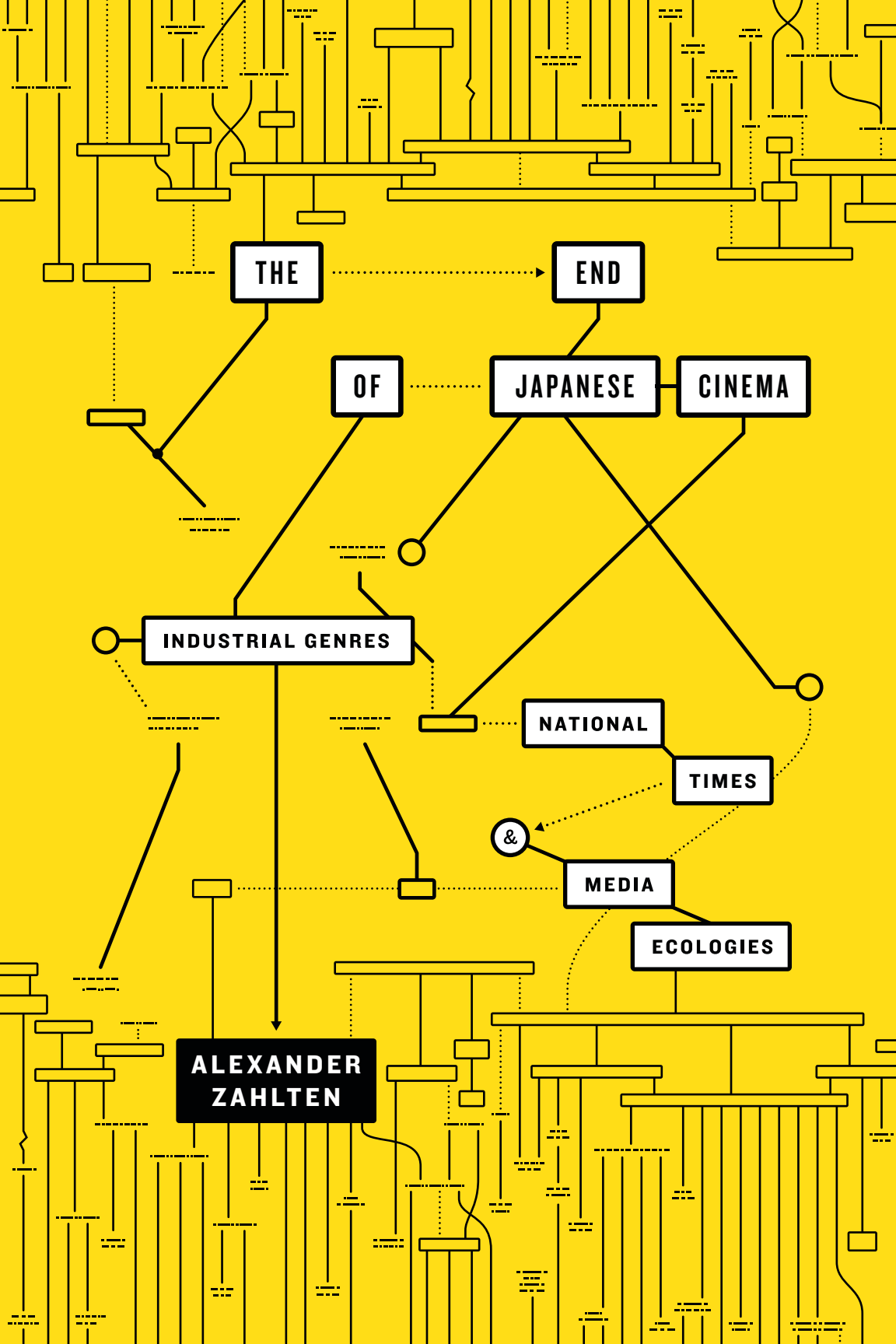




THE

END

OF

JAPANESE

CINEMA

INDUSTRIAL GENRES

NATIONAL

TIMES

&

MEDIA

ECOLOGIES

ALEXANDER
ZAHLEN

**THE END OF
JAPANESE CINEMA**

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COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY. The Studies of the Weatherhead East Asian Institute
of Columbia University were inaugurated in 1962 to bring to a wider public
the results of significant new research on modern and contemporary East Asia.

ALEXANDER ZAHLTEN

THE END OF JAPANESE CINEMA

Industrial Genres, National Times, and Media Ecologies

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INTRODUCTION

Just a month before his film won the Palme d'Or at the 1980 Cannes International Film Festival, Kurosawa Akira performed a historic snub at the glamorous Tokyo premiere of *Kagemusha*.¹ As film producer and media mogul Kadokawa Haruki approached the legendary director to congratulate him, Kurosawa coldly turned away and refused to speak with him, with the room looking on in embarrassment and shock.² Yet presumably most of the onlookers understood the reason for Kurosawa's chill-inducing rebuff. Against the odds and seemingly out of nowhere, Kadokawa Haruki had transformed how the film and media business in Japan operated, and he did so to tremendous financial success. For the media industry, Kadokawa was the man who introduced what he called media-mix strategies and who crafted an entirely new system of media production and consumption. For Kurosawa, the larger part of established film criticism, and the old-school film industry, Kadokawa had begun the process of spectacularly demolishing the high art of cinema. Even more than that, what he produced was not even "cinema" anymore; in fact, it was difficult to determine exactly what it was, and what it was becoming.

Kurosawa's deep resentment of Kadokawa Haruki was likely based on the sense that something, some grotesque transformation, was encroaching upon his beloved medium. And while we can assume that Kurosawa was most concerned with the context of Japan, in most media-permeated societies today

there is a sense that profound changes have taken place that fundamentally affect how we produce, use, engage with, and understand film and media more generally. To take the case of Japan, imagine that in 1958 one entered a theater to encounter a double or triple bill that might include a comedy from the Company President (*shachō*) series or a special-effects film such as *The H Man* (*Bijo to ekitai ningen*, Honda Ishirō), then returned home or continued on to food and drink. This was cinema proper, defined by a specific mode of production and, importantly, a specific space and practice of spectatorship. By the 2010s, audiences might watch the ninja character Naruto in the anime series on TV while drinking Naruto soda and browsing the Naruto website or playing the online game on their phones. In the morning they could read the manga on the train and receive tweets generated by a Naruto *kyara*-bot while chatting with other fans online. Later they might be preparing to present a self-produced Naruto manga at a fan convention on the weekend, possibly in Naruto cosplay. What was once cinema now entered into a less localizable space of media woven into the fabric of everyday life.

To be sure, this is a transformation that affects all highly mediatized societies. On top of a bounded media text for consumption we find constellations of characters and worlds that are accessible via multiple, multidirectional engagements. We are embedded in these arrangements as much as they are entangled with and coshape our quotidian rhythms. Such a relation is not entirely new—just as film has always entailed connections to other media—but increasingly obvious and consequential. Accordingly, models that assumed the transmission of a media text from an authorial or corporate center to the mass audience that reads the text are increasingly complemented by models that see not a media environment distinct from us but an ecology of media production, circulation, distribution, and redistribution that we are always already part of. Such models frame the relationship between us and media less as one of interactions between cleanly separable individuals and objects or systems than one of what Karen Barad terms intra-actions, actions within interlocked and interpenetrating, barely distinguishable entities or systems.³ A different economy, media epistemology, and ultimately a different mode of politics follow from such a perspective.

This book delineates the history of film in Japan since the 1960s in order to map transformations in the systemics and experiences of the film and media ecology. To achieve this, it uses genre to track the changing ways that audiences understood and engaged with film. This approach also entails a reconceptualization of what film genre is and a form of reading film that is not fully close nor distant but that we might instead call proximate. Not simply a category based on narratives and film styles, here film genre also includes the

structures that produce, distribute, and frame these films, themselves always enmeshed in processes of narrativization and world building.

