc, "Birth of a New Avant-Garde," 20.

4 Astruc, "Birth of a New Avant-Garde," 18.

5 Bazin, "On the politiques des auteurs," 255.

6 Yoshimoto, *Kurosawa*, 58–59.

7 Yoshimoto, *Kurosawa*, 4.

8 Choi, "Introduction," 5–6.

9 Wada-Marciano, *Nippon Modern*, 25, 51.

10 Richie, *Ozu*.

11 Schrader, *Transcendental Style in Film*.

12 Yoshimoto, "Difficulty of Being Radical," 242–57.
13 Desser, *Eros Plus Massacre*, 19.
14 Burch, *To the Distant Observer*, 25–185.
15 Thompson and Bordwell, "Space and Narrative in the Films of Ozu," 41–73.
16 Schrader, *Transcendental Style in Film*, 81.
17 Choi, "Introduction," 10.
18 Gerow, "Critical Introduction," xxx–xxxi.
19 Hasumi, *Kantoku Ozu Yasujirō* [Director Ozu Yasujirō].
20 Hasumi, *Kantoku Ozu Yasujirō* [Director Ozu Yasujirō], xxv.
21 Yoshimoto, *Kurosawa*, 61.
22 Fujiki and Phillips, "Introduction," 1.
23 Fujiki and Phillips, "Introduction," 11.
24 Bernardi and Ogawa, "Introduction," 4.
25 Shohat and Stam, "From the Imperial Family to the Transnational Imaginary," 153–54.
26 Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 41–46.
27 Fujiki and Phillips, "Introduction," 3.
28 Motion Picture Producers Association of Japan, Inc., "Nihon eiga sangyō tōkei" [Data of Japanese Film Industry], accessed October 31, 2024, www.eiren.org/toukei/data.html.
29 Yoshimoto, "Difficulty of Being Radical."
30 Miyao, "Introduction," 2.
31 Higson, "Concept of National Cinema," 43–44.
32 Gerow, *Visions of Japanese Modernity*, 13 (my emphasis).
33 DeVereaux and Griffin, "International, Global, Transnational."
34 Miyao, *Aesthetics of Shadow*, 4–7.
35 "15 nendo Nihon eiga (geki) no satsuei gijutsu danmen" [A Technological Aspect of Cinematography in 1940 Japanese (Fiction) Films], 89.
36 *Nihon Eiga* 7 (1944), quoted in Katō, *Sōdōin taisei to eiga* [The National Mobilization Policy and Cinema], 160; "Kōgyō seiseki kessan" [Record of Box Office], *Eiga Junpō*, February 1, 1943, quoted in Katō, *Sōdōin taisei to eiga* [The National Mobilization Policy and Cinema], 120–21; Furukawa, *Senjika no Nihon eiga* [Wartime Japanese Cinema], 173.
37 Fujiki and Phillips, "Introduction," 10–11.
38 Miyao, "Introduction," 2.
39 Nornes, "Review."
40 Choi and Frey, "Introduction," 1.
41 Sinnerbrink and Trahair, "Introduction," 4.
42 Sinnerbrink and Trahair, "Introduction," 5.
43 Sinnerbrink and Trahair, "Introduction," 5.
44 Sinnerbrink, *Cinematic Ethics*, 18–19.
45 Sinnerbrink, "Emotional Engagement and Moral Evaluation," 209.