This book introduces the concept of industrial genres to help describe those historically specific cases in which film-industrial structures and the supposedly bounded feature film textuality that belongs to them overlap on the level of meaning: in terms of narratives, tropes, and politics. Put differently, industrial genres are cases in which, on the level of meaning, film-industrial systems align with their audiovisual texts to propose or critique models of social organization. If, according to Rancière, politics is a question of distribution, systems and texts here are coextensive with each other in terms of working toward common distributive goals, constituting a more cohesive, larger, and legible formation. The Pink Film industry in its structures and practices formulates itself as coextensive of the Pink Film texts' agenda. Even more simply put, the Pink Film industry was itself legible and experienced as a textuality with a specific politics that extended into the screening spaces, posters, and films, and vice versa. It is the common politics of filmic textuality and larger industrial system that makes Pink Film an industrial genre.

This is, to be sure, an unusual use of the term "genre"—one that shifts slightly from category to relation—but one that I hope to show will be useful. That industrial genres multiply at certain points, especially from the 1960s onward, and then begin to fade away as a match between the textuality of the film and the textuality of the industrial structure becomes less probable is in itself significant. Industrial genres, then, will lead us through the trajectory from cinema to new media ecology.⁴

The following chapters describe the formational periods of three industrial genres that were central to film in Japan to trace the larger developments of film and media since the 1960s. This book then takes the beginning of the end of Japan's studio system as its starting point. The breakdown of a Fordist model of film production designed to supply a massive general audience—"supply an audience" in both senses of the term, as both servicing and creating it—is part of the deep transformation of industry, aesthetics, and spectators.

This history begins with Pink Film, a sexually themed type of film that revolutionized the industry from the early 1960s to the mid-1970s. Pink Film positioned itself against a model of postwar Japan that claimed a completely new beginning. It was a system that pushed for an efficient and highly regulated sociality integrated into the Cold War system. In contrast, Pink Film insisted on the messy, confusing, and contradictory experience of Japan two decades after the war. Its highly disturbing focus on sexual violence, predominantly against women, and its production of intensely gendered theater

spaces were equally confused and contradictory responses to this experience, formulations of both imagined resistance and vigorous collaboration in the construction of this new Japan. It is here that we first find the formulation of specific forms of confusion to be central, as it will be to each of the industrial genres in this book.

We then continue to Kadokawa Film, a genre that from the mid-1970s to the early 1990s epitomized the immensely influential media-mix strategies that have shaped the media industry in Japan. Kadokawa Film constructed a space in which audiences could imagine Japan as situated in a glamorous global media present, immediated in the sense of films without a time lag or borders to other nations or media.

And third, this history then moves to V-Cinema, a straight-to-video genre that represented an attempt to reimagine film and its role vis-à-vis a new media ecology. From the early 1990s to late in the first decade of the 2000s, V-Cinema retreated from the promiscuous open media space of Kadokawa Film into the living room and destabilized a model of historical sequence via the time-shift technology of video. V-Cinema was expressedly a nostalgic vision, although complexly mediated through a new media technology.

Finally, we turn to developments in the early 2000s, which saw the state develop a tumultuous and intensified interest in the uses of popular media culture, often on the basis of a misunderstanding of new media ecology principles. It is perhaps no surprise that all of the above discourses are deeply permeated with concerns about nation. If print capitalism has been claimed to be one of the foundational factors for the development of the construct of nation, the new media ecology and its platform politics still relate to it, if in more volatile, erratically nostalgic, and utopian ways.

Much of the rapidly expanding body of writing on media in the last two decades that has attempted to understand the shifts in media culture—mostly in the U.S. context—explicitly or implicitly assumes that digital technology is more or less deterministically at the root of a revolution of how we do and make sense of things. Yet practically all aspects attributed to contemporary media culture have been part of mass-media culture from its early stages. A mythic tale of digital rupture inevitably loses sight of long-standing and multifaceted transformations. In its various material forms, film was the paradigmatic medium in the twentieth century and suffered the entire span of these transformations. Film can be, therefore, essential to understanding the deep changes media have gone through and how we have changed along with them. The trajectory of industrial genre is symptomatic to these changes.

The Aesthetics of Industrial Genres

The straight-to-video film *The Tusk of Evil* (*Kyōaku no kiba*, Narita Yūsuke, 1991) is the story of a renegade cop on a rampage, attempting to stop an international arms deal. The rental tape cover features a man in a leather coat and bandana sporting a machine gun. The back cover shows him variably firing the gun, having sex, and fighting one-on-one in an exploding warehouse. The text on the cover declares the main actor, Matano Seiji, to be the “new hardboiled hero,” after the late Matsuda Yūsaku, and advertises the film to be full of “hard violence” and set in “streets full of nonnationality.”

The Tusk of Evil, while one of the best-selling videotapes of the year, does not appear in any major history of film from Japan. In fact, it does not appear in minor histories of film from Japan, or even in those that focus on the 1990s. Yet one look at the tape’s cover suffices for many in Japan to assign the film to the genre of V-Cinema (short for Video Cinema). Indeed, the film, the cover and the images and text on it, the section of the video store where it is located, and the technology it utilizes all converge to form an identity and articulate an argument. In concert with the production system of V-Cinema they reference film history in the form of a deceased star and the films he was associated with in the late 1970s, the 1960s action films from major studio Nikkatsu, and U.S. crime films from the 1970s. This reference extends to the section of the film industry that produced this film, the discourses it produces about itself, and a temporal model it espouses.

Thus V-Cinema qualifies as an industrial genre. The previous example of the media ecology that contemporary media articulations such as *Naruto* participate in already demonstrates, even leaving questions of reception aside, the difficulty of assuming a single, bounded work. On the level of film, industrial genre points toward a similar but slightly different boundary problem. Here the concept of industrial genres includes the film industry itself, most simply divided into production, distribution, and exhibition, as part of a larger textuality that audiences engage with. For Pink Film, Kadokawa Film, and V-Cinema, industry itself is part of an aesthetic formation to be engaged and decoded, in some way experienced and understood. At least in the formational periods that are the focus of this book, these genres provided specific and meaningful constellations of industrial structures and practices, media texts, and spectatorships.

The concept of industrial genres departs from the conventional usage of the term “genre” in film theory in order to make it attentive to questions of history and location. In film theory, genre has generally relied on concepts

and categories developed in literary theory and modeled on U.S. cinema. These two legacies have created immense problems for what is potentially an important tool for mapping landscapes of audiovisual media and for tracking larger change across them.

The main consequence of the transposition of the genre concept from literature to film is that even different conceptions of genre in film define a genre category solely or primarily on the levels of narrative and visual style. Even theorists such as Steve Neale, who argues for taking industry discourse, posters, and advertisements into account in establishing genre categories, ultimately relate all of these aspects back to the filmic work that is being categorized.⁵ A main reason for reformulating the concept of genre is to craft a tool that maps change, not static taxonomies, that has a wider scope than simply the filmic text to incorporate the many additional levels on which film makes meaning, and that accounts for specificity of (filmic and social) contexts yet allows us to approximate larger historical trajectories. It thus must be a tool that on the one hand is appropriate to film—which most genre theory arguably still is not—yet does not simply universalize Hollywood categories or even posit Hollywood as the privileged or default reference point.

The primacy of the filmic text has been tentatively softened in film scholarship in recent years. Gerard Genette's idea of the paratext, "a heterogeneous group of practices and discourses of all kinds" that surround the (literary) text, framing and presenting it in ways that decisively codetermine our reception, provided an important early impulse.⁶ For film such paratexts would be posters, pamphlets, trailers, or news articles. Yet even Genette's structuralist approach squarely centers on bounded, written, literary texts, for which the paratext is "only an assistant." While aware of the problems the now-destabilized "idol of the closed text" presents, Genette nonetheless retains it for its utility and warns against the "hollow fetish" of the paratext.⁷ When Jonathan Gray revives the discussion of the paratext for the media situation of the early 2000s, he cautions, with Roland Barthes, against the equation of work and text, pointing out the "increasingly hazy boundaries between primary and secondary textualities."⁸ Ultimately, Gray retreats from the more extensive idea of textuality and retains the division and hierarchy between text and paratext with the more qualified maxim, "To understand what texts mean to popular culture as a whole, we must examine paratexts too."⁹

This book circumvents the need for Genette's distinctions and shifts the emphasis away from static, bounded, and hierarchized texts. Instead it maps shifting textual constellations of industrial structures and practices, media texts, spaces of circulation, and spectatorships. In the case of industrial genres

these constellations as a whole are aesthetic formations that actively produce meaning and present a perspective on the world and, usually, the nation.

Not every film necessarily belongs to an industrial genre; in fact the increase and now fading of industrial genres since the 1960s is one of the trajectories this book outlines. The narrative an industrial structure itself spins, as, for example, independent film, does not always match the narratives or tropes of the films it brings into circulation. Finite and historically specific, industrial genres appear and disappear as a discrete and recognizable constellation of discourses, industry formations, practices, and material media objects that together formulate specific and strategic arguments. Anime with its cottage industry and specific parameters of production and distribution, or *jishu* film (amateur or autonomous film) with its local and national distribution networks in the 1970s, may arguably have qualified as industrial genres at certain moments in their existence. The studio system, again at specific times, with its form of production and distribution geared toward producing a specific type of film, may well be said to constitute a very general type of industrial genre. In fact, such an assumption is implicit in many analyses of classical Hollywood cinema, be they formalist or ideological.

Why focus on V-Cinema, Kadokawa Film, and Pink Film to map the broader development of film and media if other industrial genres are available? The films they encompass are not usually recognized as radical masterworks or respectable films. They are not regarded as emancipatory, or even as acceptable in terms of their ethics or their aesthetics. The staff who make them are overwhelmingly not acknowledged by critics or academics as creative geniuses or “great men” (though they are, tellingly, overwhelmingly male), and the films, for the large part, are not seen as paradigm-changing commercial successes. While in all three of these genres we can find impressive examples of the art of film, they are often closer to being the most basically formulaic assembly-line products and are emphatically popular.

Yet the combined roughly eight thousand films that Pink Film, Kadokawa Film, and V-Cinema produced—and are partially still producing—were tremendously important in the transformation of the functions of film and media in Japan. As both mirrors and motors, as symptoms and interventions, these genres catalyzed profound and complex changes that influence any and every kind of media engagement in Japan today. Even if these genres did not cause these immense shifts, they did decisively characterize and coshape them despite their dubious cultural capital.

Each of these genres defined themselves as oppositional to a status quo that they, respectively, defined differently. At the same time it is not difficult

to understand their trajectory and that of film in Japan in general from the 1960s to the early 2000s as an avant-garde of practices and attitudes that are often called neoliberal. Pink Film was a forerunner in the casualization of labor in the studio-system-dominated film industry and possibly an enabler of outsourcing strategies that are now well established. Kadokawa Film continued the push toward an atomized, post-Fordist industry and ever more sophisticated systems of consumption. It marketed this shift via the attraction of a Japan reintegrated and resynchronized to world time, aestheticized as a glamorous cosmopolitanism. V-Cinema further intensified the exploitation of labor while delivering deliberately anachronistic visions via video, the technology that makes time itself mobile and commodifiable.

Yet while deeply entwined with the vicissitudes of capitalism in Japan, the arguments these genres made were more complex and layered than a simple drive for more profit. They constructed serialized visions of national moments, respectively bound to the prisms of transforming media technology, practice, and system. Tracking industrial genres provides insights into the emergence of a system of media that functions at ever-higher levels of complexity and the imagination of nation or other communities that shadows this trajectory.

However, industrial genres seem to function as a robust formation only for limited periods of time. That finiteness itself is important in its historical implications. The three industrial genres treated in this book produced and performed cohesive discourses through industry practices as much as in the connected body of films, but they did so most densely in their formational phases, which will accordingly be the focus of this book. It was during these approximately ten-year stretches that they defined themselves against films or industry formations that themselves may not be consistent enough to qualify as parts of an industrial genre. There exists a tipping point, then, when the films and the industrial structures and processes match up and an industrial genre emerges—when Pink films become part of Pink Film. We still however need to allow for categories—even if only discursive ones—of film that rely more centrally on narrative or style within the filmic text, what Rick Altman calls the semantic and syntactic elements of a genre.¹⁰ Here “genre” designates the extended category of industrial genres, while “subgenre” points to categories that are established purely through differentiation on the level of the filmic text, through narrative and audiovisual style, such as the Western or science fiction film.

The history of industrial genres is as much the history of a set of film aesthetics as of an aesthetics of industry. Kadokawa Film’s worldview was understood

and aesthetically experienced through its business structure and strategies as much as through the films that belonged to it. There is, therefore, a difference between the concept of industrial genre and work commonly being done in film industry studies. While John Caldwell explicitly states that “industry is textualized,” the overwhelming majority of work that takes industry into account still relies on some form of base-superstructure model.¹¹ Caldwell himself lucidly analyzes the discourse the industry produces about itself, yet such industry discourse remains a separate sphere from the spaces, practices, and media texts these industries coproduce. In contrast, I claim that industrial genres put forth an aesthetic argument that is formulated on the level both of a narrative work and of industrial organization and practice itself. If this sounds as if industrial genres possess a degree of agency, it is because that insinuation is intentional: Pink Film, Kadokawa Film, and V-Cinema here are emergent systems that develop their own set of sometimes unexpected internal rules and external consequences, and not only relate to but redefine their environment.¹² These systems include aspects such as labor relations and distribution methods as much as a set of narratives and camera movements or uses of sound, all outfitted with decodable and experiential aspects. This aesthetic strategy lets an industrial genre define its perceived environment and the salient concepts through which it structures it. Such definitions inevitably lead to clashes. Groups such as the PTA (Parent-Teacher Association) or the Tokyo Metropolitan Police perceived Pink Film as oppositional to the status quo not only because of its overtly antiauthoritarian, antigovernment narratives and abrasive stylisms but also because of the specific model of production and distribution it developed and performed against the major studios and the spectatorial spaces it opened up.

To provide a simple example of the limitations a conventional genre concept poses, it is very difficult to distinguish between Pink films and the sexploitation films produced by the major studio Nikkatsu and marketed under the name Nikkatsu Roman Porno purely on the level of narrative and style. Both feature subgenres such as the *danchi-tsuma* (apartment wife) films or the *chikan* (train groper) films, and both have a similar rhythm of sexually themed scenes (approximately once every ten minutes). Yet the audiences, the film industry, and, with considerable consequences, the Tokyo Metropolitan Police Department perceived them as very distinct categories. The different theater spaces, advertising, and type of company producing the films all suggested specific positions, politically and experientially.

This brings us to two basic problems in the way genre has been applied as one of the main tools for ordering films and the history of cinema. First, virtually no one has analyzed the way genre as a system of categorization itself

may mean different things within different contexts. Second, to date no genre system has been proposed that might be appropriate to mapping the multiple ways film is understood in different contexts and, especially, at different times. Industrial genres are meant as tools to address both of these issues through emphatic historicization.