46 Choi and Frey, "Introduction," 2.
47 Rodowick, *Virtual Life of Film*, 78–79.
48 Choi and Frey, "Introduction," 6.
49 Yoshida, *Ozu's Anti-Cinema*, 1–3.
50 Yoshida, *Ozu's Anti-Cinema*, 65.
51 Levinas, *Entre Nous*, 146.
52 Peperzak, "Preface," xi.
53 Domrzalski, "Suffering, Relatedness and Transformation."
54 Lamberti, *Performing Ethics Through Film Style*, 8.
55 Saxton, "Fragile Faces," 12.
56 Chow, "Phantom Discipline," 1391.
57 Chow, "Phantom Discipline," 1392.
58 Suwa and Yoshida, "Eiga to Hiroshima, soshite kibō" [Film, Hiroshima, and Hope], 94.
59 Yoshida and Funahashi, *Mada minu eiga gengo ni mukete* [Toward the Film Language That We Have Not Seen], 126.
60 Yoshida and Funahashi, *Mada minu eiga gengo ni mukete* [Toward the Film Language That We Have Not Seen], 61.
61 Yoshida and Funahashi, *Mada minu eiga gengo ni mukete* [Toward the Film Language That We Have Not Seen], 445.
62 Nornes, "Riddle of the Vase," 78–89.
63 Nornes, "Creation and Construction of Asian Cinema Redux," 175.
64 Schrader, *Transcendental Style in Film*, 149.
65 Thompson, *Breaking the Glass Armor*, 339–40.
66 Bordwell, *Ozu and the Poetics of Cinema*, 117.
67 Cazdyn, *Flash of Capital*, 235.
68 Yoshida, *Ozu's Anti-Cinema*, 79–80.
69 Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, 17.
70 Uchida, "Tamerai no rinrigaku" [The Ethics of Hesitation], 39.
71 Gregory Comnes also uses the notion "the ethics of indeterminacy" in his discussion of William Gaddis's fiction. For Comnes, it means a vision of plurality and contingency that disallows prescriptive utterances based on Christianity, humanism, reason, or Newtonian epistemology. I agree with Comnes in his emphasis on plurality and contingency. However, Comnes still focuses on the novelist Gaddis's exploration of the constitution of meaning by our unconsciousness, seeking out the randomness, paradox, and mystery of the world. To me, the ethics of indeterminacy is to give up on constituting meaning at least from the author's side and to allow randomness in the audience's perception. Comnes, *The Ethics of Indeterminacy in the Novels of William Gaddis*, 3.
72 Yoshida, *Ozu's Anti-Cinema*, 5–7.
73 Creed and Reesink, "Animals, Images, Anthropocentrism," 100.
74 Ozu, "Tatoeba tōfu no gotoku" [For Example, Like Tōfu], 203.

75 Yoshida, *Ozu's Anti-Cinema*, 28.
76 Lamberti, *Performing Ethics Through Film*, 5.

1. Cats and the Gaze of Things

1 Chow, "Phantom Discipline," 1391.
2 Chow, "Phantom Discipline," 1391–92.
3 Chow, "Phantom Discipline," 1392.
4 Derrida, "The Animal That Therefore I Am," 372.
5 Creed and Reesink, "Animals, Images, Anthropocentrism," 101.
6 Derrida, "The Animal That Therefore I Am," 372–73.
7 Cimatti, *Unbecoming Human*, 2.
8 Trifonova, "Nonhuman Eye," 136.
9 Yoshida, *Ozu's Anti-Cinema*, 7.
10 Amad, "Visual Riposte," 53.
11 Jacques Leenhardt, qtd. in Ross, *Fast Cars, Clean Bodies*, 76.
12 Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 201.
13 Amad, "Visual Riposte," 53, 54, 51.
14 Amad, "Visual Riposte," 53, 54.
15 Amad, "Visual Riposte," 62.
16 Amad, "Visual Riposte," 65.
17 Amad, "Visual Riposte," 51; Miyao, *Japonisme and the Birth of Cinema*, 83–92.
18 Gunning, "Before Documentary," 18.
19 Amad, "Visual Riposte," 56.
20 Amad, "Visual Riposte," 63. Jacques Lacan also discusses the returning gaze from the object of our eyes' look. We are not fully in control of our eyes' look but cannot help having the uncanny feeling of being gazed at by the object. Lacan's famous example is *The Ambassadors* (1533), a painting by Hans Holbein the Younger. A skull, which is recognizable only when the painting is looked at from the side at an angle, gazes back at us. Still, the hierarchized dichotomy between looking and being looked at is maintained. Lacan, *Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis*, 92.
21 Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, 287.
22 Sartre, *Existentialism Is a Humanism*, 28.
23 Cimatti, *Unbecoming Human*, 6–7.
24 Cimatti, *Unbecoming Human*, 6.
25 Martinot, "Sartre and Derrida."
26 Chen, *Animacies*, 55.
27 Lapworth, "Responsibility Before the World," 389.
28 Yoshida and Funahashi, *Mada minu eiga gengo ni mukete* [Toward the Film Language That We Have Not Seen], 110.