The first of the above points is one that has not been addressed significantly despite Alan Williams's 1984 call for genre theory to find a way to "get out of the United States."¹³ Beginning with André Bazin's foundational essays on the Western, genre categories have been largely developed on Hollywood models. Indeed, the idea of film genres itself partially relies on Hollywood cinema, and in practice (sub)genre categories have simply been applied to other contexts. Thus films made in the 1950s in Japan about old women transforming into cats to haunt the living are now generally categorized as horror films in both Japan and the United States. Yet that category possessed no relevance for film production or reception in Japan at the time these films were made and seen; they were regarded as *bakeneko* (transforming cat) films. Today, even in Japan a DVD of a *bakeneko* film may well be found in the J-horror section, erasing categorizations and discourses that provide important insights into the lived media spaces of the time.

Only a handful of projects have even attempted a less U.S.-centric approach to categorizing film.¹⁴ One of the most direct attempts to conceptually address the complex problem of genre in cinemas outside of the United States is Mitsuhiro Yoshimoto's essay "Melodrama, Postmodernism and the Japanese Cinema." Yoshimoto reviews the role of melodrama against the backdrop of postwar Japan to examine the specific function it might have had in that context: "If there is any meaning in carrying on genre criticism, it lies only in the dismantling and deconstruction of generic identity through a radical process of historicizing the institution of genre."¹⁵ Following Fredric Jameson, Yoshimoto defines melodrama as the articulation of societal conflict, in Japan's case the disparity between modernity and modernization. By reading melodrama and its demise in the 1970s as inseparable from the particular sociopolitical air its viewers (and producers and disseminators) breathed, Yoshimoto succeeds in leaving aside questions of otherness and tradition in exchange for a highly productive interweaving of filmic text and context. In one other respect, however, his analysis is problematic. While showing how a genre can be charged with different meanings across varying contexts and emphasizing the constructed nature of generic categories, Yoshimoto restricts himself to observing a genre in isolation, as if it did not relate to other existing ones, and accepts a genre definition that derives all meaning from filmic narrative.

In contrast, including industrial structures, practices, and spaces allows for both a more holistic view on how film makes sense and a more fine-tuned negotiation of the global, regional, national, and very local aspects of film as they manifest in film as practice (of making, of disseminating, of engaging). Using industrial genre takes shifts in the relations of textuality, contextuality, and practice into account—how we intra-act with and understand media.¹⁶

Second, then, genre, to be useful, needs to account for a complex model for change. The question—not a new one—remains of how to retain traces of history and contingency while accounting for a trajectory.

An astonishing example of the complex relation of continuity and change is that Pink film budgets have remained at around 3 million yen since the mid-1960s. The value of this amount of money has of course changed considerably. This example encapsulates some of the issues concerning the relation of change and continuity that categories such as genres pose. A basic problem of the conventional film genre definition is how it relates to changes over time, more often than not proposing a set of stable narrative or stylistic elements, or a stable set of rules that determine genre change. The approaches to the Western are instructive here. Genre theory in film studies began with André Bazin's writings on the Western, which he saw as a reformulation of myth: "The Civil War is part of nineteenth century history, the western has turned it into the Trojan War of the most modern of epics."¹⁷ As this statement confirms, there is a stubborn connection between Euro-American-centrism and an ahistorical perspective. But even if much of genre theory initially tended toward immutable categories modeled on Hollywood films (and implicitly still often do), there have also been numerous attempts to accommodate genre change. In the 1970s Will Wright detected changes in the Western that he saw rooted in historical change that in turn forced the myth to adjust its narrative structure.¹⁸ This was an important step in the direction of incorporating history, yet it relied on an idealized conception of film as a pure reflection of the social, independent of industrial, legal, media-technological, or other developments within the industry. Increasingly since the 1980s, the question of genre change across time has become central, just as scholars have begun to warn against the "taxonomic trap" (Christine Gledhill). Rick Altman has proposed genre cross-pollination as one of the mechanisms of change. In his well-known model, genres are defined on a semantic level (cowboy hats, horses) and on a syntactic level (garden versus wilderness). Genre change can take place through a recombination of new semantic elements, or those stemming from an existing genre, with syntactic elements from another (or new ones). As this model focuses almost completely on the filmic text, Altman has at other times also attempted to accommodate the

question of discourse by including journalism and film marketing to examine the influence on generic labeling. The latter signifies another general shift, the tendency to approach genre categories primarily as a discourse, not as historical or reified categories.¹⁹ Following this direction, Hideyuki Nakamura developed an intriguing approach to film noir. Mindful of his position of a theorist situated in Japan, gazing on a dynamic that initially developed between the United States and France, Nakamura states that “what this book ultimately attempts is not to recognize the general characteristics of the film/text called ‘film noir,’ nor to provide a clear definition of the concept of ‘film noir.’ Rather, it is to describe the particularity of ‘film noir’ as a unique complex of discourse and images, as a long-standing diverse and scattered symbolic practice.” For Nakamura, film noir, a genre designation created retrospectively by French critics with regard to an assortment of American films, poses an opportunity to think about the question of categorization and film or, more generally speaking, the relationship of history, media, discourse, and experience.²⁰

If we take history or experience into account, how can we track larger, even global developments yet still account for specificity and contingency, both historical and in terms of locality? How to account for change that is not simply an immediate, almost telepathic reflection of audience sentiment, a marketing construction, or free-floating discourse?

Pink Film provides an unruly example of how difficult the relationship of stability and change is to conceptualize even when the focus is not only mainly on the filmic text. Not only the budget, the Pink Film system of production, distribution, and exhibition as well ostensibly remained largely as it had been from the late 1960s to the early 2000s, as did the format of the films, shot at around one-hour length with regularly spaced erotic scenes.²¹ Thus Shindō Takae’s *Blue Assault: Document of Abnormal Experience* (*Aoi Bōkō: Ijō taiken hakusho*, 1967), about the exploitation of a young woman from the countryside when she moves to the big city, Nakamura Genji’s *Beautiful Mystery* (*Kyōkon densetsu: Utsukushiki nazo*, 1983), a gay Pink film that parodies Mishima Yukio’s personal militia, or the Pink Film version of Meike Mitsuru’s *The Glamorous Life of Sachiko Hanai* (*Hanai Sachiko no karei na shōgai*, 2004), the story of a sex worker who gets caught up in a North Korean plot to steal a replica of George W. Bush’s finger and becomes Noam Chomsky’s biggest fan along the way, all nominally follow this same formal pattern and initial production and release form.

Yet the inflection of meaning that Pink Film’s industry, screening spaces, and films charged the genre with has changed significantly. Pink Film at one point quite often used current events and spectacular crimes as source material for

the content of stories in order to capitalize on the publicity that the events had generated (director Wakamatsu Kōji's films are the most well known of these outside of Japan).²² This was only possible because the low-budget production methods demanded, and the customary double role of director-producer allowed for, extremely fast scripting and shooting schedules. On average, a Pink film made it from the first idea to the first public screening in three months, often faster. The location shooting that went along with the low-budget productions supplied a degree of stylistic realism that added to the true crime effect, and the original event was often still fresh in the audience's memory.²³ Moreover, this mode of realism was connected to what some called "erotic realism," which Pink films were associated with, a mode that was in turn connected to pre- and postwar discourses of resistance against political authority. This connotation has changed significantly, partially due to the role of realism in hard-core video pornography. The link between technology and aesthetics alone has helped change the perception and audience practices of Pink Film entirely. Industrial genres then are cohesive in the relations they enact, and the meanings and actions they produce and perform. However, they are also historical, mutable, and finite and allow us to see that level of historicity. Such a model necessarily contests some of the more basic and common narratives of the history of Japanese cinema.

Models of Japanese Cinema History

In 1982 Luise Crom wrote an article titled "Porno and Apocalypse: Japanese Film Today" for the magazine *Merian*.²⁴ It was a herald of the long relative disappearance of film from Japan from Euro-American film festivals throughout the 1980s. In Japan itself, articles and special issues on the crisis of Japanese cinema have been a mainstay of film journalism from the 1960s onward. By the late 1970s film in Japan, critics and film festival programmers seemed to agree, was primarily interesting as a crash-and-burn spectacle. This is one of several dominant narratives of Japanese cinema that erase a multitude of complex and fine-grained negotiations within it as much as the fundamental change it was subjected to.

Though it has taken increasingly sophisticated approaches, academic research has often implicitly agreed with a variation of the apocalyptic view. It has also tended to focus on respectable formations of the kind that are more difficult to find from the early 2000s onward: the 1930s golden age of cinema, supposedly radical film (auteurs) of the 1960s, or the intriguing (so-called) independent films by young directors in the 1990s. To be sure, there has been

work on what is often termed genre cinema, such as films assigned to the J-horror category, or on animated film, which is often cordoned off as separate from live-action film. Despite their constituting more than half of live-action film production in Japan from the 1960s to the early 2000s, academic work on film in Japan hardly discusses or even mentions Pink Film, Kadokawa Film, or V-Cinema.²⁵

The focus on male directors—almost never screenwriters, actors, or cinematographers—and (ideally radical) masterpieces represents another of the more permanent aspects of the study of film from Japan. For all the problems associated with such an approach, at one point it did enable films to be examined on common (a)historical ground. Culturalist approaches, such as those taken by Noel Burch or at times Donald Richie, attempted to isolate an enduring and essential Japanese quality in film from Japan, often posited as an alternative to Hollywood. They and their appeal to fundamental continuity across historical upheaval have been largely abandoned. Likewise, formalist approaches most prominently represented by Burch and David Bordwell that prioritize locating distinct styles and defining them in relation to the historical rupture of modernity or to capitalist modes of representation have dissipated.²⁶ From the first decade of the 2000s onward, many of the major works on Japanese film were part of film studies' general turn to history and its reevaluation of early phases of cinema, aided by the emergence of a generation of scholars fluent in Japanese and with access to historical documents. Focusing on well-delineated groups such as the collective around documentary filmmaker Ogawa Shinsuke, or discourses such as the pure film movement, such work often deliberately problematized the trappings of larger-trajectory narratives and the label of national cinema.²⁷ This work has been followed by research with a focus on precisely delineated discursive histories that also attempts to widen the scope and contact points of film from Japan. From the late 2000s onward, much research began to set its sights on anime, discourses on moving images (*eizō*) and their relation to architecture or surveillance, or the media mix. Concomitantly the focus began to shift in the direction of media theory and away from the supposedly autonomous medium of cinema.²⁸

Despite such transitions in framework and theoretical concerns, the narrative of decline still lives on in the background, in both academic and journalistic accounts. As mentioned, film journals in Japan especially have sported regular features on the crisis of Japanese film from the 1960s onward. Until very recently, almost every account of contemporary film from Japan, be it in Japanese or English, began by juxtaposing the year cinema attendance peaked

(1958), or the year film releases and the number of screens peaked (1960), with the considerably lower contemporary figures. This narrative typically recounts how the annual filmgoing audience shrank by nearly 90 percent from 1,127,452,000 (1958) to 119,575,000 (1996) and how the number of films produced in a given year was reduced by more than half in the same period.

The direction that popular cinema in Japan took did not help its case with many critics. When Satō Tadao, the most prominent living film critic, wrote a history of the oldest major studio, Nikkatsu, for its seventieth anniversary in 1982, he merely subsumed the period following 1972 in a few lines under the section “the period from action films onward.”²⁹ With this he virtually erases everything Nikkatsu produced after it switched almost wholesale to making the sexually themed Nikkatsu Roman Porno films. Satō wrote this at a time when Nikkatsu was the only former major studio still producing and releasing almost seventy films per year, more than one-fifth of the total number of films of around 330. Yet Satō seems unwilling even to touch upon the subject of sex films. Indeed, if one includes Pink films, 1982 saw close to 75 percent of films from Japan positioning themselves in the sexually themed bracket.

The story of decline has an epilogue. “Japanese Film World Rises Again” was a typical headline in 2004.³⁰ Smaller production outfits replaced the vertically stratified majors as the main site of production. Broadcasters became major players in film production, leading to an influx of capital and a strong increase in the number of movies being made. The industry, supported by the government’s burgeoning interest in popular culture for the purpose of national branding, was able to establish new financing methods. Film funds and production committees involving several media companies spread the financial risk, and banks developed an interest in investing in this more transparently regulated system. And while market share would not show steady growth again until around 2004, the international profile of live-action film from Japan rose (again) in the 1990s. In 1997, three films from Japan—*Fireworks* (*Hana-bi*, Kitano Takeshi), *The Eel* (*Unagi*, Imamura Shohei), and *Suzaku* (*Moe no Suzaku*, Kawase Naomi)—won major prizes at the Venice and Cannes film festivals. International interest surged, accompanied by the increasing visibility of anime and manga, which in turn helped inspire the government’s “Cool Japan” campaign. Inside Japan the industry seemed to be gaining more secure footing as well, although due to very different films. In 2006, 417 films from Japan were released, up from 230 in 1991, the lowest figure since the mid-1950s. The number of screens climbed to 3,062, up from the 1993 low of 1,734 (the lowest since 1947), and the total box-office gross for domestic films climbed to the third-highest level of all time. Film from Japan, it seemed, was back.³¹

The industrial genres treated here may have been sidelined by academic and journalistic work precisely because they are transitional, because they signal a veering away from the cinema model that the narratives of apocalypse and resurrection rely on. Thus far, academic research has not fully engaged with the live-action films of this “resurgence,” unimpressed by the kinds of films that brought about the economic upswing. Overall the films do not fit the focus primarily on “quality” films that can be endorsed due to perceived political or artistic merits. In contrast, accounts of reemergence tack a tale of resurrection onto the narrative of “decline and bankruptcy,” as Donald Richie called film from the 1980s onward, that had been in place for the past decades, using box-office numbers and film festival prizes as their meter.³² Beyond commercial success or very specific forms of appreciation, however, the question persists: what qualitative transformations have taken place over the decades since the 1960s? How has the engagement with film and other media changed, and how does that decisively shape our understanding of the world? What films did audiences in Japan actually watch, and how did they make specific sense of them at respective points in time? Industrial genre will provide a tool to locate cohesive discourses that film shaped and participated in. Each of the industrial genres mapped in the following chapters presents and performs its own version of history, in terms of both film and nation.

We Live in Historical Times

In July 1983, Kadokawa released a double bill of films that would become immensely popular and etch themselves into the collective memory of moviegoers in Japan for decades to come: *Detective Story* (*Tantei monogatari*, Negishi Kichitarō) and *The Little Girl Who Conquered Time* (*Toki o Kakeru Shōjō*, Ōbayashi Nobuhiko). Especially the latter fascinated an entire generation with its tale of the involuntary leaps of young idol Harada Tomoyo across time gone awry. Linear time and the sequence it implied were being fiddled with on another level as well: Kadokawa released the films in theaters and on VHS and Betamax II tapes at the same time. Even in this early stage of the video industry, this was a highly unusual move. The hierarchy of different media channels was already in place, dictating a fixed linear sequence in which films moved through them.

As we will see later, Kadokawa Film ripped into the idea of linear sequence with a vengeance, arguing instead for simultaneity on a massive and overwhelming scale. This match of film narrative and business strategy formulates the specific arguments the industrial genre of Kadokawa Film was making, at the time, *about time*. These arguments about time and temporality that Kad-

okawa Film put forth were deeply tied to the very specific history of Japan shaping itself into a nation that was emphatically intended to be modern. Stefan Tanaka has described how momentous the switch from an assortment of lunar calendars to unified modern time following the solar calendar and modeled on European nations' calendars was in Japan in 1873: "A new reckoning of time was one of a series of events . . . which brought about a truly remarkable and revolutionary transformation of the archipelago. The myriad communities that existed at the start of the era were completely reconfigured both spatially and temporally into one society, Japan. A new temporality is fundamental to this new society."³³ The abrupt and deliberate design of a certain time helped create Japan as nation, and it is no surprise that a complex relationship to time marks many popular culture discourses.

Media then complete the triangle, now composed of media, nation, and time. Conceptions of how time works and how it relates to an explicitly national self—in other words, a specific temporality—are expressed in distinct ways in each of the respective industrial genres mapped here. Benedict Anderson explored how print capitalism enabled and shaped the modern imagined community of the nation, enabling new ways "of linking fraternity, power and time meaningfully together."³⁴ Similarly, we must ask what new ways of linking the new media ecology facilitate. The different takes on temporality the industrial genres put forth connect them to specific ideas about the nation that are instructive for understanding their respective moments. But they also help to further understand the relation of time-based media such as film and video to questions of nation.

Japan has an anguished history of being sandwiched between time zones. Immensely complex negotiations of temporality ensued after U.S. military power forced Japan into trade in the mid-nineteenth century. Harry Harootian has written lucidly about the problematic association of spaces such as western Europe and especially the United States with the present or the future, leaving "the rest" to be perennially behind and obliged to catch up.³⁵ In Japan, a frenzied struggle arose to break that relation in the latter half of the nineteenth century, though it often enough resulted in an in-between state, with Japan in front of its Asian neighbors and eventual colonies, yet still behind Euro-America. The effects of this ongoing negotiation cannot be underestimated, and discourses of historical rupture and continuity are inevitably caught up in this dynamic. These discourses become a major structuring force for industrial genres as well.

The analysis of the respective temporality industrial genres construct thus plays a major role in the following chapters, so what temporality means here

needs some elaboration. There is a very general usage of the term that usually refers to a specified relationship to time. More specifically, it is connected to the idea that modernity instituted a different relationship to time, one that really only made time in the modern sense—a linear progression from the past to the future via the present, though one that is contingent and can change direction at any time—possible. This modern temporality also was, as Philip Rosen recounts, the “enabling condition for the ‘discovery’ of the specific object History.”³⁶

Recent theory has treated this modern directional time critically, associated as it is with the problematic aspects of modernity: colonialism and its hierarchization into those ahead and behind, capitalist temporal regimes that press social life and labor into life cycles more easily integrated into cycles of consumerism and exploitation, structured by heterosexist and otherwise normative straight time. Many interventions make it their specific goal to upset the oppressive aspect of modern time by locating spaces of resistance to, or at least cracks in, such a temporal regime. Elizabeth Freeman formulates her own project as one that shores up deviations from oppressive time while staying attuned to the swift attempts to reintegrate them: “The point is to identify ‘queerness’ as the site of all the chance element that capital inadvertently produces, as well as the site of capital’s potential recapture and incorporation of chance.”³⁷

Such approaches agree that modern time is fundamentally massive and homogenously oppressive, and usually assumes that it is centered in the United States. However, even if that were true, the complicated temporal negotiation that different global contexts have gone through already injects a disorderliness into the way the power of modern, homogenous, linear, and sequential time is enacted. Even this hegemonic temporality relies on much less tidy negotiations between competing submodels and experiences of temporality. We must understand how a variety of temporalities grapple with each other to provide a more differentiated view on such a massive formation and how it unfolds locally—industrial genres are one attempt to do so.

One important approach that is useful both within and beyond the Euro-American context comes from the historian Reinhart Koselleck and his idea of multiple historical times (*historische Zeiten*), or, as Fredric Jameson has translated the term, historical temporalities.³⁸ Koselleck was an early proponent of the idea that the time of modernity had implemented a “temporalization of history,” or as Philip Rosen paraphrases Koselleck, the modern idea of “linear or directional time” time was tied to the idea of “principles of change internal to distinctive historical sequences.”³⁹

Due in part to mistranslation of Koselleck's terms into English, his ideas were initially received in Anglo-American scholarship as a theory of periodization, and were only reassessed in the early 2000s. Indeed, Koselleck proposes historical times as a multiplicity of specifically located temporalities, ones that are at work simultaneously even if separated by time. However, his emphasis lies on the question of experience as the main point where the differing qualities of "progress, decline, acceleration or delay, the not-yet and the not-anymore, the before and the after, the too-early and the too-late, the situation and the duration" manifest.⁴⁰ Koselleck splits the question of experience into two different aspects: "As we know it is difficult to illustrate or understand historical time; it is sustained by spatial background meanings and can only be described metaphorically. However there is a possibility of analyzing source material in terms of historical times. Two anthropological categories are suitable for gleaning the time notions implied in language sources. These are the categories of the space of experience [*Erfahrungsraum*] and horizon of expectation [*Erwartungshorizont*]."⁴¹ Koselleck sees the two of these acting together to create a sense of time, not just of things that happened or things that will happen but an *experience* of how time itself structures what happened and what might happen: gradually, catastrophically, or inevitably. Fredric Jameson finds fault with Koselleck's model for being "philosophically neutral," by which he means it does not present an ideological analysis of models of time.⁴² However, it does allow us to examine the ideological terrain the respective historical times were navigating. In Japan, maybe more obviously than in some other contexts, that navigation has always been explicit, contentious, ideologically inflected, and political in both broad and very specific senses.

Industrial genres can, considering Koselleck's framework, help to map the temporal experience they both reflected and actively shaped. Far from the "principles of change internal to distinctive historical sequences" that determinist-evolutionary genre models such as those once proposed by Ferdinand Brunetière mirrored, we can focus on a multiplicity of temporalities that are, each for themselves, specific negotiations of a certain experience of time and sometimes appeals for a different one. Industrial genres are enactments of the expectations, experiences of acceleration and stasis, ideas of rupture, and sudden transitions or unwelcome continuities that make up historical time. While Pink Film is a discourse centered on a specific use of corporeality that tries to contain ideas of both continuity and rupture within the postwar system, Kadokawa Film aims for a synchronized world, and *The Little Girl Who Conquered Time* is a utopian appeal for a different historical time less structured by the geopolitical power relations of Japan during the Cold War. V-Cinema

plays off of the technology of video to propose impossible rewinds of media history, always in interaction with a historical present it tends to deny, and *Task of Evil*, with its multiple references to media history embedded in the new time-manipulation technology of VHS, is part of the historical time that V-Cinema weaves into. It should be mentioned that for all of these industrial genres, the spatial models they navigate, among others in terms of reception spaces, play an important role and resonate strongly with Koselleck's idea of a space of experience. This aspect features throughout this volume and is discussed more centrally in chapter 6.

One of the claims of this book is that all of these genres represented, respectively, a strategic confusion of existing models of historical times. Usually this functioned as a means of formulating opposition to existing models. Pink Film, to which I turn first, specifically con-fused aspects of temporality in the postwar system with the continuity of discourses carried over from the 1930s. Following the war, the Japanese (and the U.S.) government promoted the idea of a complete rupture after 1945 in order to espouse the idea of a new, democratic Japan. However, to do so it retained the linear, directional time directed toward a prosperous future that had helped fuel the colonial effort, now integrating it into the Cold War system. The immediate postwar period saw attempts at breaking through this now differently oppressive, structuring time with a focus on immediacy and corporeal sensation. In this context the so-called literature of flesh argued for an instantaneous time with little trust or belief in the future or the past. Accommodating or rather con-fusing both temporalities, Pink Film's body politics formulated an underlying sense of confusion in the postwar system and made it palatable and commodifiable, enabling both unease and reintegration. While not easily categorizable as resistance, it was a confusion that was as inviting as it was uncomfortable, and it is no surprise that dominant structures faced with the formation of these genres have repeatedly attempted to minimize it.

The End of Japanese Cinema

Kurosawa Akira feared that Japanese cinema was in danger, and he feared correctly. What this book outlines is a trajectory of transformation, yet its title purports to describe the end of Japanese cinema. What, however, would that mean exactly?

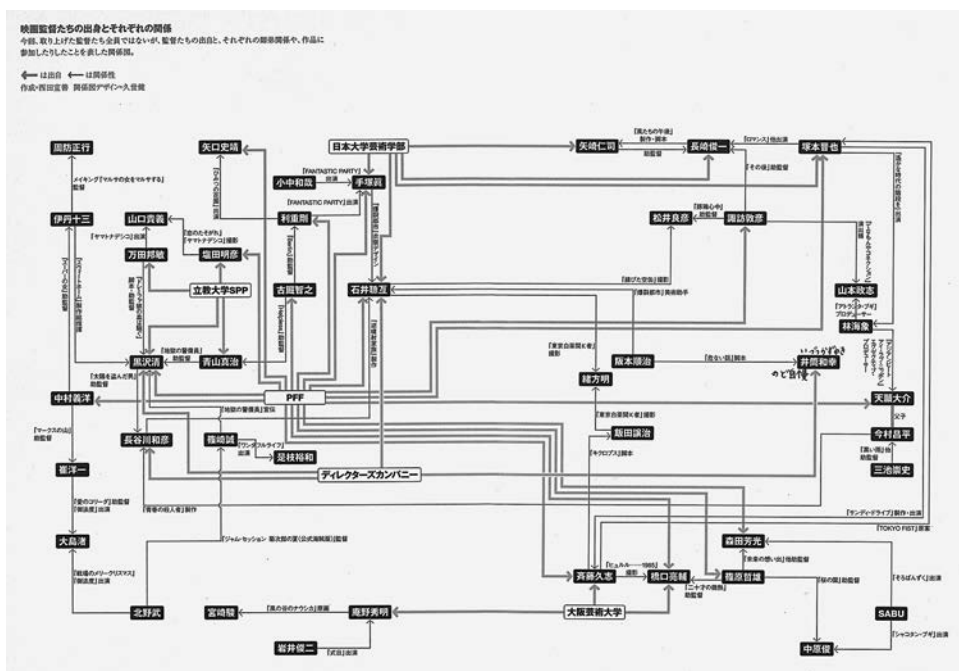
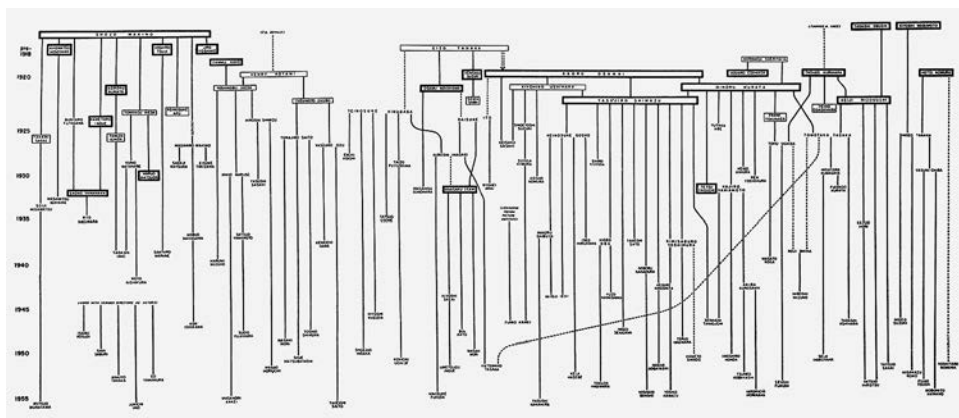
"Cinema," "film," and "media" are terms that are used in a variety of ways. Francesco Casetti has explicitly decried the all too common announcement that cinema has expired. "Yet," he explains, "the cinema has certainly not died. Movie

theaters, for example, not only continue to exist, but are also increasing in number.” (In Japan, as we will see in chapter 6, this is not strictly true; theater screens have increased, at least in comparison to the 1990s, but theaters have decreased.) Casetti’s first reflex, then, is to anchor cinema in designated spaces, even if he then, for the purpose of preserving the term in a changing media environment, goes on to define cinema primarily as a “particular way of relating with the world through moving images, as well as relating with these images.”⁴³

For the purpose of this book, however, “cinema” refers to a more specific discourse of moving image production, circulation, and reception practices. It is a moving image form based on the technology of capturing light and eventually sound on rolls of film material made of nitrate, celluloid, or polyester, to be distributed to cinema spaces for assembled audiences to engage with in the dark. Despite multiple connections to other media, it is often discussed as a stand-alone medium, associated with the studio system and specific models of (Fordist) production and standardization. While producing a specific and highly gendered system of appreciation (*auteurism*), it established specific avenues of accumulating cultural capital that rely on film critics and an exclusive international (European) film festival system, with the latter tied as much to the Cold War as it was rooted in the idea of nation. It is in this milieu that the idea of a “Japanese cinema” ordered according to “great men” such as Ozu or Oshima could develop and easily be accepted, and Mitsuhiro Yoshimoto has argued that such a model of Japanese cinema was central to establishing and stabilizing the discipline of film studies.⁴⁴ It is this milieu itself that has transformed so significantly that the basis for unproblematically thinking the two levels of boundedness that Japanese cinema implies—nation and medium—has crumbled away.

Moving-image forms such as the feature film are still with us, if joined by user-generated clips on Nico Nico Douga, advertising culture, Original Net Animation (ONA), augmented reality objects, and other formations. However, they now by default stand in relation to multiple material bases, media channels, and modes of mediation; this “standing in relation to” is now understood as constitutive of moving image media forms in a way it wasn’t before.

If we conceive of the term “film” as closer to the Japanese term “*eizō*” than to the material of the film strip, then we can think of it in terms of mediated, usually moving, images easily tied to various media-mix models. Yuriko Furuhashi has lucidly described how the designation *eizō* became discussed and popularized in 1960s Japan. Referring to the explicitly mediated image, both moving and still, *eizō* points to the search for new ways to engage with an



FIGURES I.1–I.2. Frameworks for understanding film from Japan changed with the structure of the industry. Figure I.1 shows the chart at the end of Joseph Anderson and Donald Richie’s *The Japanese Film*, ordering directors by apprenticeship lineage and studios. Figure I.2 is an attempt in 2000 to show relations between directors, film schools, film festivals, and production companies, struggling to contain the complexity. From Anderson and Richie, *The Japanese Film*, 432–33, and *Far Away from the Real: Nihon Eiga Nyû Wevu*—“Riaru” no Kanate e, 24–25.

image and media culture caught in profound change.⁴⁵ To go a step further, *eizō* enters an even higher order of relationality when it always already stands in relation to a larger emergent media system, in some way (self-)coordinated and only occasionally centrally controlled (especially in Japan). Throughout this volume we will catch a glimpse of the effects of this transmogrification, a shift from “Japanese cinema” to “film in Japan,” with the latter always a priori participating in and understood in relation to larger media or media-mix systems. It is film in Japan that we now need to frame less as a towering stand-alone than as part of an expansive media ecology.

Why then focus on the parts of this media ecology that still very much emerge from the lineage of cinema? Following the industrial genres of Pink Film, Kadokawa Film, and V-Cinema allows us to detect the larger trajectory and the shifts that have deeply affected that genealogy. These shifts manifest in a changing conception of film and media vis-à-vis life, in how they make meaning, in how they help constitute and formulate ideas about forms of collectivity that include but are not limited to the scale of nation and world.

To understand the significant shifts in the epistemology of media that film in Japan allows us to track, it will not help us to view time periods or genres as reified, temporally hermetic units, delineated by eruptive change. Substantial transformations are processes that are composed of layers of influence from different historical moments. Koselleck has termed these time layers (*Zeitschichten*). Such layers each represent disparate experiences of time, operating with a variety of speeds and durations. They are recognizable as something that has ended, but all together form what is perceived as the towering and unstable present moment. This book embarks on mapping such time layers through genres that have been largely ignored despite having constituted the bulk of narrative live-action film in Japan since the 1960s. It begins that journey with Pink Film.

INTRODUCTION

- 1 Japanese names will be given in the name order conventionally used in Japan, family name first and given name second.
- 2 Director Ōbayashi Nobuhiko recounts this story in “Boku no Kadokawa Eiga-Dansō.”
- 3 See, for example, Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway*.
- 4 The emphasis is here on an emergent media ecology that functions according to a new set of principles, not an ecology of new media.
- 5 See Neale, “Melo Talk.” Theorists such as Christine Gledhill criticized Neale’s position as reifying genre categories and returning to the “taxonomic trap,” while Gledhill prefers to focus on the reasons genres have been constructed. See Gledhill, “Rethinking Genre,” 221.
- 6 Genette, *Paratexts*, 2.
- 7 Genette, *Paratexts*, 410.
- 8 Gray, *Show Sold Separately*, 39.
- 9 Gray, *Show Sold Separately*, 26.
- 10 Altman, “A Semantic/Syntactic Approach to Film Genre.”
- 11 Caldwell, “Para-industry.”
- 12 This conceptualization draws on neocybernetic ideas of emergence, which differ slightly from older, classical cybernetic ideas of emergence. As Bruce Clark and Mark Hansen mention, this means that “in contrast to the technosciences of emergence, it proceeds not (like some latter-day Herbert Spencer) from the simple to the complex, but rather by way of system-specific and system-internal reductions of hypercomplexity to ordered complexity. This is the meaning of von Foerster’s statement that it is we who invent the environment that we perceive.” See Clark and Hansen, “Introduction: Neocybernetic Emergence,” in *Emergence and Embodiment*, 13.
- 13 Williams, “Is a Radical Genre Criticism Possible?” In Europe, there are naturally more investigations into non-Hollywood genres such as the Italian *giallo* or the German *heimatfilm*. These mostly follow the usual fixation on the text, however.

- 14 Sarah Berry has called for looking at how (Hollywood-originated) film genres spread to other national cinemas as part of a system of glocalization, when transnational genres assume specific significance in a local context; see Berry-Flint, "Genre." David Desser has attempted exactly that in his article "Global Noir," chronicling the transnational dissemination of a film noir style and certain character relations.
- 15 Yoshimoto, "Melodrama, Postmodernism and the Japanese Cinema," 32.
- 16 The term "intra-act" here draws on Karen Barad's usage.
- 17 Bazin, "The Western."
- 18 Wright, *Sixguns and Society*.
- 19 Altman, "A Semantic/Syntactic Approach to Film Genre"; also Altman, "Reusable Packaging."
- 20 Nakamura, *Eizō/Gensetsu no Bunkashakaigaku*, 68.
- 21 Changes to the structure of the Pink Film industry and the films themselves, incremental until the early 2000s, have sped up considerably since then.
- 22 For an excellent outline of Wakamatsu Productions' work in this regard, see Furu-hata, *Cinema of Actuality*.
- 23 A type of production that Yuriko Furu-hata sees as one form of the "cinema of actuality." Furu-hata, *Cinema of Actuality*.
- 24 Crom, "Porno und Apokalypse."
- 25 The notable exception for Pink Film is the writings of Roland Domenig and a volume dedicated to the genre: Nornes, *The Pink Book*.
- 26 For the paradigmatic example of a structuralist approach, see Burch, *To the Distant Observer*. For an impressive and exhaustive formalist approach that veers away from finding "Japaneseness," see Bordwell, *Ozu and the Poetics of Cinema*.
- 27 See, for example, Gerow, *Visions of Japanese Modernity*; Nornes, *Forest of Pressure*; Miyao, *Sessue Hayakawa*.
- 28 For example, see Lamarre, *The Anime Machine*; Steinberg, *Anime's Media Mix*; and Furu-hata, *Cinema of Actuality*.
- 29 Satō, "Nikkatsu Eiga Zenshi."
- 30 Takamura, "Japanese Film World Rises Again."
- 31 The gross for domestic films in 2006 was \$884.48 million. These are the statistics as published by Eiren, the Motion Picture Producers Association of Japan, Inc. They can be downloaded at Eiren, "2006-nen Zenkoku Eiga Gaikyō" [The national general situation of film], Eiren, accessed June 2014, <http://www.eiren.org/toukei/index.html>.
- 32 Richie, *100 Years of Japanese Film*, 208.
- 33 Tanaka, *New Times in Modern Japan*, 1–2.
- 34 Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 52.
- 35 Harootunian, *History's Disquiet*.
- 36 Rosen, *Change Mummified*, 108.
- 37 Freeman, *Time Binds*, xvi.
- 38 Jameson, "The Aesthetics of Singularity."
- 39 Rosen, *Change Mummified*, 107.

- 40 Quoted by Jordheim, "Against Periodization," 161.
- 41 Koselleck, *Zeitschichten*, 331.
- 42 Jameson, "The Aesthetics of Singularity."
- 43 Casetti, *The Lumière Galaxy*. David Rodowick similarly sees the term "film" as connected to the technology of (nitrate, celluloid, etc.) film, and therefore prefers "cinema" as the term more suited to thinking about contemporary forms of moving images; see Rodowick, *The Virtual Life of Film*. I will follow a nuance more common in European languages, where "cinema" or its equivalents often imply space, whereas space is associated with practices. Barthes, for example, in his essay "Leaving the Movie Theater," states, "Whenever I hear the word *cinema*, I can't help thinking *hall*, rather than *film*." See Barthes, "Leaving the Movie Theater," 346.
- 44 Yoshimoto, *Kurosawa*.
- 45 Furuhashi, *Cinema of Actuality*.

ONE. ESTABLISHING PINK FILM

- 1 The film now exists only as a fragment of about twenty minutes in the archives at the National Film Center in Tokyo. In my research I have not found any account of someone who has actually seen the entire film. Suzuki Yoshiaki has recounted the novelization of the real story that was printed in *Bessatsu Naigai Jitsuwā*, and on which the film is based. In it, Tamaki investigates a gang of four men and finally realizes the culprit was a boy named Kenji. The story ends with her apology to her dead sister for not being able to take revenge, and reveals Tamaki as preparing to perform an abortion of Kenji's child. There is no way of knowing how much license the film took with the story. See Suzuki, *Pinku Eiga Suikoden*, 38. The title of the book references one of the most famous works of classical literature from China, *Outlaws of the Marsh* (also often called *Water Margin*). It is the story of a bandit who resisted corrupt authority with his band of 108 outlaws in the Shandong Province of the twelfth century, and functions as an allusion to the oppositional image Pink Film would soon acquire. Also see the interview with the lead actress of the film, Tamaki Katori, "Nihon Sekusupuroitēshon Eiga Kōbō-shi 1."
- 2 There were several cases in which prints of films without an Eirin mark had been seized. In 1952 the films *Farewell to Youth* (*Wakōdo e no hanamuke*, prod. Makino Masami), a sex education film, and *Mark of Love* (*Ai no dōhyō*, prod. Ōsaka Eigajin Shūdan) screened in theaters and strip-show venues, were seized on grounds of exhibition of obscenity. Screening films without an Eirin mark was never actually illegal, though the national exhibitors association, Zenkōren, officially forbade its members to do so from 1962 on. For two examples from 1952, see Haruhiko, *Nihon Eiga Posutā-shū*.
- 3 Regarding the form of the term "Pink Film": it refers to the genre, while "Pink film" refers to a film situated within that genre. In general, genres are capitalized, and subgenres lowercased. Exceptions are the cases in which a (potential) subgenre is also a trademark label, such as Roman Porno.